

NSG underpins government initiatives to reduce traffic congestion

The National Street Gazetteer (NSG) is a centralised unique referencing system with the fundamental aim of making the street works process more efficient.

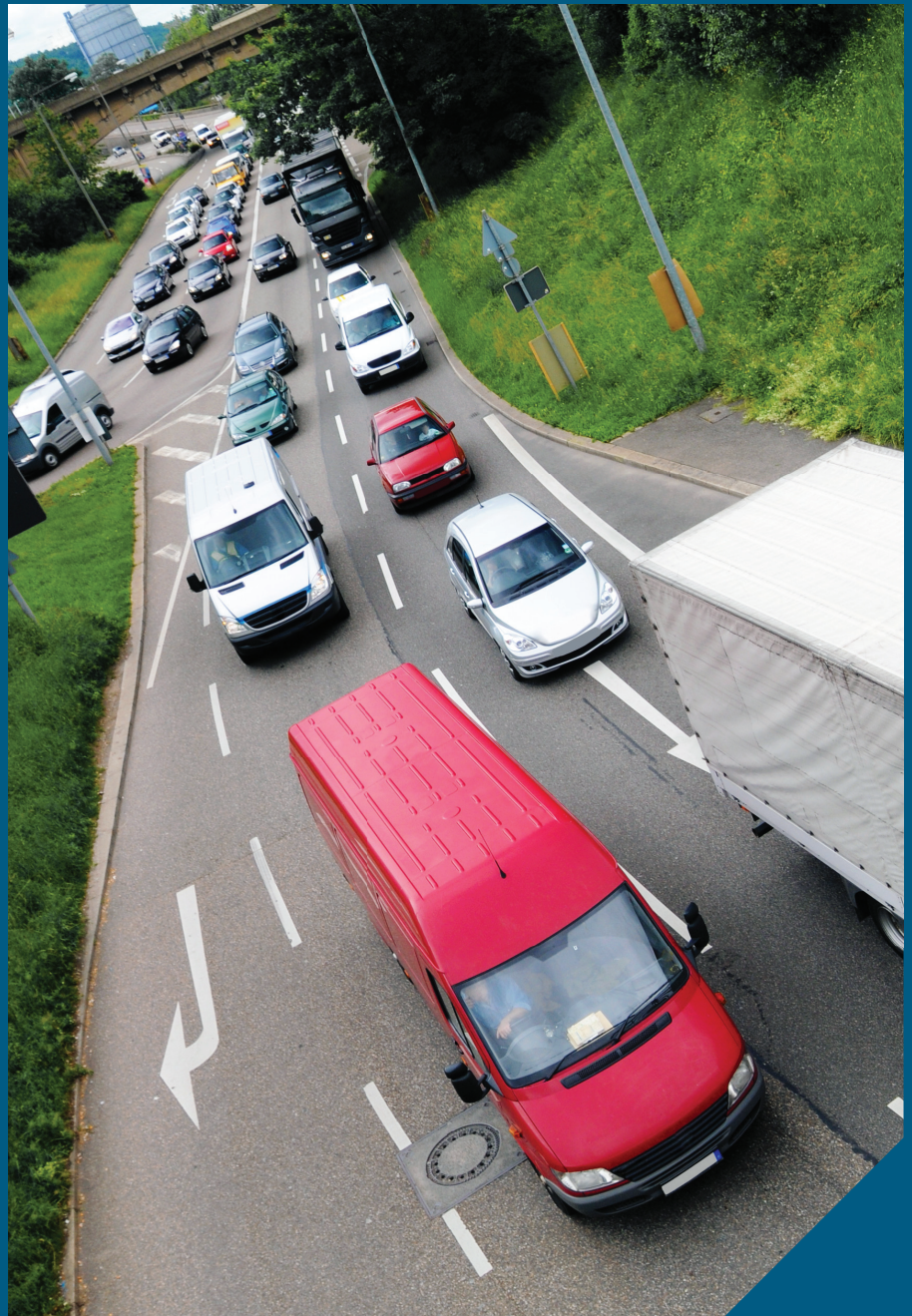


The NSG carries a definitive list of streets and primarily allows local authorities to manage all street works carried out by themselves and by statutory undertakers in an efficient manner on their network. The main aim of this is to reduce congestion and minimise any impact on the public.

