



From the Parliamentary
Under Secretary of State

Council leaders

Department for
Transport

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Dear Colleague

Permit Schemes for works in the highway

I am writing to outline my approach to permit schemes, which give local authorities much more control over where and when works are carried out on their roads.

Permit schemes are already up and running in most of London, and in Kent, and have reported very encouraging early results. Building on their success, I am keen that more authorities should consider seriously the role that permit schemes could play in their areas.

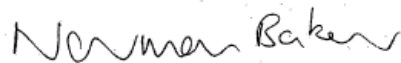
From the authority perspective, a well-designed permit scheme can provide a broadly cost-neutral way to get significantly better performance from road networks. I am therefore supporting the future development of permit schemes in two ways:

- Firstly, I will be bringing forward legislative proposals later this year, under which English local highway authorities would no longer need to seek central government approval to implement a new permit scheme (or to vary an existing one). This would place decision-making squarely with elected local authorities, removing a significant risk currently facing authorities who wish to implement schemes.
- Secondly, I have removed unnecessary bureaucracy from the approval process that will remain in place until the new legislation is passed. Last November I published revised guidance which explains that the Department for Transport will no longer be subjecting authorities' proposed permit fee levels to independent external scrutiny. The new guidance is available at <http://www.dft.gov.uk/pgr/roads/network/local/streetworks>.

I can also confirm that the Department for Transport will no longer be commissioning its own evaluation of permit schemes, as this would largely duplicate the evaluations that local authorities themselves are conducting.

Further advice and support for local authorities considering permit schemes is available from DfT and I would encourage you to contact us as early as possible if you are considering making an application. For further information, local authority officers are welcome to contact Maclean Okotie on 020 7944 4443 or at maclean.okotie@dft.gsi.gov.uk.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Norman Baker". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

NORMAN BAKER