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**News story**

**Government to crack down on disruptive street works to cut congestion and improve roads**

New measures could generate up to £100 million **extra** over 10 years to resurface roads **across** England.

**From: Department for Transport (/government/organisations/**department**-for-transport)**,

**Guy Opperman MP (/government/people/guy-opperman)**, and **The Rt Hon Mark Harper MP**

**(/government/people/**mark**-harper)**

Published 15 January **2024**

**new** proposals **from** the government's Plan for Drivers to cut traffic caused by street **works utility** companies that **allow works** to overrun face increased fines, which could generate up to £100 million extra to **improve** local **roads**

⚫ **launch of consultation follows record** £8.3 **billion**

increase to resurface roads **across** England **as** government continues to back drivers

A crackdown **on** disruptive roadworks could cut congestion **for millions** of drivers and generate up to **£**100 million extra to resurface **roads**, as the **first** key measures **from** the government's **Plan** for **Drivers (https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/plan-for- drivers**) **are** delivered today **(15** January **2024)**.

Roads Minister, Guy Opperman, has launched **a street works consultation**

**(https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/street-works-**

fines-**and-lane-rental-surplus-funds**) **on a series of measures** to prevent utility companies **from** letting **roadworks** overrun and clogging **up** traffic **as a result**.

The consultation seeks to extend the current £10,000 per day fine for overrunning street **works** into weekends and bank holidays as a deterrent **for** working **on** the busiest days for road travel. Currently, **utility** companies are only fined for disruption **on** working **days**. The **measures** could double fines **from** £500 up to **a** maximum **of £1,000** for companies that breach **conditions** of the job, such as **working without a** permit.

The plans **would** also direct at least 50% of money **from** lane rental schemes to be used to improve roads and repair potholes. Lane rental schemes allow local highway authorities to charge companies **for** the time that street and road **works** occupy the road.

As **a** result, the measures could generate up to £100 million **extra over 10** years to resurface **roads** while helping tackle congestion, cutting down journey times and helping drivers get from A to B more **easily**.

Launching on National Pothole Day, the consultation is part of a **series of measures from** the government's Plan for **Drivers**, **a** 30-point plan to **support** people's freedoms to **use** their **cars**, **curb over-zealous enforcement measures** and **back drivers**.

Transport Secretary, Mark Harper, said:

**After** investing an extra £**8.3 billion** to **resurface** roads **across** England, the largest **ever** increase in funding for local **road** improvements, **this** government **continues** to **back drivers with these new measures from** our Plan for **Drivers.**

Our **new** proposals seek to free up **our** roads **from** overrunning **street works**, cut down traffic jams and generate up to £100 million extra to resurface **roads** up and **down** the country**.**"

Roads **Minister**, Guy **Opperman, said**:

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Being **stuck** in traffic **is** infuriating for **drivers**. Too **often** traffic jams are caused by overrunning street **works**.

"This government is backing drivers**,** with a robust

approach to **utility** companies and **others**, who dig up **our** streets. We **will** seek to massively increase fines **for** companies that breach conditions and fine **works** that **overrun into weekends** and bank **holidays** while making the rental for such **works** help generate up to an extra £100 million to improve local roads.**"**

While it's **essential** that gas, water and other utility companies carry out vital maintenance **work** to provide the **services we** all rely **on**, the **2** million street **works carried** out in England in 2022 to 2023 have cost the economy around £4 billion by causing severe road congestion and disrupting journeys.

The consultation comes **after** this government introduced a performance-**based street works regime**

**(https://www.gov.uk/government/news/new-street-works-regime-** to-**clamp-down-on-**pothole**-pain**) to **ensure** utility companies resurface roads to the best possible standard, and new lane rental schemes **where utility** companies can be charged up to £2,500 per day for street **works**.

The **measures** can also help boost active travel by preventing **street works from** disrupting **walking**, wheeling and cycling while also providing opportunities to **improve** pavements and pedestrian crossings and make repairs to pavements and cycle lanes.

Edmund King, AA president, said:

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Overrunning roadworks and poorly reinstated roads from utility companies frustrate drivers and cause **unnecessary congestion**, and trench defects **can** damage vehicles **and** injure those on **2 wheels**.

We **are** pleased that the government is looking to extend the fines for over-running street **works**, invest **more of the surplus** fines **in roads** and ensure that those who dig up the **roads** repair them to a high and timely standard."

In addition, the government plans to make all temporary, experimental or permanent restrictions on traffic digital. These **so**-called **traffic regulation** orders **(**TROs) include things **like the** location of parking spaces**,** road closures **and** speed limits.

Making these digital means **they must now** be added to **satnav systems**, **ensuring drivers** have the **most** up-to- date **information,** making journeys easier and paving the way for more reliable self**-**driving vehicles.

RAC Head of Policy, Simon Williams, said:

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Drivers **shouldn't** have to put up with temporary **roadworks** for any longer than is necessary**, so we're** pleased to **see** the government **is** looking to do more to guarantee that **utility** companies minimise disruption by carrying **out roadworks** as quickly and **efficiently** as **possible**. They should **also** leave **roads** in better condition than they found them, which unfortunately is hardly ever the case at the moment."

The measures **follow** the biggest ever funding uplift for local road improvements**, with** £8.3 billion **of redirected** High **Speed 2 (HS2)** funding

**(https://www.gov.uk/government/news/8-billion-boost-to-repair-** roads**-and**-**back-drivers**) **– enough** to **resurface over 5,000** miles of **roads** across England **-** as the government **continues** to be **on** the side of **drivers** and **improve journeys for more people,** in more places, **more quickly**.

**Kent** County Council's Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport, Neil Baker, said:

**I** welcome the launch of the government's street **works** consultation to consider measures aimed at preventing utility **roadworks** overrunning. We have already piloted a pioneering lane rental scheme **on some** of our roads, which encourages utility companies to work in the **most efficient** way to **minimise disruption for** the traveling public in Kent.

**I** will continue to **work** with government, the Department for Transport and other stakeholders to find **ways we** can reduce congestion in order to keep Kent moving."

**Clive** Bairsto, Chief Executive **of** Street Works UK**,** said:

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**Utilities** perform a **vital** role in connecting households, working to the highest standards, while complying **with rigorous** inspections to ensure **works** are high quality and lasting.

We look forward to engaging constructively with **government throughout** this consultation, representing our members and the wider industry, to ensure both **utilities** and **local authorities can** deliver infrastructure **works** while giving customers and road users the speed of delivery, lack of congestion and transparency they expect."

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