The ultimate purpose of the NSG is to make the process of managing streets and street works more efficient for the benefit of road users and citizens.

Working closely with the Department for Transport, GeoPlace is now responsible for hosting street designations for the Primary Route Network. GeoPlace is also working with Transport for London and making information available on a new transport scheme designed to reduce congestion in London.

The two articles overleaf explain the role of GeoPlace and the NSG in these two initiatives.



Department for Transport hands over street designation repository to GeoPlace

Local knowledge and control of roads reduces traffic jams, enabling easier flow of people and vehicles through the road system. From April 2012, government handed over greater responsibility to local highway authorities for the management of the roads classification system.

To help with effective management of the road network and in order to aid road users' efficient navigation from one place to another, roads are organised and classified using the primary route network together with the roads classification system. This network provides easily identifiable routes to access the whole of the country.

While authorities had previously undertaken the majority of the work involved in reclassifying a road, they always needed to secure the agreement of the Department for Transport (DfT). Under this new approach, local authorities are now responsible for defining the primary route network, which designates roads between places of traffic importance and exercising the power to title 'A' and 'B' roads without the need for central approval.

In order to carry out these functions, local authorities need to fill in a single form, submit the form to GeoPlace along with any associated documental evidence and then enter it into the National Street Gazetteer (NSG). Only once the designation is entered in the NSG will it become valid.

GeoPlace has been requested to act on behalf of DfT to host the form, act as the central repository for receiving these applications, collate the information, and distribute it to the designated contacts within central government such as the DfT and Ordnance Survey.

Simon Bailey, NSG Custodian at GeoPlace commented "Local authorities are well placed in understanding their road networks and identifying the roads that are best suited for traffic. GeoPlace already works very closely with local authorities in maintaining and managing the NSG. Bringing together the recording system for roadworks, the primary road network and street classifications can only serve to benefit road users and reduce overall congestion".

Transport for London works with GeoPlace to reduce traffic congestion

GeoPlace is working with Transport for London (TfL) to make information available on a new transport scheme designed to reduce congestion in London.

Road congestion is a major issue for London's transport system, causing significant frustration for road users and affecting Londoners' quality of life. With around half a million holes dug in London's roads every year, it is not surprising that roadworks account for about a third of the Capital's most serious traffic disruption.

It is estimated that disruption from roadworks costs the Capital's economy around £750 million a year. Around £300 million of this is on London's busiest roads – the Transport for London Road Network (TLRN) or Red Routes – which, although only comprising around 5% of London's road network, carry over 30% of the traffic.

The vast majority of roadworks disruption on the TLRN is in fact concentrated on around half of its length. It is in these areas – identified as Congestion Management Areas (CMAs) – that TfL is keen to target additional measures and stronger incentives to deliver a real change in the industry so that works are planned and undertaken more efficiently.



Following approval from the Department of Transport, from 11th June 2012, TfL will operate a Lane Rental Scheme giving notice to works promoters and stakeholders of its intention to operate the Scheme. The introduction of a targeted 'lane rental' scheme will allow TfL to charge companies a daily fee for digging up London's busiest roads at the busiest times and will help incentivise more efficient working practices.

The scheme aims to minimise the amount of time that works disrupt traffic, either by ensuring works are carried out as speedily as possible, or by ensuring that more works are carried out outside of peak traffic hours and that roads are fully open at the busiest times. In the areas where lane rental charges apply, the proposed scheme will provide adequate time for works to be carried out without charge, therefore minimising the opportunity for costs to be passed onto the consumer.

Details about which streets are affected by the Lane Rental Scheme is available from the NSG website which is maintained and hosted by GeoPlace.

Details on the TfL Lane Rental Scheme have been included in the TfL ASD file which can be downloaded from the NSG website, this incorporates the locations subject to Lane Rental charges as special designations.

www.thensg.org.uk