

5 July 2024

Dear resident

I am contacting you because I know, in the past, you may have been affected by severe traffic disruption when there are delays and problems with cross channel traffic. As Strategic Lead of the Kent & Medway Resilience Forum (KMRF) I want to offer support to local communities through any future disruptive periods and ensure that you are familiar with what to expect and how to access help and advice

The sections below will give you more background to the issues of heavy traffic in the area and, more importantly, where you can get information if you need it.

This includes:

- **WHERE TO FIND UPDATES AND INFORMATION THAT YOU MIGHT NEED**
- **EMERGENCY SERVICES ACCESS DURING TRAFFIC DISRUPTION**
- **WHEN TRAFFIC MEASURES ARE EXPECTED TO BE REQUIRED THIS SUMMER**
- **HOW THE KMRF MANAGES TRAFFIC IN YOUR AREA**

1 INFORMATION

For the latest updates on any services changes and useful contacts in your community, you can find out more by visiting the following websites:

If you are a resident or business in the Dover District visit [here](#)

If you are a resident or business in the Folkestone & Hythe District visit [here](#)

For more information, or to check what is happening on the roads before you go out and about, you can visit [Check before you travel - Kent County Council](#) or @KentHighways or @HighwaysSEAST on X.

2 EMERGENCY SERVICES ACCESS DURING TRAFFIC DISRUPTION

When disruption occurs in and around the areas of Dover and Folkestone, be reassured that emergency services can get to where they need to, however bad the situation is on the roads.

FIRE - Kent Fire and Rescue Service has plans in place to make sure they can carry on providing an effective emergency response in areas of significant congestion. They do this by moving crews, fire engines and other resources around the county to provide cover where it's needed. They urge everyone to only call 999 in an emergency, where there is a risk to life or property.

AMBULANCE - In periods of expected increased traffic build up, South East Coast Ambulance (SECAMB) can station paramedics in your area to ensure they are as prepared as possible to provide care for seriously ill or injured patients. In periods of disruption in and around Dover and Folkestone, they may organise for ambulance crews to start and finish their shifts more locally, which would further help with the response. Please be assured that SECAMB position their vehicles to best respond to patient demand. You can help manage demand by only dialling 999 in an emergency and making use of alternatives including NHS 111.

POLICE - Kent Police officers will still reach you quickly in an emergency even when there is heavy traffic congestion. They have enough officers in place to enable them to get to an emergency, and can move people around the county to provide cover where it is needed. You do not need to visit a police station to report an incident. The quickest way is online at www.kent.police.uk/report but always call 999 in an emergency including if a crime is in progress or someone's life is at risk.

NHS - The NHS in Kent and Medway has tried and tested plans to make sure patients can access the care they need during periods of disruption. Patients can help by making sure they use the right service for them. If you are not sure where to go or what help you need, use NHS 111 online (111.nhs.uk) or on the phone. Visit www.StopThinkChoose.co.uk for more information and a list of local services.

3 BUSY PERIODS THIS SUMMER

I hope that giving you more details and warning you about when busy periods are expected can help you to plan ahead and prepare.

In advance of a busy summer, as the Olympic games are being held in Paris, and with many people heading across the Channel on holiday, **Operation Brock will be put in place overnight on Wednesday 10th July, to ease traffic flow.**

The decision to install Operation Brock at this time is because most schools break up on 19th July, therefore we anticipate that **Friday 19th, Saturday 20th and Sunday 21st July** will be very busy days for the Port of Dover and Eurotunnel.

The following weekend (**Thursday 25th, Friday 26th and Saturday 27th July**) will see the start of the Olympics, and that is also expected to be an extremely busy time.

From then on, as we move through the summer, passenger numbers (as predicted by the Port of Dover and Eurotunnel) are high over **every weekend (Thursday, Friday and Saturday) until mid-August.**

KMRF is committed to reviewing the need for Operation Brock throughout the summer and to removing it at the earliest possible opportunity.

4 HOW THE KMRF MANAGES TRAFFIC IN YOUR AREA

It is important to say that, as much as we plan and put all sorts of measures in place to avoid the build-up of traffic to protect communities and businesses in the area, Kent is the gateway to Europe and our border is exposed to numerous factors which can impact the road network. Therefore, further disruption is likely as we head into summer and beyond.

Until new ways to manage this flow of traffic are found at a national level, Operation Brock and Dover TAP are the only tools available to us to manage the traffic into the centre of Dover, as well as on roads and in villages around Folkestone.

DEFINITIONS AND EXPLANATION OF TRAFFIC MEASURES:

OPERATION BROCK

Operation Brock holds back freight in a queue in one lane of the M20 when it gets busy at the Port of Dover and Eurotunnel.

DOVER TAP

Dover TAP acts as a 'pressure valve' - holding lorries on the A20 outside Dover town centre and releasing them only when space becomes available in the port itself.

ROUNDHILL TUNNEL

The Dover-bound Roundhill Tunnel is only closed as a safety measure when the build-up of queuing traffic at the back of Dover TAP would continue into the tunnel itself.

The queue on the Folkestone side of the tunnel then begins to affect cars and lorries getting off the M20 and into the Eurotunnel terminal, which only results in more disruption.

Unfortunately, we have no choice regarding the closure of the tunnel, as standing traffic is not allowed in any National Highways tunnel, due to the danger of fumes in a confined area and the risk of vehicles catching fire while held in a queue.

DRIVER BEHAVIOUR

We know the traffic disruption in your area can sometimes also be made worse by lorries, and potentially other drivers, not following the correct routes or the traffic plan that's in place.

To tackle this, a new permit system will be introduced in time for the summer getaway, which is aimed at preventing freight drivers from dodging the queues in Operation Brock as they head through Kent to cross the channel.

It's also hoped the new permit system will reduce the need for sudden closures of the Dover-bound A20 Roundhill Tunnel at Folkestone, and help keep local roads flowing more freely in busy periods.

As part of the system, lorries will be taken off at the Courtwood Interchange (the junction of the A20 with the B2011 Folkestone Road to Dover town centre and Capel) for a permit check at the bottom of the slip road, before either being allowed to continue straight on to Dover or sent to the back of Brock if they do not have the right paperwork.

It goes without saying that it is advised that local traffic avoids the A20 at when traffic heading into Dover is very busy.

LOCAL HAULIERS

It's important to stress that local HGVs and deliveries will not be pulled off the A20, but allowed to continue their journey, with passenger and local traffic, onwards into Dover. Those Kent hauliers that qualify for the Local Haulier Permit will be sent these shortly, ahead of the busy summer period. There is no need to apply for a Local Haulier Permit as, if you fall within the catchment area, KMRF already has your details.

EES CHECKS

As we are sure you are aware, the EU is also planning to introduce EES (Entry Exit System) checks towards the end of this year.

These checks will require travellers passing through the Port of Dover and Eurotunnel on their way to Europe to register facial and fingerprint scans, which will mean that processing people through the system will naturally take much longer than it does now.

We are awaiting confirmation from the EU as to exactly when the checks will be introduced.

You can find out more information about EES checks [here](#)

We understand that if you or your business are affected by gridlock, these details of how we manage traffic are of little comfort.

However, it is important that you understand not just how the traffic system works, but that we are doing all we can to protect you and mitigate congestion in the area.

The KMRF is a partnership made up of Kent County Council, borough and district councils like Dover District Council and Folkestone and Hythe District Council, the emergency services, the Department for Transport, and a range of other

organisations, working together to minimise the effects significant events have on communities like yours.

We want to do all we can to support you through disruption in the future by offering as much help and advice as possible.

Simon Jones, Strategic Lead for the KMRF.