

# M25 junction 10/A3 Wisley improvement scheme



## Heathland restoration and woodland management factsheet



**Restored heathland**

### Heathland restoration

Heathland is one of the UK's most threatened environments and is a vital habitat for a wide range of invertebrates, reptiles, and bird species. The M25 junction 10 and A3 is surrounded by ancient heathland, a habitat that has declined in Surrey by 85% over the last 200 years. Heathland was lost when local areas were planted with conifers for timber production.

We'll be restoring large areas of heathland at Wisley and Ockham commons. This heathland restoration is supported by Surrey Wildlife Trust, Natural England, RSPB and Forestry England.

To restore the heathland and bring it back to life, we need to allow plants like heather (*Calluna vulgaris*), bell heather (*Erica cinerea*), gorse (*Ulex Europaeus*), wood sage (*Teucrium scorodonia*), perforate St John's-wort (*Hypericum perforatum*) and wavy hairgrass (*Avenella flexuosa*) to grow again. Which in turn, will support the wildlife that needs lowland heathland to survive. This will involve clearing areas of pine dominated woodland, to allow the heathland to regenerate.



### Our improvements

Our scheme will involve some of the most extensive environmental mitigation ever carried out by National Highways, including restoration of the heathland, woodland enhancement, and replacement of lost habitats. These works will be phased over several years and will be supported by a commitment to manage and monitor the restored and enhanced areas for up to 25 years, while they establish.



**Visualisation of our proposals for M25 junction 10**



Did you know that this bird is most often spotted warbling its ratty and scratchy song from the top of a gorse stem?



**Dartford Warbler**

## Woodland enhancement

Much of the woodland around junction 10 is dominated by Scots pine of the same height and age, resulting in a uniform woodland. In addition, some of the areas have not been managed for several years leading to overcrowded trees and poor ecological conditions.

We're enhancing the woodland using selective clearance. This will involve thinning out conifers to improve the abundance of broadleaf, structurally complex woodland that is more in keeping with the historic landscape and is a vital habitat for a wide range of species.

Though trees will be removed from these habitats, that is not the same as woodland being lost, quite the opposite, they are being ecologically enhanced.

This work will open up the areas, encourage regrowth and increase the variation of height and age of trees. New areas of native tree and shrub species, which are best suited to the conditions here, will also be planted along and around the roads.

## Replacing lost habitats

We will need to take some of the land around the A3 and M25 to build the scheme. We'll be replacing this land on a like for like basis so there will be no overall loss of area of common land or Special Protection Areas because of the scheme.

There will be a loss of trees at the current A3/Wisley Lane junction to allow for construction of the new bridge; these are predominantly pine, beech, betula, castanea and oak. The A3 will be widened into the central reservation as it passes the RHS Garden, not only avoiding and protecting other important tree specimens along the A3 boundary but also the extensive and vital root structure under them.

The trees and shrubs will be reused, where possible. How they are reused will be determined by the size, species and form of the tree. Some will be used for habitat creation on site, others will be removed from site to be converted into a wide range of products, such as milled timber, fencing, animal bedding, solid wood fuel and biomass. We're committed to ensuring wood material coming from the site is not treated as waste.

## Contact us

-  [nationalhighways.co.uk/m25j10](mailto:nationalhighways.co.uk/m25j10)
-  **0300 123 5000**
-  [M25j10@nationalhighways.co.uk](mailto:M25j10@nationalhighways.co.uk)

You can also follow National Highways south-east on social media:

-  [facebook.com/HighwaysSEast](https://facebook.com/HighwaysSEast)
-  [@HighwaysSEast](https://twitter.com/HighwaysSEast)



## Regeneration timeline

This long-term process starts with the removal of trees, which might seem concerning at first, but it is the first step to getting it back to its natural state. The trees and shrubs, where possible, will be used for either habitat creation on site or converted into everyday products such as fencing, benches and animal bedding. Within one year, vegetation will begin to grow and as time passes the heathland will flourish and will support local wildlife.



Existing trees cleared



Trees used for habitat creation



After one year grass and wildflowers start to grow



Heathland starts to flourish



Heathland fully restored