

A421 - Bedford to M1 Junction 13 Improvements Newsletter Issue 1 - April 2009

Welcome to the first of our Newsletters in which we will regularly keep you up to date with progress on construction of the A421 improvements M1 Junction 13 to Bedford. By now you may be aware that works have been in progress since 28 October 2008.

So what have we been doing since October?

- Work on our main site office at Hoo Lane is almost complete and we moved in mid March. A smaller second compound at Salford Road is in preparation.
- Fencing work is almost complete.
- Site clearance is substantially complete.
- Archaeology progressing in several areas along the route.
- Lower Shelton - on going preparation for lengthening the subway, alternative pedestrian access now in place.
- Forming accesses and plant crossings.
- Preparatory works for drainage channels.
- Preparatory work at Cowbridge.
- Environmental work ongoing.
- Foundation piling started on the M1 and Salford Road bridges.



Archaeological Surveys

Archaeological evaluation followed by detailed excavation has been undertaken along the route of the proposed A421. These works have revealed archaeological remains dating from the Bronze Age up until the Modern period. An archaeological report will be published in due course.

The Environment

A team of ecologists from Scott Wilson has been working hard to make sure that all protected species including great crested newts, badgers, reptiles and bats, have been safely rehomed before work starts on the site.

Great crested newts lived in 26 ponds next to the site of the new road, they and their habitat are protected under European law. To make sure the newts were not harmed, work began to rehome them late in 2008.

During the period August to October 2008 newts have been re-located into a series of specially constructed newt-homes or "hibernacula". Over 20 kilometres of temporary amphibian fencing was erected along the proposed route, to aid the trapping process and prevent newts from re-entering the site during construction. Trapping will be completed in spring 2009 when newts emerge from their winter hibernation. Currently, six new ponds are being created for Great Crested Newts to breed in. Areas of grassland adjacent to the new ponds will be made 'newt-friendly' through favourable management of vegetation and creation of earth mounds suitable for newt hibernation.

Ecologists will continue to be active at the site throughout 2009 overseeing sensitive works during the construction period, to ensure that there is no harm to protected species or habitats. Over the forthcoming months this will include erecting bat and barn owl boxes within adjoining land; excluding badgers from the site and overseeing

the construction of three mammal tunnels, which will allow their safe movement beneath the new road.

Traffic Management

Major construction work began on Thursday 19 February 2009 and motorists have been warned to expect some disruption to their journey until completion of the project in December 2010. The Highways Agency and Balfour Beatty will work together to minimise disruption to motorists, but there are some major works to be carried out on the M1 at Junction 13 and some sections of the existing A421. Expected Traffic Management over the coming weeks is as follows;

- New bridge over M1 – temporary 50mph speed restriction. Lane closures will be in operation but three lanes will be in use as the hard-shoulder will be used as an additional lane.
- M1 Junction 13 slip roads – overnight closures from 29 April.
- A421 speed restrictions – 40mph in place since 19 February at various locations along A421 between the M1 and 1.25 miles east of the junction with the A6, until December 2010.
- Partial closure of A421/B530 roundabout (Interchange Retail Park roundabout), no right turns to or from the A421 westbound carriageway from 24 March.
- A421 down to single lane from A6 roundabout.
- A6 narrow lanes and 30mph speed restriction between Cowbridge and A421/A6 roundabouts during upgrades from 2 March until late Autumn 2009.
- A421 Marston Moretaine contraflow, gap and layby closures and closure of Lower Shelton Road from 11 May 2009 until the opening of the link road in Autumn.

Rights of Way Closures

Some public footpaths and bridleways will be affected by the works (See table on last page) but we aim to keep any inconvenience caused by closures and diversions to a minimum. Closures are in place for your safety, please observe the signs.

Considerate Constructors Scheme

This project is a member of the Considerate Constructors Scheme (CCS) which requires all workers to be more aware of the impact the works may have on the local residents and anyone else who may be affected. We will pay close attention to environmental issues such as noise, dust, mud and waste management.

If you have any comments or would like further information, you can contact, Balfour Beatty's Public Liaison Officer Jan Bath or the Highways Agency's Project Manager Roy Brunsdon on (01234) 796099 ,



Roy Brunsdon



Jan Bath

Email: A421M1toBedford@highways.gsi.gov.uk

or visit our website www.highways.gov.uk/roads/projects/4584.aspx

A421 Rights of Way Closures

Footpath No.	Start of closure				Until	Comments	Closure granted
	Dec.	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.			
HCR6/AG32/HS10					Aug 2010	No alternative possible	
BRG1/BRG2					Apr 2009	Temp diversion during construction	
BRG10						Diverted to Sheep Tick Lane	
LID41					Dec 2010		
LIDA6					Apr 2010		
LID29/LID30/LID31						All 3 to use 1 point to cross site	
LID38/LID5/LID5A					Dec 2010	Closed- No alternative possible	
MMO25/MMO27						Remains unaffected	
MMO33/MMO34						Temp diversion during construction	
MMO54						Remains unaffected	
MMO55/MMO56						Diversion proposed	
MMO58						Diverted onto new alignment early 2009	
WOO1	closed				Spring 2011		14 Nov. 2008
KER23					Dec 2010	Temp diversion during construction	
KEUA1/STWA1/ELS8					Dec 2010	Closed- No alternative possible	

Contacting the Highways Agency

You can also get in touch with the Highways Agency about the A421 Improvement:

Email: A421M1to Bedford@highways.gsi.gov.uk

Tel: **01234 796099**

Website: www.highways.gov.uk/roads/projects/4584.aspx

By post: **Highways Agency, Major Projects, Woodlands, Bedford MK41 7LW**

A421 Project Helpline

If you have any questions, please contact:
Jan Bath, Balfour Beatty Public Liaison Officer,
A421 Improvement Scheme,
Hoo Lane (off Woburn Road), Wootton,
Bedfordshire,
MK43 9EH

Email: Jan.bath@bbcel.co.uk

Tel: 0845 481 0867.



If you need help using this or any other Highways Agency information, please call **08457 50 40 30** and we will assist you.

For real time traffic information:

08700 660 115

www.highways.gov.uk/trafficinfo

24 hours a day, 365 days a year

For general Highways Agency information:

08457 50 40 30

email: ha_info@highways.gsi.gov.uk

24 hours a day, 365 days a year

*Calls from BT landlines to 0845 numbers will cost no more than 4p per minute and to 0870 numbers no more than 8p per minute, mobile calls usually cost more.

Safety at roadworks



The Highways Agency is working with the industry and road users to reduce the risks of working on the roads.

For the safety of roadworkers 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.