



Our ref: CEO 18100378
Your ref: HW/AE

Helen Whately MP
House of Commons
London
SW1A 0AA

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Network Delivery and Development
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8 March 2016

Dear Helen Whately

Thank you for your letter of 4 February addressed to Jim O'Sullivan, on behalf of your constituents, [REDACTED] concerning litter on the A2 and M2. I have been asked to reply to you as this issue falls within my area of responsibility.

We are aware that there is a continuing problem with litter, particularly in this area of Kent. Unfortunately, for a number of reasons including closeness to urban areas and because they are heavily used, the A2 and M2 are hotspots for littering. I assure you that we take the issue of litter very seriously and fully appreciate your concerns about the poor impression it gives. Not only is it unsightly but it can also pose a threat to the environment and a safety risk to those who have to clear it up.

We have recently carried out verge and swathe cuts to maintain sightlines for all signs and lights and also prevent potential risks to road users and our assets. These improved the appearance of the network in one respect but it has also revealed a large amount of litter.

Each week we carry out a network wide litter survey which highlights the areas which need picking. The litter picking then takes place as soon as practicable. Where there are hard shoulders, this can take place during the day without any road restrictions. Elsewhere, it may require partial or complete road closures which need to be scheduled in, so may take a little longer.

Over the last few weeks our litter crews have been carrying out clearance on different sections of the motorway and have picked over 500 bags of litter. However, sadly we recognise that no sooner do we litter pick, litter is dropped again, so it can appear that nothing has been achieved despite our continuous effort.

We do regularly monitor the cleanliness of the network to ensure standards are being met and although we do not have the power to prosecute for littering, we regularly put up messages on the network urging drivers to keep



their rubbish with them and dispose of it safely and sensibly upon reaching their destination.

In January 2014 we published our Litter Strategy which illustrates our efforts to seek to change the way people think about litter. More details are in the link below:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/highways-agency-litter-strategy>.

Highways England will be working closely with our stakeholders' and suppliers to plan ways that will discourage people from dropping litter. We are also working with the Department for Transport and local authorities to develop new initiatives to tackle this issue. Please be assured we are focused on reducing litter on our roads but it is a societal issue that we won't resolve quickly, or on our own.

I hope this helps to address the concern of your constituents. If you would like to discuss the matter further, Scott Rodgers, the Maintenance and Operations Manager for Kent, would be pleased to help. Scott can be contacted by telephone on: 0300 470 1044; or by email at: scott.rodgers@highwaysengland.co.uk.

Yours sincerely



David Brewer
Executive Director

