

Working on behalf of



Forkers Ltd

Customer Contact Centre: 0300 123 5000
www.highways.gov.uk

ESSENTIAL MAINTENANCE WORKS:

A5 Towcester

Update Bulletin 1 – 27.7.2018

As you are no doubt aware, works started on Monday 23rd July 2018 as planned, to Phase 1 of our essential maintenance scheme on the A5 in Towcester.

In the early hours of Monday, the gaps in the central reservation of the A43 were closed by the traffic management contractor, H. W. Martin. with a mix of Varioguard barrier and traffic cones. The outside lanes (lane 2) of both carriageways were closed to traffic to allow the lifting into position of the 'Varioguard' barrier units with a HIAB lorry mounted crane. Traffic cones used to close the gaps were replaced by Varioguard barrier last night.

The gaps have been closed as recommended by a road safety audit. This found that, due to the increased traffic flow that will occur on that section of the A43 when used as the part of the main diversion route around our works, there is a greater risk to vehicles turning right across oncoming traffic. There is also a serious risk of drivers attempting U turns, particularly at the Blisworth turn, to try and shorten their journey time along the diversion route. The gaps will be re-opened once our works are completed, which is programmed to be around the end of November 2018. I apologise for any inconvenience that these gap closures may cause but I hope you can understand the reasoning behind the decision.

Once the gaps had been closed, temporary 50mph speed limit signs were erected from just north of the Hulcote turn down towards Tove roundabout and the outside lanes re-opened to traffic. Signs for the northbound and southbound through traffic diversion routes, including several 'Businesses Open as Usual' signs were then put in place and the A5 closed to through traffic at Tove river bridge and the A5 / Brackley Road / Northampton Road junction. At present local traffic can travel north up the A5 to the junction with Brackley Road and Northampton Road and turn either right or left at that point. Local traffic can also approach this junction from both Northampton Road and Brackley Road and either travel straight ahead or turn south down the A5. With the exception of the day of the Paloma Faith concert at Towcester Racecourse, this situation is programmed to last until approximately the middle of the second week in August but I will provide an exact date before then. In order to accommodate the numbers of people expected to attend the **Paloma Faith concert on Saturday 28th July** we will be **reopening the A5 to through traffic between 9pm Friday 27th July and the early hours of Sunday 29th July only**. You may also be interested to note that about 130 cyclists are cycling through Towcester on the morning of **Saturday 28th July 2018** to raise funds for **The Care of Police Survivors**, a U.K charity dedicated to helping the families of police officers who have lost their lives on duty.

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I understand that there is some confusion about access for heavy vehicles during our works. All Freight Transport Organisations (FTOs) have been advised of the main diversion routes for through traffic and their members have a duty of care to only use those routes. If local residents produce evidence of drivers ignoring the designated routes and driving through surrounding villages, along roads which carry **enforceable weight restrictions**, we will notify the FTOs and Police in writing. The FTOs would be expected to bring this issue to the attention of their drivers, asking them to respect the diversion routes and existing weight restrictions. Any defaulting driver may even be subject to disciplinary procedures. However, please bear in mind that, in keeping with our message that Towcester is open for business as usual, heavy vehicles still need access to service farms, particularly at this time of year, as well as local businesses, construction sites, residents and communities outside of our immediate work area but inside the larger area affected by the diversion routes. We are monitoring the number of heavy vehicles which have come through to our first phase hard closure point on the north side of the A5 / Brackley Road / Northampton Road and the early indications are that the number is minimal. This would suggest that the majority of haulage drivers are following the through traffic diversion routes. The 'Off Street Parking Permit system is in place in Phase 1 and appears to be working well.

Since arriving in Towcester on 9th July 2018, Forkers Ltd have created a site compound just north of Tove roundabout with welfare facilities for the workforce. This involved stripping and placing topsoil in bunds long the edges of the compound area. The topsoil will be used to reinstate the area once the scheme has been completed and the compound is no longer required. The area was then stoned up, surfaced and road markings denoting a one - way system, car parking and materials storage area were applied. Welfare cabins were then lifted into position and a water service and drainage installed. The cabins are powered by super silent generators. The compound area is covered by 24 / 7 security.

Since 23rd July 2018, Wilkinson Environmental have cleaned existing surface water drainage pipelines with a jetting machine, used specialist cameras to carry out CCTV inspections of the pipelines and carried out repairs using **trenchless technology** wherever possible. These internal repairs are carried out by sending an epoxy 'sock' placed around a deflated air bag along the pipeline to the exact location of the damage, inflating the bag so that the epoxy 'sock' is compressed against the pipe and then deflating and removing the bag after the epoxy has 'cured'. It may appear at times that nothing much is happening and that the workforce sit in their vehicles a lot but, when they are in their vehicles they are either monitoring the pictures from the camera or waiting for the epoxy 'sock' to cure before carrying out other repairs. The same applies to H. W. Martin's traffic marshals, who man the closures for twelve hours at a time and aren't expected to stand up for that length of time. They also regularly inspect the diversion routes to ensure that the signage hasn't been removed, vandalised or damaged by vehicles. When a pipe is found to have collapsed, Forkers Ltd. will carry out repairs by breaking out the existing asphalt carriageway or footway, excavating down onto the collapsed pipe, supporting the trench sides, removing the remains of the collapsed pipe, inserting a new pipe and connecting to the existing pipe at either end with 'bandseal' flexible collars. The support will then be withdrawn and the excavation backfilled with foamed concrete and the carriageway or footway permanently reinstated with asphalt.

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Jetting machine

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CCTV survey van

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Works to be carried out over the next two weeks include cleaning of existing surface water pipelines with a jetting machine, using specialist cameras to carry out CCTV inspections of the pipelines and carry out repairs using **trenchless technology** whenever possible. Repairs to collapsed pipes where required, permanent reinstatement of carriageway or footway with asphalt, replacement of ironwork i.e. access chamber covers and frames and gully grates and frames. Resurfacing of the carriageway is programmed to start on 9th August 2018 but I will confirm that nearer the time.

NB: Please note that all our planned road works may be subject to change due to weather conditions or unforeseen circumstances.

I apologise for any disruption our works may cause. Please plan ahead and allow extra time for your journey.

For further information, please contact:

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