The M6 through Cheshire

The motorway is a strategic route which connects people, communities and businesses and carries more than 100,000 vehicles each day. As traffic flows have increased over time the motorway has suffered from congestion at peak times and delays when incidents occur.

The smart motorway programme (which was called managed motorways) brings about a range of improvements to improve traffic flow and reduce delays.

These include converting the hard shoulder to a traffic lane and mandatory speed limits to smooth traffic flow.
Smart Motorways Programme

What is a smart motorway?
On some busier motorways Highways England are installing new technology - signs and signals - to help manage congestion and to improve journey times. These schemes are called smart motorways.

Typically improvements include using the hard shoulder as a traffic lane and introducing mandatory speed limits.

Smart motorway schemes have already been installed on the M42 at Solihull, on the M6 between junctions 4 at Coleshill and 10a near Walsall, and on a section of the M25. Other smart motorway schemes are under construction including the M6 Junctions 10a-13 scheme near Stafford which opened recently.

What is all-lane running?
On some smart motorway schemes the hard shoulder is opened to traffic using the overhead signs only when congestion occurs. For all-lane-running schemes the hard shoulder is converted into a permanent running lane. This means that the M6 J16-19 scheme will have 4 traffic lanes in each direction controlled by overhead signs. Emergency refuge areas alongside the motorway will provide refuges for broken down vehicles.

More information regarding smart motorways can be found at the following website: www.highways.gov.uk/smartmotorways

M6 J16-19 Crewe to Knutsford

Work is now underway to begin construction of Cheshire’s first smart motorway between Crewe and Knutsford. Once completed, the £233 million project will help to keep traffic moving along the 30 km section of M6 between junctions 16 and 19.

What’s Happening Now?

We are currently setting up our new project compound and site offices on land on the east side of the motorway, just north of junction 17 (next to the former Saxon Cross Motel). This compound will provide a base from where all the construction works will be managed. It will also act as our materials and plant storage facility.

Initial mobilisation works include excavators moving top soil, laying temporary surfacing, installation of fencing and drainage and placement of site cabins. The work is being undertaken during the day and all efforts will continue to be made to keep disruption to a minimum.

We are also carrying out necessary surveys along the motorway in advance of the main works. These include environmental surveys – to ensure wildlife is protected – and drainage and manhole surveys.

We will also be carrying out removal of some planting to provide space for the new works. Where possible, planting which is removed is replaced after construction.

Environmental assessment

An Environmental Assessment Report (EAR) has been produced to meet Highways England’s responsibilities to identify, manage and monitor the effects of all its major developments. The EAR can be found on the scheme website – see back page for details.

Throughout the works consideration will be given to the wide variety of habitats along the 30km (19 miles) corridor of the scheme and to the potential for a range of species of wildlife which may inhabit the landscape of the scheme.

Community matters

As responsible contractors the Carillion Kier Joint Venture have applied for two integral construction related schemes:

Considerate Constructors Scheme

A non-profit making, independent organisation founded in 1992 by the construction industry to improve its image.

Considerate Constructors seek to improve the image of the construction industry by striving to promote and achieve best practice.

On registration to the scheme the site will sign up to the Code of Considerate Practice. This can be broken down into 5 key areas and is audited at regular intervals.

• Care About Appearance
• Respect the Community
• Protect the Environment
• Secure everyone’s Safety
• Value their Workforce