

Transport Act 2000(A)

Notice of consultation on a proposal to introduce a charging scheme at the Severn Bridges

The M4 and M48 Motorways (Severn Bridges Charging Scheme) Order 2017.

The Secretary of State for Transport gives notice that he proposes to make the following Order in exercise of the powers conferred by sections 163(3)(d), 167(1)(a) and (2)(a), 168(1), 171(1) and 171(2) of the Transport Act 2000.

The Severn Bridges Act 1992 does not allow for reductions in tolls, so we're introducing a Charging Order under the Transport Act 2000 to remove Value Added Tax (VAT) from the tolls. This is because after the end of the concession, it will no longer be necessary to include VAT. Charging will then continue until the end of 2018, at which point all charges at the crossings will be abolished, to enable costs incurred by taxpayers relating to the crossings – previously and over the final year of charging – to be recovered. We believe this represents the fairest arrangement, which balances the contribution made by users and taxpayers. This Charging Order will supersede the tolling scheme under the Severn Bridges Act.

The proposed Order establishes a charging scheme in respect of the roads carried on the English parts of the two Severn Bridges, commonly known as the Severn Bridge (being the westward carriageway of the M48 motorway from a point 500 metres east of the outer edge of the eastern abutment of the Aust Viaduct to the boundary with Wales, a distance of 3140 metres) and the Second Severn Crossing (being the westbound carriageway of the M4 motorway from a point 60 metres east of the Binn Wall to the boundary with Wales, a distance of 3055 metres.)

The proposed Order designates the roads in England which are carried by the bridges as the roads in respect of which charges are imposed under the Order ("the scheme roads").

The vehicle classes are determined by reference to the Road User Charging and Workplace Levy (Classes of Motor Vehicles) (England) (Regulations) 2001 (S.I. 2001/2793). The proposed new Order maintains the same exemptions for vehicles as included in the Severn Bridges Act.

The proposed Order also provides for advance payments in respect of charges for use of the scheme roads. Such agreements may provide for reduced charges.

From the date of coming into force of the new Order the charging regime shall be as follows:

CLASSES OF MOTOR VEHICLE AND CHARGES

<i>Class of Motor Vehicle and Description</i>	<i>Charge for each motor vehicle for a single journey from east to west</i>
Classes A ₁ , and A ₂ Including motor cars and motor caravans	£5.60
Classes A ₃ and A ₄ Including small goods vehicles and small buses	£11.20
Classes B ₁ and B ₂ Including other goods vehicles and buses	£16.70

It is proposed that the Order shall come into effect on 8 January 2018 and remain in force indefinitely. However the announced policy intention is that charging should only remain in place until the end of 2018, whereupon the Charging Order will be revoked.

COPIES of the following documents:

- This notice,
- The draft Charging Order: The M4 and M48 Motorways (Severn Bridges Charging Scheme) Order 2017
- a map of the location to which the order relates
- a statement setting out the Secretary of State's reasons for proposing the order

may be inspected free of charge at all reasonable hours from 19 September until 12 December 2017, at the following locations:

The Wales Office, 1 Caspian Point, Caspian Way, Cardiff, Wales, CF10 4DQ

Highways England, Temple Quay House, Bristol BS1 6HA

These documents can also be found at the website:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/severn-crossings-proposed-toll-reductions>

Any person may object to or make representation about the making of the Order not later than 12 December 2017 by writing to the Secretary of State, Severn Charging Scheme Order, Great Minster House, 33 Horseferry Road, London, SW1P 4DR or by email to severn.consultation@dft.gsi.gov.uk and stating the grounds of objection. In the preparation of an objection and the statement of grounds of objection it should be borne in mind that the substance of any objection or representation may be communicated to other people who are affected by it.