

# Dartford – Thurrock River Crossing

## Discounted Charges for Local Residents using the Crossing



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## Discounted Charges for Local Residents using the Crossing

**Your views on the scheme invited**

**A consultation document**

**February 2008**

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# 1 Executive Summary

- 1.1 This document sets out, for consultation, our proposals for introducing a local discount scheme for use of the Dartford -Thurrock River Crossing. It seeks views, in accordance with Trunk Road Charging Schemes (Bridges and Tunnels) (England) Procedure Regulations 2001 on the proposed A282 Trunk Road (Dartford-Thurrock Crossing Charging Scheme) Order 2007 which has been modified in response to the previous consultation exercise in December 2006<sup>1</sup>.
- 1.2 The Dartford Crossing has brought huge benefits and opportunities to that part of the Thames Estuary. But it has also brought a lot of through traffic into the area, and some specific locations have experienced air quality problems.
- 1.3 In recent years the Government has made available a proportion of revenues from the Crossing to the Dartford and Thurrock local authority areas in recognition of the impact of the Crossing on residents. At present additional funding is made available to Kent County Council for Dartford (£1 million) and Thurrock Council (£0.75 million) to help deliver integrated transport projects in support of their Local Transport Plans.
- 1.4 During the consultation exercise strong support was expressed for a local discount scheme to allow local residents to benefit from a reduced charge for use of the Crossing. The Government announced in April 2007 that it was prepared to respond positively to this call, and to provide discounts to residents as an alternative to providing targeted local funding for Dartford and Thurrock.
- 1.5 This consultation document proposes, in summary, that:
- (i) Private cars should be eligible for discounts when used by residents of Dartford and Thurrock local authority areas.
  - (ii) There will be a £10 annual registration fee which will entitle residents of these areas to 50 free one-way journeys per year. Thereafter journeys will be charged at 20p each. (London charges the same annual £10 fee for those who make use of their residents' discount scheme).
  - (iii) To benefit from the discount residents will need to register annually and apply for an electronic "tag" that is fitted in the windscreen of the nominated vehicle. The tag will be provided free of charge but a £10 charge will be levied for replacement of lost or damaged tags.

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<sup>1</sup> *Proposed changes to charges at the Dartford-Thurrock River Crossing – consultation document – December 2006*

- 1.6 After implementation the Government will keep under review the effects of the local discount scheme, in particular on traffic and congestion levels.

**The local discount scheme will mean there will be three possible ways for car users to pay the charge**

**Local discount scheme** – only those living in areas designated for the discount may apply. Those choosing to use the scheme must register and pay an annual £10 registration fee, which entitles them to 50 free one-way journeys per year. For additional journeys the charge will be **20p per crossing**. An account will be set up and a “tag” provided. The tag will be registered to a single vehicle and may not be transferred between vehicles.

**Standard DART-Tag** – users may opt to set up an account and have a “tag” in their vehicle which triggers automatic payment of the charge when passing the barrier. These users will pay **£1 per crossing**. The Standard DART Tag scheme offers reduced rates for all users of the Crossing, regardless of where they live or what vehicle they are using. The DART-Tag may be transferred between cars. DART-Tags are currently issued free but with a requirement to buy £30 worth of trips (for cars). We are seeking views on whether to adjust the terms and conditions. (Dart tags are available for vans and lorries too.)

**Cash** – The charge will be **£1.50 per crossing** between 6am and 10pm. Free at night

- 1.7 The local discount scheme will be operated in addition to the current “DART-Tag” scheme, which offers reduced rates for all users of the Crossing, regardless of where they live or what vehicle they are using. The table below sets out the rates that will apply. These were the subject of our December 2006 consultation. It should be noted that, following the December 2006 consultation, it has been decided that the cash rate for lorries will be £3.70 and not £4.00 as originally proposed. The tag rate for lorries will be £3.20 as previously proposed.



Current and new cash and DART-Tag charges, for those not registered for the local discount scheme

	<b>Current day charge (6am – 10 pm)</b>	<b>Current night charge (10pm – 6am)</b>	<b>New day charges (6am – 10pm)</b>	<b>New night charges (10pm – 6am)</b>
<b>Cash Charge</b>				
Cars	£1.00 <sup>(1)</sup>	£1.00 <sup>(1)</sup>	£1.50	Free
2 Axle Goods	£1.80	£1.00 <sup>(1)</sup>	£2.00	Free
Multi Axle Goods	£2.90 <sup>(1)</sup>	£1.00 <sup>(1)</sup>	£3.70	Free
<b>Tag Charge</b>				
Cars	£0.93 <sup>(1)</sup>	£0.93 <sup>(1)</sup>	£1.00 <sup>(1)</sup>	Free
2 Axle Goods	£1.67 <sup>(1)</sup>	£0.93 <sup>(1)</sup>	£1.75	Free
Multi Axle Goods	£2.69 <sup>(1)</sup>	£0.93 <sup>(1)</sup>	£3.20	Free
<small>(1) Under current arrangements, vehicle charges are doubled if they are towing a trailer. The trailer charge will be removed.</small>				

- 1.8 The Government will make every effort to ensure that the new charges, including the local discount scheme, can be implemented in the autumn. Given that the Government has put forward a clear statement of its preferred approach, work has already started to put in place the necessary systems and processes. A further announcement about a start date for the new regime will be made at the end of the consultation period.

## 2. How to Respond

- 2.1 The consultation period began on 18th February 2008 and will run until 16th May 2008. Please ensure that your response reaches us by that date. If you would like further copies of this consultation document it can be found at [www.dft.gov.uk/roads/dartfordconsultation](http://www.dft.gov.uk/roads/dartfordconsultation) or you can contact the Department for Transport. Please send consultation responses to
- Julian Smith  
Dartford Consultation  
Zone 3/5  
Great Minster House  
76 Marsham Street  
London  
SW1P 4DR
- Telephone 020 7944 2259  
Fax 020 7944 2198  
Email [dartford.consultation@dft.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:dartford.consultation@dft.gsi.gov.uk)
- 2.2 When responding please state whether you are responding as an individual or representing the views of an organisation. If responding on behalf of a larger organisation please make it clear who the organisation represents, and where applicable, how the views of members were assembled.
- 2.3 A list of statutory organisations/stakeholders that we have sent this consultation to is included in this consultation document. If you have any suggestions of others who may wish to be involved in the consultation process please let us know.
- 2.4 This consultation has been produced in accordance with the principles of the Government's "Code of Practice on Consultation".
- 2.5 According to the requirements of the Freedom of Information Act (2000), all information contained in your response to this consultation may be subject to publication or disclosure. This may include personal information such as your name and address. If you want your response **or your name and address** to remain confidential, you should explain why confidentiality is necessary. Your request will be granted only if it is consistent with Freedom of Information obligations. An automatic confidentiality disclaimer generated by your e-mail system will not be regarded as binding on the Department.
- 2.6 A summary of responses to this consultation will be published on our website: [www.dft.gov.uk](http://www.dft.gov.uk) after the consultation period has closed. Paper copies will be available on request. The Government will then announce its conclusions following the consultation.

