

Subject Newtown Bypass Update
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Newtown Bypass Update

I thought it would be useful to provide an update on the progress on the Newtown Bypass.

In 12 months' time, we will see the long-awaited completion of the Newtown bypass, almost 75 years after the need for a bypass was first mooted. This will be a momentous occasion and I would like to thank the many people who have played a part in making this a reality.

After visiting the site at the end of last year, I'm pleased to say that good progress is being made and we are expecting the construction work to be completed later this year with the first vehicles using the bypass in early spring next year.

I was pleased to walk the route of the bypass behind the Treowen housing estate with Project Manager, Nick Cleary (pictured below).



The contractors, Alun Griffiths, have reported that ½ million hours have already been devoted to the project and 2.5 million tonnes of soil and rock, enough to fill the Principality Stadium in Cardiff, will be used for landscaping the route of the bypass.

20,000 lorry loads of quarried stone will be used for the road, 5,000 lorry loads of tarmac will be laid, and over 20km of drainage pipes will be installed. Over 3,000 tonnes of steel will be used in the bridges which is about half of the weight of the Eiffel Tower and 15,000m³ of concrete is required for the bridges and underpasses, which equates to over 2,000 concrete trucks.

There are currently 250 people working directly on the bypass, with all staff contributing to the local economy through renting local accommodation, spending in local shops and restaurants.

I'm sure you will agree that these statistics demonstrate that the bypass is an incredible feat of engineering and an outstanding achievement for all involved.

Progress has been moving apace and the contractors are currently ahead of schedule. I was also pleased to have gained assurances from the contractors that that it will not be affected at all by the collapse of Carillion, Britain's second largest construction firm, as it has absolutely no involvement in the scheme.

Two of the seven bridges and two of the four underpasses along the route have already been completed and Upper Dolfor Road has now been diverted over the new bridge to allow the contractors to excavate the rock from the cutting beneath it.

They have also opened one of the five new roundabouts on Pool Road at the eastern tie-in and temporarily diverted traffic to the north of the old road. This has allowed construction to start on the construction of the Pool Road Bridge which will eventually take the Bypass over the re-aligned Pool Road.

The remaining bridges are also taking shape. The beams for the Wern Ddu Lane Bridge were lifted straight into position and the beams for the Dolfor and Mochdre Bridges were delivered in smaller sections to be assembled on site.

The work on both Dolfor and Mochdre bridges were major operations and required some of the largest cranes available in the country to carry out the work. When the work has been completed on most of the bridges, this will allow contractors to progress the earthworks

and road works along the whole route of the bypass. I'm informed by the contractors that most of the bridges will be completed over the next couple of months.

During the construction, the contractors are mindful of trying to keep disruption to a minimum especially for commuters. However, Hollies Lane will have to remain closed to traffic until March/April and there will also be intermittent Temporary Traffic Management at Lower Dolfor Roundabout, Pool Road Roundabout and near Black Hall Farm on the A489 towards Kerry.

You can view a fly-through of what the bypass will look like by clicking [here](#) and you can also view a list of the upcoming road closures [here](#).



As this major construction project continues, there will inevitably be some disruption but I firmly believe that when it is completed, the bypass has the potential to transform the economy of towns such as Newtown, Llanidloes and Machynlleth. It is urgently needed to address congestion issues, improve school safety, improve response times of the emergency services and support tourism and the wider Mid Wales economy.

I've also been supporting a number of landowners and homeowners who have been affected. These residents should of course be treated with courtesy and respect and I want the Welsh Government and the contractors to honour their commitments to the local environment including promises to protect a number of important areas, trees and landscapes.

As always, if you have any questions or concerns about the construction phase of the Newtown Bypass, please don't hesitate to contact me as your Assembly Member.

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