

# MINISTERS BOTTLE BAN

# DUMB U-TURN ON SMART HIGHWAYS

By JONATHAN REILLY  
Political Correspondent

**KILLER smart motorways will be kept running after ministers shunned calls to bring back permanent hard shoulders.**

Transport Secretary Grant Shapps is set to unveil a host of extra safety measures including better technology – but there will be no end to using the emergency lane for high-speed traffic.

That is despite 38 people being killed on smart motorways in the past five years and coroners ruling them responsible for the deaths.

Smart motorways have been criticised because the hard shoulder is either permanently turned into a traffic lane or the lane is switched on or off to traffic depending on how busy the road is.

It means drivers who break down can be trapped in speeding traffic.

Highways England has admitted turning the hard shoulder on and off can be confusing and has promised to convert all smart motorways

## Killer roads will stay



**38**  
Number of people killed on "smart" roads in last 5 yrs

into all-lane running roads by the end of March 2025.

Last year, a BBC investigation found that on one section of the M25, the number of near misses had risen from 72 to 1,485 since the hard shoulder was removed in April 2014.

Speaking to a Panorama investigation last year, Mr Shapps said: "We absolutely have to have these as safe

or safer than regular motorways, or we shouldn't have them at all."

The Sun understands the new safety measures will be briefed to road safety charities today, with an announcement in the afternoon.

In March 2020, the Department for Transport

launched plans to increase the number of emergency refuge areas and upgrade the equipment that automatically detects a stopped vehicle within three years.

Just 37 miles of motorway have been fitted with this technology.

Coroner David Urpeth said in January smart motorways were an "ongoing risk of deaths" after Jason Mercer and Alexandru Murgeanu were killed by a lorry on the M1 near Rotherham.

And an inquest for Nargis Begum, 62, who died after a car she was travelling in broke down and was hit, has also been referred to the Crown Prosecution Service to consider investigating Highways England for possible corporate manslaughter charges.

It comes as Britain's pot-hole littered roads led to a three-fold jump in breakdowns this year, RAC figures show. Patrols helped 4,694 drivers who had probably broken down as a result of hitting a pothole in the first three months of 2021, up from 1,461 for the last three months of 2020.

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Better tech... Shapps



Victim... James Nash

## Killed by mentally ill spy fear attacker

By BEN LEO

A CHILDREN'S author was shot then beaten to death by a mentally ill neighbour convinced he was a Russian spy, an inquest heard.

James Nash, 42, was blasted by Alex Sartain, 34, with a home-made shotgun in his garden.

Parish councillor Mr Nash's head was then repeatedly stamped on. His killer also died later that day when he crashed his motorbike while being chased by police.

A post mortem on Mr Nash, who died three days later in hospital, found he had deflected the shot with his left hand but died from multiple blunt-force injuries.

Sartain's father John told the inquest his son believed his neighbour worked for Russian president Vladimir Putin.

Sartain also believed he was spied on by the CIA, MI6 and Nasa.

He had been detained under the Mental Health Act but was released three months before the killing in August at Upper Enham, Hants.

Mr Nash's widow Sarah told the Winchester hearing she heard the shot and ran to find Sartain stamping on his head. Verdict: Unlawful killing.

## Formula predicts Big C risk

AN algorithm has been created to predict the risk of prostate cancer based on a man's age, weight and history.

Other factors include smoking, ethnicity, serious mental illness, deprivation and diabetes.

The formula, based on a study of 800,000 men aged 25 to 84, also takes into account blood tests.

Prostate cancer kills 300,000 men worldwide each year.

It is hoped the new calculation, devised by researchers at Oxford University, will help save lives as current risk tests are unreliable.

Prostate Cancer UK said: "We need more accurate ways to detect these cancers earlier."

# THE OUTLINE KING



SHADOW BOXING

KENYA FEEL THE LOVE

THESE silhouette snaps look like they are taken from hit Disney film The Lion King.

But they were captured by Dubai photographer Priyanshi

By EMMA JAMES

Bachhawat Nahata at sunrise on Kenya's Masai Mara. They put other shots in the shade.

MASAI MARVEL

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### NAP FOR HEROES

NHS staff can have a power nap at work after a charity donation pool for a £4,000 sleeping pod at Poole Hospital, Dorset.

8 ABERDEEN

GLASGOW 9

sky NEWS HD WEATHER with NAZANEEN GHAFFAR

TODAY: Mist and fog across eastern areas of England will clear WED 14°

SUJIKO

Place the numbers 1-9 in the spaces so that the number in each circle is equal to the sum of the four numbers around it.

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