# 3. The Proposals in detail

## Background

- 3.1 In December 2006, the Department consulted on revised charges for the Dartford Crossing. That consultation<sup>2</sup> noted that:
- without any charges traffic levels would be substantially higher than they are now, leading to extensive congestion.
  - even with the current charge levels, usage levels are leading to regular congestion and occasional very severe congestion.
  - without action the likelihood of severe congestion will increase.
- 3.2 The consultation document proposed:
- an increase in charges for those paying by cash.
  - substantial reductions for those choosing to pay on account using a “DART -Tag” to register their charge.
  - the removal of night time charges for all vehicles, when congestion is less of a problem.
- 3.3 The intention was to continue to apply an effective pricing signal given growing congestion pressures while at the same time providing an incentive for more people to opt for alternatives to paying cash, thereby easing flow through the charging booths.

## Local discounts

- 3.4 In the run-up to the launch of the consultation local MPs suggested that local residents should benefit from a substantial discount for use of the Crossing. The Government invited views on this suggestion.
- 3.5 Substantial numbers of people expressed a desire to see a local discount scheme. Details are set out in the summary of responses to the December 2006 consultation, published on the DfT web site at <http://www.dft.gov.uk/consultations/closed/dftconsuldartford/dartsumconsul>

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<sup>2</sup> *Proposed changes to charges at the Dartford-Thurrock River Crossing – consultation document – December 2006*

3.6 On 2 April Dr Stephen Ladyman MP, Minister of State, said –

*“The Dartford Crossing has brought huge benefits over the years. But surrounding communities have borne the brunt of the added fumes and jams. We have registered the strong demand for local discounts expressed through the consultation and we accept in principle that there is a case for this, alongside the implementation of the other proposals in the consultation paper”.*

He made a commitment to develop a scheme for further consultation, noting that any scheme had to be fair to both local residents and the tax payer.

## Rationale

- 3.7 The Dartford Crossing has brought huge benefits and opportunities to that part of the Thames Estuary. But it has also brought a lot of through traffic into the area, and some specific locations have experienced air quality problems.
- 3.8 In recent years the Government has made arrangements for a proportion of revenues from the Crossing to be made available to deliver integrated transport policies in the Dartford and Thurrock areas. This was in recognition of the impact of the Crossing on residents. Kent CC (for Dartford) and Thurrock Council receive £1m and £0.75m respectively per annum on top of their regular capital allocations, to help deliver integrated transport projects in support of their Local Transport Plans.
- 3.9 The consultation exercise prompted a clear call that local people would like to see a discount scheme rather than funding through Local Transport Plans. Given the strength of views expressed the Government is prepared to offer a local discount scheme. This document describes the detailed arrangements.
- 3.10 The Government made clear in the 2006 consultation that if such a scheme were introduced then remaining overall revenues would go towards national transport projects, meaning that the locally targeted funding would be discontinued.
- 3.11 The scheme being proposed here for consultation offers discounts for private cars used by residents of Dartford and Thurrock local authority areas. We have used these boundaries as they include the most affected locations, and they reflect what underpinned the intention behind the current targeted funding regime. The Government believes that this is a proportionate approach which provides clarity about eligibility. The Government views the proposed boundaries as the maximum that could be justified.
- 3.12 As stated above the local discount scheme is available only to local people. But it will also be possible for *anyone, regardless of where they live*, to use the Crossing at rates well below the new cash charges (£1 for cars instead of the new £1.50 rate). To benefit from these rates users must apply to the Crossing operators for a standard DART-Tag. The table in the executive summary of this document sets out the rates.

- 3.13 The Government wishes to stress that the proposed scheme would be kept under review, and there should be no presumption that discount rights will be granted in perpetuity particularly if the arrangements are clearly causing significant additional traffic problems.
- 3.14 It is also important to stress that the Dartford local discount scheme should not be seen as a precedent for other congestion charging schemes. The combination of circumstances at Dartford makes the situation unique.

## Details

- 3.15 The following sections set out our proposals in detail for the local discount scheme.

### **Who should be eligible?**

- 3.16 Residents of Dartford Borough Council and Thurrock Council should be eligible for free journeys and discounts. Each resident may nominate one vehicle, and any vehicle may be nominated only once. In principle there is no limit to the number of vehicles that may be registered per household, provided there is satisfactory evidence that they are all for the personal use of people living at that address.
- 3.17 Leased and company cars may be eligible where evidence can be provided that they are for the private use of a resident. Similar tests will be applied as for the London Congestion Charging scheme's residents' discount scheme
- 3.18 Vans and Lorries will not be eligible for the local discount scheme, nor will cars used predominantly for business. (Users of these vehicles may still opt for the standard DART-Tag scheme.)

### **The level of discounts to be offered**

- 3.19 The Government proposes that local residents should be entitled to 50 free one-way journeys over the Crossing per year. Thereafter journeys will be charged at 20p each.

### **How it will work**

- 3.20 Those wishing to benefit from the local discount will need to register annually and agree to receive the discount on the terms offered. The registration process will check that applicants are eligible and that nominated vehicles are for their private use. There will be an annual registration fee of £10 per vehicle towards the costs of running the scheme. (TfL charge a £10 annual fee for their residents' discount scheme under the London Congestion Charge.) An account will be set up and users will need to put a minimum of £10 credit on their account.
- 3.21 On registration, residents will be issued with a "tag". The tag is a small plastic box that sticks to the windscreen. It may be used only in the nominated vehicle. No charge will be made for the tag, but if a tag is lost or damaged than a £10 charge will be imposed for a replacement.

