

Highways England repairing thousands of potholes in the East

Thousands potholes across the East are being repaired by Highways England as the organisation works hard to restore our roads following the recent Beast from the East.

The company responsible for motorways and major A roads is carrying out urgent repairs to road surfaces across the region damaged by the recent severe weather, with roads in the East particularly badly affected.

During cold temperatures water, which seeps below the road surface, freezes and expands putting pressure on the road surface. When the ice melts and contracts the pressure decreases, and this repeated process can cause the road surface to weaken. Traffic on the road can then cause the road surface to deteriorate which is why potholes are more frequent during the winter months.



Highways England's regional operations director, Martin Fellows, said: "Safety runs through everything we do at Highways England, and keeping our road network in a

good, safe condition is our top priority.

“During spring 2018 we will work with our maintenance partners, investing money to bring the east region network to a better standard for ongoing maintenance.

“Many roads in the East of England were built in the 1970s and the time is coming where we need to comprehensively renew them. We are acting in the immediate term to restore recurrent problem areas and in the longer-term will need to carry out permanent improvements.”

The number of potholes in the East has increased by a quarter since 2015, from 4,508 to 5,645. While nationally 400 potholes are repaired a month each winter, in the East that number is over 1,500.



Highways England’s employees have already completed much-anticipated resurfacing on the A120 in Essex, between Ramsey and Horsley Cross, on the A11 in Norfolk, between Attleborough and Thickthorn northbound. Operatives from contractor Kier will have completed further repairs at areas including:

- The M11 junctions 7 (Harlow) to 8 (Stansted Airport);

- The A47 between Guyhirn and Wisbech, and around Sutton;
- The A11 in Norfolk between Attleborough and Thickthorn southbound;
- Repairing 36 potholes on the A12, and a further 30 between junctions 27 and 26;
- Laying down 220 tonnes of filling material on potholes on the A1 between Biggleswade and Langford, and;
- Laying down 390 tonnes of filling material on potholes on the A428 between Caxton Gibet and Hardwick.

Highways England has already repaired thousands of potholes on the region's roads, including laying over 6,800 tonnes of filling material to cover a distance of 35 square miles, including resurfacing around 10 miles of road.

Over the next six weeks further potholes will be completed at other locations across the region, including:

- The M1 southbound between junctions 10 (Luton) and 8 (Hemel Hempstead), and various slip roads;
- The M11 between junctions 6 (M26) and 9 (A11), and southbound passing Cambridge;
- The A1(M) between junctions 9 (Letchworth) and 10 (Radwell)
- The A1 at Little Paxton;
- The A5 at Little Brickhill, and with the A421;
- The A11 at Wymondham;
- The A12 at Witham, at Boreham, between junctions 24 and 25, between junctions 20b and 22 and 26 and 27 northbound, and various slip roads;
- The A14 at Brampton Hut, at Spaldwick, and at Risby;
- The A47 between Redmoor and Elm, around Guyhirn Bank, at Soke Parkway, at Oversley Lodge, and at Honningham.
- The A120 at Pellens Corner, at Wix, and at Takeley;
- The A414 in both directions;

Repairs will be done using various methods to ensure they are completed quickly while causing minimal disruption for drivers. Around 1,000 potholes are repaired a month using cold filling material, while around seven tonnes of hot filling material are used nightly, covering around 60 square metres.

Highways England is delivering the Government's £15 billion road investment strategy between 2015 and 2020. This includes £7.593 billion on modernising and enhancing the network and £3.658 billion on renewals and maintenance.

In the last financial year (2017/18), Highways England spent £61.4 million on essential maintenance and improvements across the East, including £3.5 million on new noise barriers on the M40 in Buckinghamshire, a £3.1 million project started to construct a new roundabout with Harwich Road and the A120 near Wix, and a £3.5 million repair to the accident damaged Saddlebow Interchange on the A47 near King's Lynn.



This essential maintenance work is in addition to the longer term investment work, including new dual carriageways on several sections of the A47, widening the A12 in Essex, the £1.5 billion Cambridge to Huntingdon A14 upgrade, and the £4.4 - £6.2 billion Lower Thames Crossing.

Highways England will spend £34.4 million to maintain the region's roads over the next year, including £2.75 million on resurfacing the A14 between Newmarket and Bury St Edmunds, £2.5 million on bridge repairs on the M1, A14 and A1, £2.25 million on resurfacing the A12, and a further £2.24 million on replacing digital message signs on the same road. Our work in the next year will include laying enough tarmac to fill 20 football pitches, enough white lining to fill an Olympic swimming pool, and enough cats' eyes to reflect enough light collectively to be seen from space.

In the last year Highways England has resurfaced over 1,200 lane miles. This hard work will continue to ensure England's motorways and major A roads are maintained to a safe and serviceable condition.

Members of the public can report any issues on Highways England road network by emailing info@highwaysengland.co.uk or calling our 24 hour Customer Contact Centre on 0300 123 5000.

Ends

NOTES TO EDITORS

Highways England is the wholly government-owned company responsible for modernising, maintaining and operating England's motorways and major A roads.

1. **Safety at roadworks:** Highways England is working with the industry and road users to reduce the risks of working on the roads. For the safety of road workers and all road users, when you are approaching roadworks:
 - Keep within the speed limit – it is there for your safety.
 - Get into the correct lane in good time – don't keep switching.

- Concentrate on the road ahead, not the roadworks.
 - Be alert for works' traffic leaving or entering roadworks.
 - Keep a safe distance – there could be queues in front.
 - Observe all signs – they are there to help you.
 - And be alert for road workers, the roads are their workplace.
2. **Real-time traffic information** for England's motorways and major A roads is available:
- From the **web** at www.highways.gov.uk/traffic or from a **phone or mobile device** at m.highways.gov.uk
 - By **phone** from the Highways England Customer Contact Centre on 0300 123 5000 at any time. (Calls to 03 numbers are charged at no more than a national call to an 01 or 02 number and are included in all discount schemes and call allowances. This applies to all landlines, mobiles and payphones. Call costs will vary depending on your landline or mobile supplier.) **Make sure it's safe and legal before you call. Before using any mobile, find a safe place to park. Never stop on the hard shoulder of a motorway except in an emergency.**
 - **On Apple and Android mobile devices** via the [Apple App Store](#) or [Google Play Store](#).
 - From **Twitter** – there are eight feeds with live traffic information provided by region. For information on roads in the East of England follow us at [@Highways EAST](#) or for the full index visit www.highways.gov.uk/twitter.

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