

## A12 Chelmsford to A120 widening scheme

### Accommodating Badgers

#### Background

The A12 Chelmsford to A120 widening scheme is now in the Examination Stage which started in January 2023 when the Planning Inspectorate accepted our Development Consent Order (DCO) application. Following the examination, the Planning Inspector will make a recommendation to the Secretary of State for Transport, who will decide if the DCO should be granted so that the project can move into construction. If granted, construction is due to begin in 2024.

#### Work we do in advance of the DCO decision.

If the DCO is granted, we must be ready to start construction on time. To avoid delays and extra costs, there is some work we can do in advance. This includes preparing ecology areas for the relocation of badgers if we have to work in areas where they have been found to be living. This will be done by agreement with landowners of the areas we need to prepare and is reversible if the scheme does not go ahead as planned.



#### Native Badger

#### How we'll protect badgers

Badgers live in a system of interconnected tunnels and chambers called a sett. Every badger clan has one main sett, which is used for breeding and is usually relatively large. To ensure local badgers are not disturbed if main construction goes ahead, we will build artificial setts to which they can be moved. This will be done under a special licence granted by Natural England. Badgers and their setts are protected by law, so the locations will not be revealed. Our ecologists will monitor the new territory and living area to check that the badgers are using the artificial sett as planned.



The pictures above and below show the two stages of construction of an artificial badger sett.



After stripping the topsoil, which will be stockpiled nearby, plastic pipes and wooden boxes, will be arranged in a pattern similar to the tunnels and chambers badgers dig to make a sett. It will be less than 1 m in height, covered with topsoil and seeded for protection from erosion.

Once grass and wild plants have grown over the artificial sett, it will be ready for badgers. This area will also be used as a habitat for common lizards, grass snakes and slow worms.

### **Reinstatement**

If the DCO is not granted, we won't need to re-locate any badgers. The artificial badger sett and grassed areas will be removed and the area will be returned to how it was before.

## **Get in contact with us**

If you'd like more information about this work, then please call the 24/7 National Highways Customer Contact Centre on 0300 123 5000, or email [info@nationalhighways.co.uk](mailto:info@nationalhighways.co.uk)