3.22 When the vehicle passes through the booths at the Crossing, an automatic reader will “read” the tag. The barrier will rise if there are still free journeys on the account or if there is a positive balance. We envisage putting in place measures to alert users when their account is low to allow them time to top up before it reaches zero. Checks will be undertaken to ensure that only vehicles registered with the scheme benefit from the discount and appropriate measures will be taken in cases of abuse. There will be arrangements for dealing with change of address, change of vehicle etc.

### **Other points**

#### *Lorries*

3.23 The December 2006 consultation proposed a charge of £4 cash for lorries and £3.20 for those using the DART- Tag. The European Commission has questioned whether this effectively discriminates against overseas hauliers who are less likely to have a tag. This is arguable, but the Government has decided to change the cash rate to £3.70 to reduce the differential. We shall be exploring the potential for making tags more readily available to overseas hauliers to encourage more of them to use electronic payment and thereby avoid the need to stop for a cash transaction. The attached draft charging order has been modified from the version on which we consulted in December 2006 to reflect this change.

#### *Existing DART-Tags*

3.24 This paragraph refers to the existing DART-Tag scheme, not the local discount scheme. We are keen to encourage the use of electronic payment via the DART-Tag scheme to avoid cash payments where that makes sense. Under the new charging regime DART-Tag users with cars will pay £1 per crossing instead of the new cash charge of £1.50, which represents a significant incentive. We will be keeping the terms and conditions for the DART-Tag under review to see whether it provides the right balance of incentives while ensuring we take due account of costs, both of the tags themselves and of the administration of the account.

#### *Next steps – timing*

3.25 The Government had originally intended to implement changes to the charging regime in January 2008. The decision to introduce a local discount scheme means that this timescale has been extended to allow for a further consultation. Subject to the outcome of this consultation, the Government will make every effort to ensure that the new charges, including the local discount scheme, can be implemented in the autumn of 2008. This will also be dependent on being able to complete the necessary technical work to that timescale. A further announcement about the precise start date for the new regime will be made at the end of the consultation period.

## 4. Consultation Questions

- 4.1 The draft charging order is attached, and any comments on this are welcome. For the local discount scheme the Government seeks views specifically on:
1. *Eligibility, i.e. the discount area.*
  2. *The discounted rate, i.e. 50 free journeys per year then 20p per journey thereafter.*
  3. *The way that the scheme will operate.*
- 4.2 Please also suggest any alternative methods for reaching the objective and highlight any possible unintended consequences of the policy, and practical enforcement or implementation issues.
- 4.3 The Regulatory Impact Assessment can be found at Annex A. When responding to the consultation please comment on the analysis of costs and benefits giving supporting evidence where possible.

# 5 Code of Practice on Consultation

- 5.1 This consultation has been produced in accordance with the principles of the Government's Code of Practice on Consultation.
- 5.2 The code of practice sets out the following criteria:
- Consult widely throughout the process, allowing a minimum of 12 weeks for written consultation at least once during the development of the policy.
  - Be clear about what your proposals are, who may be affected, what questions are being asked and the time-scale for responses.
  - Ensure that your consultation is clear, concise and widely accessible.
  - Give feedback regarding the responses received and how the consultation process influenced the policy.
  - Monitor your Department's effectiveness at consultation, including through the use of a designated consultation co-ordinator.
  - Ensure your consultation follows better regulation best practice, including carrying out a Regulatory Impact Assessment if appropriate.
- 5.3 A full version of the code of practice is available on the Cabinet Office web-site at: [www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/regulation/consultation/code/index.asp](http://www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/regulation/consultation/code/index.asp)
- 5.4 If you consider that this consultation does not comply with the criteria or have comments about the consultation process please contact:

Andrew D Price  
Consultation Co-ordinator  
Department for Transport  
Zone 9/9 Southside  
105 Victoria Street  
London  
SW1E 6DT

email: [consultation@dft.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:consultation@dft.gsi.gov.uk)



## 6. List of those consulted

As required by the Procedure Regulations (SI 2001/2303) the following statutory consultees have been identified:

- Police Chief Constable for Essex
- Police Chief Constable for Kent
- Chief Officers of the Essex County Fire and Rescue Service
- Chief Officers of the Kent Fire Brigade
- East of England Ambulance Service
- Kent Ambulance NHS Trust
- Kent County Council
- Essex County Council
- Dartford Borough Council
- Thurrock Council
- London Development Agency
- East of England Regional Assembly
- South East Regional Assembly
- South East England Development Agency
- East of England Development Agency
- The Disabled Persons Transport Advisory Committee

<b>Summary: Intervention &amp; Options</b>		
<b>Department /Agency:</b> Transport/Highways Agency	<b>Title:</b> Impact Assessment of A282 Trunk Road (Dartford-Thurrock Crossing Charging Scheme) Order 2008	
<b>Stage:</b> Consultation	<b>Version:</b> 1	<b>Date:</b> 7 December 2007
<b>Related Publications:</b> Dartford-Thurrock Crossing Discounted Charges for local residents using the crossing December 2007 consultation		

Available to view or download at:

<http://www>.

Contact for enquiries: Martin Jones

Telephone: 020 7944 3970

What is the problem under consideration? Why is government intervention necessary?

The Dartford Crossing is a key link in the strategic road network, but it suffers from significant levels of congestion. Without intervention, traffic flows are estimated to rise to between 170,000 and 190,000 movements per day by 2016, up from current levels of 150,000 per day, and this will lead to worsening congestion. The problem is how to address this while reflecting the concerns of local people..

What are the policy objectives and the intended effects?

Overall the objective is to mitigate congestion, pending any future enhancement of capacity across the lower Thames. The Department will be starting a study considering the possibility of a new crossing in the area. Following consultation in December 2006 we will be increasing base tariffs to discourage non-essential use, while seeking to encourage more users to pay electronically, to minimise delays at the barriers. To reflect the impact of traffic and congestion on local people this consultation proposes a residents'discount scheme as part of the package.

What policy options have been considered? Please justify any preferred option.

This document compares:

Option 1: Apply the changes on which we consulted in December 2006 (ie increase charges payable in daytime, remove charges at times when traffic is very light and further encourage the use of DART-Tags) without a local discount scheme.

