

# Baldock bypass

opening on 16 March 2006



Baldock bypass  
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[www.hertsdirect.org/baldockbypass](http://www.hertsdirect.org/baldockbypass)





A bypass for Baldock was first proposed by Hertfordshire County Council many years ago. The route was agreed in 1993; the Public Inquiry was held in 1995; and permission was finally granted by the government in 2002. And now, in 2006, the bypass will be opening on 16 March, six months ahead of schedule.

Construction work started in April 2004. The tunnel is the main feature so we set up a viewing point on the bridleway near the A507 - the Buntingford road - so that people could follow the work as it progressed. First a 25m deep cutting was dug in the chalk hills, then the structure of the tunnel itself was built. This was finished in June 2005 and the soil was replaced on top. This work went very smoothly and the landscape of the Weston Hills, as seen from the A507, was restored by September 2005. The hedgerow has been replanted and the area has been returned to the farmer.



As part of the construction work, bridges w  
bridleways and footpaths. These pictures show t  
footbridge, during construction and at sunset in

In total we have moved approximately 1.5 million cubic metres of soil, but none of this has gone off site. It has all been used for landscaping - such as the environmental mounding at Clothall Common. By keeping all the soil on site we have saved hundreds of lorry journeys on local roads. We mixed batches of concrete on site, using a batching plant we set up near the Firs roundabout, which also cut down on the number of lorry journeys.



The new road is 6.3 km long and the tunnel is 240m long. The by-pass has been built as a dual carriageway to carry over 25,000 vehicles a day. It is expected that the number of vehicles passing through the town of Baldock will decrease by







re built to take local  
the new Weston Hills  
December last year.

between 48%  
and 69%, and  
this will in turn  
decrease the  
number of road  
traffic accidents in the town. Once the by-pass is  
open, the town centre will be improved and  
enhanced.



## Archaeology

Before the construction work started, a lot of  
archaeological work was carried out. We found  
the remains of Bronze Age burial mounds and  
part of the medieval hospital of St Mary  
Magdalene. We also found traces from the Iron  
and Stone Ages and from life in Roman times.  
Modern remains included some unexploded  
bombs from World War II, which were made safe  
by the Army's Bomb Disposal Unit.



## Looking after wildlife

Great care has been taken to look after the wildlife  
in the area. Tunnels under the road have been  
built for the badgers and special deer and badger  
proof fencing has been put up. A colony of  
common lizards was moved to a new location  
near Therfield and horseshoe vetch has been  
planted to attract chalk hill blue butterflies. Bat  
boxes have also been put up.

## Visiting the site

Many groups from local schools and organisations  
came on organised visits to the site, including  
pupils from most schools in Baldock. Members of  
the construction team have also given  
presentations at meetings and many local people  
came to the exhibition we held in St Mary's  
Church Hall in May 2004.

## Celebrating in the tunnel

Over 4000 people came to the 'Celebration in the  
tunnel' on December 11th last year. The event  
raised over £15,000  
for the Rotary Club of  
Baldock to  
distribute to local  
charities.





## The bypass opening

The Baldock bypass will be officially opened around lunchtime on Thursday 16th March. The occasion will be marked by a cavalcade of vehicles which will drive down the new road and through Baldock. The cones and bollards will then be removed in the early afternoon and you will be able to drive the whole length of the new road.

Some work will continue, particularly work at Letchworth Gate (Junction 9 of the A1M). Work is being carried out to improve traffic conditions at the interchange by building dedicated slip roads to and from the A1M and installing traffic lights on the northbound off slip. This work will continue until the late summer and some restrictions at the interchange will remain until that date.

As with all projects, traffic flows will be monitored after the road is open and if any problems need addressing, extra work will be carried out. In addition there will be improvement works in the area, especially in Baldock town centre, and the two local authorities, Hertfordshire County Council and North Herts District Council, are working together on this.

The opening is an exciting event for the town and the area and we hope you will soon notice a major reduction in the number of vehicles passing through the town.

## Further information

If you would like to see more about the work carried out before construction or about the progress of the construction work, please visit the Hertfordshire County Council website at [www.hertsdirect.org/baldockbypass](http://www.hertsdirect.org/baldockbypass)



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March 2006

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