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## **MOTORISTS NEED MORE THAN JUST ROAD PRICING INCENTIVES**

**Motorists are to be offered financial incentives to take part in road pricing experiments. However, a better incentive would be the assurance of a road network not plagued with premature maintenance and repairs.**

Taken aback by the strength of feeling against road pricing, as demonstrated by the 1.8 million signatories on the recent Downing Street website petition, the Government is hoping to encourage volunteers to the pilot road pricing schemes by making the system financially attractive. The pilots are to be held in ten areas over the next few years including Bristol, Cambridge, Birmingham, Greater Manchester and Norwich.

Participating drivers will be offered a choice between paying motoring taxes or installing a road-pricing meter in the car that could save money. Amongst the ideas being considered is a discount on fuel duty in return for agreeing to pay a distance-based charge which could vary according to the level of congestion. Department for Transport officials are studying an American trial in Oregon where drivers who agree to pay a mileage charge have duty deducted from fuel bills.

This is all very well says Britpave, the transport infrastructure group, but a better incentive would be the assurance that the road network is worth being charge for. "Motorists directly paying for the use of roads would expect them to be worth paying for and not be subject to ongoing unscheduled road repairs and maintenance", said David Jones, director of Britpave.

Jones points out that for the majority of privately financed road schemes involving 30 year concessions, the private sector has opted for jointless concrete roads that are surfaced with easily renewed thin asphalt. This solution offers the best of both worlds: the long-term performance of concrete and the noise reduction properties of asphalt. The stiffness and strength of the concrete offers a pavement base that will last for a minimum of 50 years and although the thin layer asphalt would require replacement every ten years this is a simple night-time operation. This method of

construction has been used to great effect on some of the UK's most heavily trafficked routes such as the M6 Toll and the M25.

"This is a solution that results in less maintenance and less road works. There is a further tantalizing saving. Research shows that the smooth ride of such road construction results in significant fuel savings. These are real incentives for the direct paying motorists", said Jones.

*For further information on concrete transport solutions visit: [www.britpave.org.uk](http://www.britpave.org.uk).*

## **ENDS**

### Notes to editors

1. Britpave (British In-situ Concrete Paving Association) promotes the better and greater use of concrete for transportation solutions. Its members include major contractors, specialist equipment and material suppliers, consulting engineers and interested trade associations. Together they provide a single voice for the in-situ concrete paving industry. For further information see: [www.britpave.org.uk](http://www.britpave.org.uk)
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