Option 2: Apply the changes in option 1 but with discounted travel for local residents as described in this consultation document.

When will the policy be reviewed to establish the actual costs and benefits and the achievement of the desired effects? Three years from the anticipated start date, in Autumn 2011, or before if necessary.

**Ministerial Sign-off** For consultation stage Impact Assessments:

*I have read the Impact Assessment and I am satisfied that, given the available evidence, it represents a reasonable view of the likely costs, benefits and impact of the leading options.*

Signed by the responsible Minister:

..... Date:

Summary: Analysis & Evidence	
Policy Option: 1	Description: Higher charges during peak hours, remove charges at times when traffic is very light and further encourage tag use

COSTS	<b>ANNUAL COSTS</b>	Description and scale of <b>key monetised costs</b> by 'main affected groups' Increase charge revenue of £7m pa to drivers, reflecting a financial transfer and not a net cost to society. (Note: there have been set up costs of around £4m to facilitate this option following the 2006 consultation but as these have already been incurred they are excluded from these calculations.)				
	<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="text-align: center; background-color: #cccccc;">One-off (Transition)</td> <td style="text-align: center;">Yrs</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">£</td> <td style="width: 100px;"></td> </tr> </table>		One-off (Transition)	Yrs	£	
	One-off (Transition)		Yrs			
	£					
<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="text-align: center; background-color: #cccccc;">Average Annual Cost (excluding one-off)</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">£</td> </tr> </table>	Average Annual Cost (excluding one-off)	£				
Average Annual Cost (excluding one-off)						
£						
<b>Total Cost (PV)</b>		<b>£ 0</b>				
Other <b>key non-monetised costs</b> by 'main affected groups' Cost of increased tag use to government, and administrative costs for additional tag users. Costs to users either in paying more or being inconvenienced by changing travel arrangements						

BENEFITS	<b>ANNUAL BENEFITS</b>	Description and scale of <b>key monetised benefits</b> by 'main affected groups' Increased charge revenue of £7m per year to government, reflecting a transfer and not a net benefit to society.				
	<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="text-align: center; background-color: #cccccc;">One-off</td> <td style="text-align: center;">Yrs</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">£</td> <td style="width: 100px;"></td> </tr> </table>		One-off	Yrs	£	
	One-off		Yrs			
	£					
<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="text-align: center; background-color: #cccccc;">Average Annual Benefit (excluding one-off)</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">£</td> </tr> </table>	Average Annual Benefit (excluding one-off)	£				
Average Annual Benefit (excluding one-off)						
£						
<b>Total Benefit (PV)</b>		<b>£ 0</b>				
Other <b>key non-monetised benefits</b> by 'main affected groups' Benefits to road users through reduction in congestion.						

**Key Assumptions/Sensitivities/Risks** There is a lack of robust evidence on the response of drivers to the proposals, and so the extent of congestion savings is not clear. Higher charges will generally deter traffic and mitigate congestion, lower charges will encourage traffic and add to congestion. But we have not been able to model the precise effects.

Price Base Year	Time Period Years	<b>Net Benefit Range</b> (NPV) £	<b>NET BENEFIT</b> (NPV Best estimate) £ 0m
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What is the geographic coverage of the policy/option?	England			
On what date will the policy be implemented?	Autumn 2008			
Which organisation(s) will enforce the policy?	enforced by barriers			
What is the total annual cost of enforcement for these organisations?	£			
Does enforcement comply with Hampton principles?	Yes			
Will implementation go beyond minimum EU requirements?	No			
What is the value of the proposed offsetting measure per year?	£			
What is the value of changes in greenhouse gas emissions?	£			
Will the proposal have a significant impact on competition?	No			
Annual cost (£-£) per organisation (excluding one-off)	Micro	Small	Medium	Large
Are any of these organisations exempt?	No	No	N/A	N/A

<b>Impact on Admin Burdens Baseline</b> (2005 Prices)		(Increase - Decrease)	
Increase of £ 0	Decrease of £ 0	<b>Net Impact</b>	£ 0

Key: Annual costs and benefits: Constant Prices

<b>Summary: Analysis &amp; Evidence</b>					
<b>Policy Option: 2</b>		<b>Description: Higher charges during peak hours, remove charges when traffic is very light, further encourage tag use, introduce local discount scheme</b>			
<b>COSTS</b>	<b>ANNUAL COSTS</b>		Description and scale of <b>key monetised costs</b> by 'main affected groups' Increase in revenues (from whole package, £5m pa to drivers), cost to local residents in loss of transport funding (£1.75m pa) but these are transfers, not net costs (see p7 below). Admin costs of local discounts (£1m pa - p10). Start up costs of £7m of which £4m has been incurred and therefore excluded from calculations.		
	<b>One-off (Transition)</b>	<b>Yrs</b>			
	£ 3m	2			
	<b>Average Annual Cost</b> (excluding one-off)				
	£ 1m (2007 prices)				
		<b>Total Cost (PV)</b>	<b>£ 5.7m (3 years)</b>		
Other <b>key non-monetised costs</b> by 'main affected groups' As for option 1					
<b>BENEFITS</b>	<b>ANNUAL BENEFITS</b>		Description and scale of <b>key monetised benefits</b> by 'main affected groups' Increased charge revenue (£5m per year to government) and savings in transport spending for government (£1.75m per year) which both represent transfers and not net costs to society.		
	<b>One-off</b>	<b>Yrs</b>			
	£				
	<b>Average Annual Benefit</b> (excluding one-off)				
	£ 0				
		<b>Total Benefit (PV)</b>	<b>£ 0</b>		
Other <b>key non-monetised benefits</b> by 'main affected groups' Possible benefits to road users through reduction in congestion of overall package (less than for option 1).					
Key Assumptions/Sensitivities/Risks The response of drivers to the proposals, and so the extent of congestion savings, is not clear. If local transport schemes generate positive returns, £1.75m would underestimate the costs for residents and so this impact would not only reflect a transfer.					
Price Base Year	Time Period Years	<b>Net Benefit Range (NPV)</b> £	<b>NET BENEFIT (NPV Best estimate)</b> £ -5.7m (3 yrs)		
What is the geographic coverage of the policy/option?			England		
On what date will the policy be implemented?			Autumn 2008		
Which organisation(s) will enforce the policy?			Highways Agency		
What is the total annual cost of enforcement for these organisations?			£		
Does enforcement comply with Hampton principles?			Yes		
Will implementation go beyond minimum EU requirements?			No		
What is the value of the proposed offsetting measure per year?			£		
What is the value of changes in greenhouse gas emissions?			£		
Will the proposal have a significant impact on competition?			No		
Annual cost (£-£) per organisation (excluding one-off)		Micro	Small	Medium	Large
Are any of these organisations exempt?		Yes/No	Yes/No	N/A	N/A
<b>Impact on Admin Burdens Baseline (2005 Prices)</b> (Increase - Decrease)					
Increase of	£ 0	Decrease of	£ 0	<b>Net Impact</b> £ 0	
Key:	Annual costs and benefits: Constant Prices			(Net) Present Value	

