

Letter to residents

Dear resident,

I am writing to bring you some updates on preparations for the introduction of the European Union's Entry/Exit System (EES).

From 12th October 2025, the European Union's (EU) new Entry/Exit System (EES) will be introduced. This is a new digital border system that will change requirements for British citizens travelling to the Schengen area.

The additional checks will be introduced gradually with the first phase of checks only being carried out for freight drivers, and coach and foot passengers. Checks for cars heading to Europe will follow at a later date.

If you are travelling to or through a country in the Schengen area (including France and Belgium) for a short stay using a UK passport, you will be required to register your biometric details such as fingerprints and have your photo taken.

People travelling should follow the advice of their travel company or operator.

Working with partner agencies we will prioritise effective traffic flow through Kent to Europe, ensuring disruption to communities from traffic congestion is minimised as much as possible whilst making sure people can get to where they need to be as quickly and as safely as possible.

These plans mean we can prioritise keeping the Roundhill Tunnel open, preventing the build-up of traffic on local roads.

Having analysed the latest data on the number of expected crossings, combined with the phased introduction of the EU's EES checks, KMRF partners have decided there is currently no need to deploy Operation Brock on the M20 ahead of 12th October.

Of course, even though the risk of disruption caused by EES checks has reduced, we all know that other things such as severe weather, strike action or accidents can also lead to communities feeling the impacts of queuing traffic.

We want you to know we are ready to respond to any incident that could cause delays or disruption to people that live, work and visit Dover and Folkestone.

As the EU's new system is phased in by French border police, the Kent and Medway Resilience Forum will carry on monitoring any impacts and working with emergency services, local authorities, health services and other partners to minimise them.

As always, I thank you for the continued patience you have shown while we prepare to see in the introduction of the EU's new EES border checks.

Yours sincerely,

Simon Jones, KMRF Strategic Lead for border disruption