



# M1 Smart Motorway

**James McCabe**  
Planning Manager

Monitor

Collaborate

## M1 Smart Motorway

The M1 Junction 13 to 16 project is a £373M investment by Highways England to upgrade a key strategic route between London and the North. The project involves a 37.9km (23.6 miles) section of the M1 which is being upgraded to an All-Lane Running (ALR) Smart Motorway. The project is being undertaken in joint venture by two of the UK's leading contractors Costain and Galliford Try.

Smart Motorways are becoming an increasing part of Highways England's network. These roads use technology to monitor and manage the flow of traffic. The technology is controlled from regional control centres which can activate and change signs and variable speed limits to help the traffic flow smoothly.

Smart Motorway projects like the M1 J13-16 typically involve construction works such as; installation of lane barriers and restraint systems for safety, road widening and increased lane numbers, new Emergency Areas, large scale resurfacing and large overhead gantries to support cameras, variable speed limit signs and other advanced motorway indicators. A great investment to make England's roads safer and more efficient.

## James' Story

James is the Planning Manager responsible for the planning controls and planning team on the M1 J13-16 project. With such an intricate project and many interactions with live highway traffic, detail is critical. Planning on the project needs to be precise with teams knowing exactly where and when things need to be done.

James could see that the existing process of planning and coordinating work had clear gaps. There was a gap in the way the construction team put into practice the high level outputs of the complex master scheduling tools and kept on top of adherence to those plans.

**“Planner gives us the ability to understand the plans of our crews and our subcontractors in one place. As one team we can assess whether the plan is achievable and if not, what the best solution is.”**

With a live 3-4 week programme and detailed subcontractor input, the whole team can always rely on this single source of truth (Planner!) to really understand their current priorities and the plan for the coming weeks. Planner's clash detection highlights issues that the team can deal with together and well in advance. With all the moving pieces that go into executing work on James' project, the ability to spot issues before they occur is saving real time and money.

James saw that the disconnect in traditional methods of building programmes in complex planning systems and tracking the real day to day progress on spreadsheets and whiteboards had issues. This process leads to poor rates of data collection and lower accuracy in identifying root causes as there's more work for teams to do and as such are completed sporadically and usually late. With Planner's Smart Status, James gets the real progress and causes of issues as soon as the team revisit their plan, every time.

**“Planner's automatic smart statusing is giving us a real ability to monitor work, track progress and prioritise issues as soon as they come up - really closing the feedback loop.”**