## Evidence Base (for summary sheets)

[Use this space (with a recommended maximum of 30 pages) to set out the evidence, analysis and detailed narrative from which you have generated your policy options or proposal. Ensure that the information is organised in such a way as to explain clearly the summary information on the preceding pages of this form.]

### **Title of proposal**

The A282 Trunk Road (Dartford-Thurrock River Crossing Charging Scheme) Order 2008, and associated proposals for a discount scheme for local residents.

### **Objective**

Through the proposed changes to the charging regime, to manage the growing demand for use of the Dartford-Thurrock River Crossing (hereafter referred to as "the Crossing") in order to mitigate congestion due to volume of traffic using the Crossing. In addition, to reflect the impacts of additional traffic and pollution that the crossing attracts to these areas by offering discounts to residents of Dartford and Thurrock

### **Background**

The Dartford-Thurrock River Crossing (the Crossing) consists of two two-lane tunnels carrying traffic to the north and a four-lane cable-stayed bridge (the Queen Elizabeth II Bridge) carrying traffic to the south. The Crossing spans the River Thames between Dartford and Thurrock, forming a trunk road link (the A282 Trunk Road) in the M25 orbital motorway. The Queen Elizabeth II Bridge at Dartford was opened in 1991 under a concession agreement. This agreement included taking over the operation and maintenance of the two existing Dartford Tunnels. The concessionaire was permitted to charge tolls until the debts associated with the construction of the bridge and tunnels had been fully discharged. Tolls finished in March 2003.

Prior to the expiry of the tolls, and following a consultation, the Government decided to implement a regulatory charge at the Crossing at broadly the same levels as the tolls, using powers in the Transport Act 2000. The reason for this was to manage the high demand for use of the Crossing.

The Department for Transport (DfT) has been reviewing the charging regime in the light of current traffic and congestion levels, likely future demand and broader transport policy considerations. The Government is proposing to maintain a charging regime, but better tailor it to manage traffic demand at the Crossing. In December 2006 the Government launched a consultation "Changes to Charges at the Dartford-Thurrock Crossing", which proposed increases in the cash charges for the use of the Dartford Crossing, while those opting to pay by "tag" and account would benefit from rates much closer to the current ones. The reason for encouraging more electronic payment was to reduce delays at the barriers. The consultation proposed a new Order to replace the existing charging Order: The A282 Trunk Road (Dartford-Thurrock River Crossing Charging Scheme) Order 2002.

### **Consultation**

In response to reactions to the December 2006 consultation the Government is launching a second consultation. In April 2007 the Department announced that it accepted the case in principle for a local discount scheme and agreed to consult further when proposals had been developed. This consultation will run for 12 weeks. This Impact Assessment (IA) forms part of the consultation.

Depending on the outcome of this second consultation, a final charging Order will be published accompanied by an IA and a statement of reasons for any changes.

### **Options considered at previous consultation**

The earlier consultation considered three options in connection with the charging regime at the Crossing.

#### **1. Continue with the current charging regime (do nothing)**

Research carried out on behalf of the Highways Agency has showed that without significant additional intervention, traffic levels are likely to increase steadily each year. By 2016, modelling suggests that traffic levels could be so high that 14 hours of congestion on the approaches to the Crossing could happen every day. These levels of congestion have been seen already and likelihood of them recurring will increase with time if there is no intervention.

#### **2. Discontinue all charging at the Crossing**

Research published in August 2001 by Brown & Root suggests that use of the Crossing would grow more rapidly still if there were no charge at the Crossing. Using 1997 as a base year they forecast that traffic would be 17.6% higher in 2003 if there were no charges at all, compared to if charging was maintained at the level at that time. Traffic increases of this scale would impede traffic flow at the Crossing and would be likely to trigger extensive periods of serious congestion even quicker than under the "do nothing" scenario.

#### **3. Introduce higher charges than present during the peak hours and remove charges at times when traffic is very light**

At current levels of charging, significant congestion is occurring at the Crossing and our forecasts suggest that this will get worse as demand for the Crossing increases. In the longer term, providing new capacity may be the way forward but such a solution could not be realised for at least 10 years, and action is needed in the meantime to manage congestion. The draft Order therefore proposed increasing charges for all vehicles between 6am and 10pm, when traffic levels are higher. Charges at night would be removed.

The initial consultation sought views on suggestions local MPs that local residents should benefit from discounts.

### **Outcome of first consultation**

Following the first consultation the Government announced its intention to proceed with the planned changes, but recognising the level of support for a local discount scheme the Government accepted the case for such a scheme and undertook to consult on the details.

### **Impact assessment for second consultation**

The following sections consider impacts for two options:

Option 1: The charging regime proposed in December 2006 without a local discount scheme; and

Option 2: The charging regime proposed in December 2006 with a local discount scheme.

These options are described in more detail below.

### **Sectors and groups affected**

The table below (table A.1) shows the average annual usage of the Crossing broken down by vehicle type (Cars, Heavy Goods Vehicles, Light Goods Vehicles and Motorcycles - 2005 data).

Table A.1 - Annual traffic volumes by vehicle class (2005/06)

Cars	HGVs	LGVs	Motorcycles	Total
39,332,683	6,170,427	8,190,637	365,923	<b>54,059,670</b>

Survey data from the Highways Agency indicates that 3% of trips over the Crossing are less than 30km, and so could be considered local trips. By contrast, 61% of trips are over 100km illustrating the strategic, rather than local, nature of the Crossing.

