

1. Question from Mr Donald F. Denton:

Prior to the public enquiry the Highways Agency published an A3 Hindhead Scheme case for closing the old A3 across Hindhead Common. In it they listed frequency and durations of closures occurring in the Tunnel.

The Tunnel has now been fully operational since 2011. Could you please provide a list of all the recorded occasions when one and both bores have been closed with and without contraflow, with dates, times of closure and times of re-opening. This will determine how accurate the predictions were and may also be an indicator to the chaotic state arising re-routing traffic when closures occur.

Response:

Thank you for your question. The data on closures of the Hindhead Tunnel is held by the Highways Agency, as the tunnel is part of their road network. The County Council has therefore forwarded your request to the Highways Agency, and their response will be sent to you and to Members of the Select Committee as soon as it is received.

The Committee shares your concerns about the impact of tunnel closures on local roads, and we will raise this with the Highways Agency as a matter of urgency to see what action they and the County Council can take to improve the situation in the future.

2. Question from Cllr Peter Hunter (Thursley Parish Council):

At the Hindhead Tunnel Public Inquiry, detailed arrangements were agreed for diversions in the case of a required tunnel closure in order to provide a smooth flow of vehicles at various points on the way towards the tunnel in either direction – north and south bound.

There have been many instances when the tunnel has been closed for both planned and unplanned instances that traffic chaos has reigned supreme much to the detriment of the residents of Thursley Parish. The Police tell us that the responsibility for implementing these arrangements lies with Surrey County Council (or possibly Hampshire for most northbound traffic).

Surrey County Council informs us that that the responsibility lies with the Highways Agency and the Highways Agency keep very quiet on the matter. Which department of Government will take responsibility for these arrangements?

Response:

Management of the formal diversion route for the Hindhead Tunnel is an issue for the Highway Agency in consultation with and the agreement of both Surrey County Council and Hampshire County Council.

There is the responsibility for formal operational plans, mechanisms of co-ordination and appropriate signs to be in place. However, the recent network disruptions have highlighted that working arrangement (including co-ordination and signage) may need to be improved.

Surrey County Council will therefore be requesting a meeting with all parties to review lessons learned and identify any improvements that can be made to the management of future formal diversions.

David Harmer
Select Committee Chairman