Businesses, commuters and leisure travellers who use the Crossing will all be affected. Local residents will also be affected by the influence of the Crossing on traffic in the surrounding area, and on local air quality.

### **Outline of new charges**

The differences between current and new charges are shown in the table (table A.2) below.

Table A.2 - Current and proposed cash and discounted charges (excluding local discount)

	<b>Current day charge (6am - 10 pm)</b>	<b>Current night charge (10pm - 6am)</b>	<b>Proposed day charges (6am - 10pm)</b>	<b>Proposed night charges (10pm - 6am)</b>
<b>Cash Charge</b>				
Cars	£1.00(1)	£1.00(1)	£1.50	Free
2 Axle Goods	£1.80(1)	£1.00(1)	£2.00	Free
Multi Axle Goods	£2.90(1)	£1.00(1)	£3.70	Free
<b>Tag Charge</b>				
Cars	£0.93(1)	£0.93(1)	£1.00	Free
2 Axle Goods	£1.67(1)	£0.93(1)	£1.75	Free
Multi Axle Goods	£2.69(1)	£0.93(1)	£3.20	Free
(1) Under current arrangements, vehicle charges are doubled if they are towing a trailer. The trailer charge will be removed.				

(Under the option involving a local discount scheme, eligible private cars will be entitled to 50 free one-way journeys across the crossing each year. Thereafter journeys will be charged at 20p per crossing.)

### **Compliance and enforcement**

The current regime depends on barriers for enforcement. There is no regime of civil penalties as exists, for example, for the London C-charge.

It is proposed to retain this arrangement. However there does need to be a mechanism to ensure that those benefiting from a local discount scheme are eligible for the discount. This would be done by an annual registration process (for which a £10 fee would be payable). Residents would need to prove that they live in the eligible area, and nominate their vehicles. A

“tag” would be issued that was linked with the registered number plate. ANPR would be used to ensure that the “tag” was being used in the correct registered vehicle. Abuse would be dealt with by withdrawal of privilege rather than by civil sanction.

### **Costs and Benefits of current options**

This section outlines the costs and benefits of each option. A number of the impacts arise from the payment of charges by road users. This represents a transfer of resources from the public to government, and so it should be noted that where such a charge, or change to a charge amount, is recorded as a benefit to one party, there will be stated a corresponding cost to the other party in the appropriate section.

Costs and benefits are assessed in comparison to the baseline case, whereby the current charging regime is maintained. The costs of congestion and delays for road users would continue and will increase with the crossing use. The mean daily traffic flow is estimated to be over 20% higher in 2016 than that experienced during 2004<sup>1</sup>. It has not been possible for this exercise to model the precise traffic impacts of the new charging regime, but what evidence we have indicates that there will be growing congestion pressures over time.

### **Option 1: Introduce higher charges than present during the peak hours, remove charges at times when traffic is very light and further encourage the use of DART-Tags**

Under this option, day toll charges will be increased as outlined in table A2. The financial incentive to use the DART-Tag system will be increased through a bigger discount to those using the system instead of a coin payment, and night time charges will be removed. Work will be carried out to improve the interoperability of the Dartford charging system with other emerging electronic charging systems. The issue of standard tags will be subject to a one-off £10 deposit.

#### **Costs**

##### *Set up costs*

There have been costs in overhauling the charging systems at Dartford to facilitate the change in charges and accommodate the expected increase in DART-Tag use. In carrying out this overhaul, some work is being carried out to improve the future interoperability of the DART-Tag system. However, this process is already underway to deliver the changes on which we consulted in December 2006 and does not fall within the scope of this consultation. The total cost of these elements of the overhaul is estimated to be around £4m.

##### *Road user charges*

The increase in charges will lead to a rise in costs for some users of the crossing. The effect on revenue is highly sensitive to the take up of tags (Tag-users (cars) will cross for £1 instead of £1.50) and the reduction in traffic from higher charges, which itself is influenced by the extent of tag use. In the absence of robust modelling of the impact on driver behaviour of the proposals, an indicative estimate in 2006 suggested that gross revenues might be around £76m in the first year of operating under the proposed charging regime, compared with annual revenue levels of £69m in 2005-06. This implies an overall increase in revenues of around £7m, but this would represent only a transfer and not a net cost to society. Revenue figures for 2006-07 are about £2 million lower than the previous year so the estimated increase may be an overestimate. It

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<sup>1</sup> Jacobs Baptie (2004) 'Getting the most out of the Dartford Crossing'  
<http://www.dft.gov.uk/consultations/closed/dftconsuldartford/>



should be noted that the charge revenues under both the changed regime and the baseline are likely to rise because of estimated increases in traffic, so these revenue figures are unlikely to be the same in future years.

In addition to an increase in charge revenues, there will be other costs to those who reduce their use of the Crossing following the increase in charges. Given that road users find their current use of the crossing to be preferable to the next best alternative, the fact that the change would make them alter their travel behaviour means that they would be made worse off (through added inconvenience or an increase in travel costs) compared to the baseline scenario. It has not been possible to quantify the overall impact on the welfare of road users because of uncertainty about reaction to the charges.

#### *Cost of tag use*

Under this option, we expect that more users would choose to use the DART-tag system. Registering for automatic payment schemes will incur some one-off administrative costs for these users. There will also be costs in the procurement and issuing of new tags. The costs of additional tag issues will be incurred by government under current terms and conditions.

#### *Cost to residents of increased night time traffic*

The proposed charging regime is likely to encourage more users to use the crossing at night time. An increased use of the Crossing at night could have implications for residents in the local area. The immediate area around the Crossing is not residential but any shift in travel patterns could lead to more activity in the surrounding area during the night - particularly freight travelling from the ports in Kent, Essex and Suffolk (Dover, Harwich and Felixstowe). However there are many influences on choice of travel time for freight operators including driver's hours and working time rules, night-time delivery restrictions at a local level, opening hours of depots and collection / delivery points so the impacts are uncertain.

### **Benefits**

#### *Increase in revenue*

As described above, the increase in charges might, at current traffic levels, increase toll revenues by around £7m. This can be seen as a benefit to government, but does not represent a net benefit to society as it is a transfer from road users.

#### *Reduced congestion*

At present, significant queuing occurs regularly at the crossing at times of peak use. We expect the effect of increased charges would be to discourage some non-essential journeys, thereby reducing traffic levels compared with what they would have been. This should help reduce delays and bring more consistent journey times. However, anyone opting for a Dart-tag will have a lesser incentive to avoid non-essential journeys as their charge will see only a very small change. It has not been possible to quantify these benefits.

Increasing the use of DART-Tags will at the margins improve traffic flows, producing further benefits to road users, as the automated system provides a faster way of proceeding through the toll gate. However, this is unlikely to have significant impacts at times when the crossing is already at capacity or suffering from heavy congestion. The overall benefit will depend on the balance between cash-payers and tag-users as cash-payers will be spending slightly longer at the barriers to make what will be a two-coin transaction.

The draft Order maintains the exemptions set out in the existing Order with 2 variations. It adds an exemption for vehicles operated by the Vehicle and Operator Service Agency (VOSA) and for any vehicles that they may require for escort duties through the crossing. The exemption for

a military vehicle currently applies only when the when the vehicles is operating in support of the police in the execution of duty. This is difficult to determine at the toll plaza and military conveyances can cause significant delays at the plazas. The exemption has been simplified, to reduce delays for all users on these occasions.

#### *Environmental Impacts*

Air quality and noise impacts will be affected by the number of vehicles on the Crossing and the level of congestion. The same applies for greenhouse gases. To the extent that it reduces traffic volumes, the increase in charges will reduce the environmental damage of road use. Impacts might be displaced to surrounding highways, or could be removed through modal switching (including car-sharing). However, in the absence of detailed modelling, the overall impact is uncertain, and it is not clear whether it would be positive overall. To the extent that traffic chooses to travel at night rather than in the day this will mitigate environmental impacts during the day but increase the impacts arising during the night.

#### Option 2: Introduce higher charges than present during the peak hours, remove charges at times when traffic is very light, further encourage the use of DART-Tags, and introduce a local discount scheme

Under this option, the main charging regime will be as for option 1, but a discount scheme for local residents is added. The details of costs and benefits are not repeated, but mentioned only where they differ from option 1.

There is an infinite range of possible options for a local discount scheme. The main variables are: who should benefit from the discount (ie where do they live); how much should they pay; and what administration charges should be payable.

The Government's proposal is that residents of the Dartford and Thurrock local authority areas should be eligible for discounts when using cars. Each resident will pay a £10 annual registration fee and be entitled to 50 free one-way journeys across the crossing each year. Thereafter journeys will be charged at 20p per crossing. To benefit from the discount residents will need to register annually and apply for an electronic tag that is fitted in the windscreen of the nominated vehicle. The tag will be registered to a specific vehicle. If it is used in the wrong car the benefits will be foregone. Discounts will be available for private cars only. Lease and company cars can be included provided there is evidence that they are for the personal use of the resident.

#### **Costs**

##### *Set up costs*

We estimate that the additional set-up costs attributable to the local discount scheme will be around £3m, spread over 2007-08 and 2008-09. It should be noted that some of these costs have already been committed.

##### *Road user charges*

For option 1 we have estimated the increase in revenues at around £7 million per year. Based on current patterns of use and assuming that the scheme is taken up by everyone for whom the annual savings would exceed the registration fee, an indicative estimate suggests that the local resident discount scheme could reduce charge revenues by about £2m per annum compared

with option 1 (ie the overall increase would be around £5 million per year). However, the actual figure will depend upon uptake and the extent to which beneficiaries make additional journeys.

#### *Cost of increased tag use*

Under this option, all users of the local discount scheme will need a tag and this cost will be borne by Government. We estimate that around 150,000 vehicles will be eligible, though not all will be registered. We do not know how many people will apply for the discount but the cost of tags is a little over £10 each, so 100,000 applicants would cost the Government over £1 million for tags. This would be in addition to the costs presented for option 1.

#### *Cost of discount scheme administration*

A rough estimate indicates that the administrative costs incurred in operating the local discount scheme and ensuring that it is not being abused will be around £10 per account per year. If 100,000 vehicles registered, it would imply administrative costs of about £1 million per year. The annual registration fee of £10 will ensure that these costs are foregone by those gaining the discount.

#### *Cost to residents of reduced local transport budget*

At present, additional funding is made available to Kent County Council and Thurrock Council in support of their Local Transport Plans. They receive a combined total of £1.75m per annum in addition to their regular capital allocations. The discount scheme would replace this funding. It is difficult to assess the exact costs of this change for residents without knowing the benefits which would have arisen from the spending of this budget but they are likely to be spread across a different subset of the resident population in comparison to the benefits (relative to option 1) of the local discount scheme that replaces the existing redistributive arrangement.

### **Benefits**

#### *Increase in revenue for government*

As described above, the increase in charges might, at current traffic levels, increase toll revenues by around £7m per year, given current use. With the local discount, this impact might be reduced to around £5m, based on an indicative estimate. This can be seen as a benefit to government, but does not represent a net benefit to society as it is also reflected in the costs to road users.

#### *Reduced congestion*

Compared to option 1, benefits of reduced congestion under this option (compared with what it would have been without overall charge increases) will be offset to the extent that the local discount scheme encourages more use of the crossing at peak times among residents. The Government has made clear in the consultation document that it will keep the proposed scheme under review, and there should be no presumption that discount rights will be granted in perpetuity particularly if the arrangements are clearly causing significant additional traffic problems.

#### *Reduced transport spending*

Withdrawal of the additional funding currently made available to Kent County Council and Thurrock Council in support of their Local Transport Plans would reduce the Government's expenditure.

### *Environmental Impacts*

Should the local discount scheme encourage greater use of the Crossing compared to option 1, the overall environmental impacts could be worse, although the impact compared to the baseline scenario would still be uncertain.

### **Distributional Issues**

The previous arrangement, whereby DfT earmarked £1.75 million of revenues annually to help fund local transport schemes, was intended to reflect the impacts of the Crossing on local people. Replacing this arrangement with a local discount scheme means that the benefits will be distributed in a different way. The benefits of the discount for residents may be around £2m per year, based on numbers of car journeys currently made by local residents. Under the discount scheme the benefits will be realised by those who choose to take up the scheme and use the crossing. Therefore, the benefit is received by a different, but possibly overlapping, subset of the residents than under the current arrangements.

### Specific Impact Tests: Checklist

Use the table below to demonstrate how broadly you have considered the potential impacts of your policy options.

**Ensure that the results of any tests that impact on the cost-benefit analysis are contained within the main evidence base; other results may be annexed.**

Type of testing undertaken	<i>Results in Evidence Base?</i>	<i>Results annexed?</i>
Competition Assessment	No	Yes
Small Firms Impact Test	No	Yes
Legal Aid	No	Yes
Sustainable Development	No	No
Carbon Assessment	No	No
Other Environment	No	Yes
Health Impact Assessment	No	No
Race Equality	No	Yes
Disability Equality	No	Yes
Gender Equality	No	Yes
Human Rights	No	No
Rural Proofing	No	No

## Annexes

### **Competition Assessment**

It is not thought that the proposals would have a significant impact on competition, as only private cars would be eligible for discounts. Leased and company cars would only be eligible where evidence can be provided that they are for the private use of the resident.

### **Small Firms Impact Test**

As part of the consultation process we will be taking views of small firms in the area which may be affected by the proposed price increases.

### **Carbon Assessment**

The proposals are likely to affect the number of cars using the Crossing, and will affect the extent of congestion there and in surrounding areas. They may also influence wider transport patterns, in terms of choice of mode, route, and trips. Therefore, they will have an impact on emissions of greenhouse gases from road transport and, to a lesser extent, other modes of transport. In the absence of robust modelling, it is not possible to determine the nature or scale of these impacts.

### **Other Environment**

Air quality, greenhouse gas emissions and noise impacts will be affected by the number of vehicles on the Crossing and the level of congestion. To the extent that it reduces traffic volumes, the increase in charges will reduce the environmental damage. Current environmental costs falling upon local residents might be passed on to surrounding highways, or could be removed through modal switching (including car-sharing). However, in the absence of detailed modelling, the overall impact is ambiguous, and it is not clear whether it would be positive overall. To the extent that traffic chooses to travel at night rather than in the day this will mitigate environmental impacts during the day but increase the impacts arising during the night.

### **Legal Aid**

The current regime depends on barriers for enforcement. There is no regime of criminal offences or civil penalties as exists, for example, for the London C-charge. As such there will be no impact on legal aid of the proposals.

### **Race, Disability and Gender Equality**

There are not expected to be any impacts on race, disability or gender equality of the proposals.

## DRAFT ORDER

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### STATUTORY INSTRUMENTS

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## 2008 No. X

### HIGHWAYS, ENGLAND

#### The A282 Trunk Road (Dartford-Thurrock Crossing Charging Scheme) Order 2008

*Made* - - - - 2008

*Coming into force* - - 2008

The Secretary of State for Transport makes the following Order in exercise of the powers conferred by sections 167, 168, 171 and 172(2) of the Transport Act 2000(a).

In accordance with section 170 of that Act she has consulted with representatives of those whom she considers likely to be affected by the Order.

1. This Order may be cited as the A282 Trunk Road (Dartford-Thurrock Crossing Charging Scheme) Order 2007 and shall come into force on \*\* 2008, and shall remain in force indefinitely.

2. In this Order—

(1) all measurements of distance are measured along the route of the relevant highway;

(2) “the plan” means the plan numbered \*\*, marked “The A282 Trunk Road (Dartford-Thurrock Crossing Charging Scheme) Order 2008”, signed by authority of the Secretary of State for Transport, and deposited at DfT Records Management Branch, Floor 13 (IMD), Ashdown House, St Leonards on Sea, Hastings, East Sussex TN37 7GA; and

(3) “local resident” means a person who permanently resides in the borough of Dartford or Thurrock.

(4) “the charging regime” means, from xx 2008 to xx 2008, those charges set out in Schedule 2 and from xx 2008 onwards means the charges set out in Schedule 3.

(5) From xx 2008 the length of highway set out in Schedule 1 (“the Crossing”) and indicated on the plan, shall become subject to the charging regime.

(6) The charging regime may be varied by the Secretary of State in the time and manner set out in Schedule 4.

3. The motor vehicles described in Schedule 5 shall be exempt from the charging regime.

4.—(1) The Secretary of State (or his agent) may enter into agreements (“composition agreements”) under which persons compound in advance, on such terms as may be provided by the agreement, for the payment of charges on a motor vehicle with respect to the use of the Crossing.

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(a) 2000 c.38.

(2) The composition agreement may relate to use on such number of occasions, or during such period, as may be provided by the agreement, and may provide for a reduction to the charges set out in the charging regime.

(3) Any composition agreement as described in (1) offered by the Secretary of State or his agent must be offered on the same terms to all persons seeking to enter a composition agreement in relation to the use of the Crossing.

5.—(1) The Secretary of State (or his agent) may enter into agreements (“local resident’s agreement”) under which local residents may compound in advance, on such terms as may be provided by the agreement, for the payment of charges on the motor vehicle specified in that Agreement, with respect to the use of the Crossing.

(2) A local resident’s agreement may relate to use on such number of occasions, or during such period, as may be provided by the agreement, and may provide for a reduction to, or exemption from, the charges set out in the charging regime.

(3) Any local resident’s agreement as described in (1) offered by the Secretary of State or his agent must be offered on the same terms to all persons seeking to enter a local resident’s agreement in relation to the use of the Crossing.

6. Nothing in this Order shall prevent the Secretary of State from suspending this Order at any time when such suspension is considered necessary for the purpose of facilitating the movement of traffic or in the interests of the safety of the public.

7. The A282 Trunk Road (Dartford- Thurrock Crossing Charging Scheme) Order 2002(a) is revoked.

Signed by authority of the Secretary of State

2008

Parliamentary Under Secretary of State  
Department for Transport

## SCHEDULE 1

### LENGTH OF HIGHWAY SUBJECT TO THE CHARGING REGIME

The length of highway subject to the charging regime is a length of the A282 Trunk Road of approximately 3.5 kilometres from a point below the north face of the bridge carrying Crossways Boulevard over the Trunk Road at Junction 1a at Dartford in the County of Kent, and extending northwards to a point approximately 300 metres north of where it crosses London Road at West Thurrock in the County of Essex, the highway being labelled A on the plan, and carried through twin tunnels beneath the River Thames and on the Queen Elizabeth II bridge over the River Thames.

## SCHEDULE 2

### CHARGING REGIME A

1. In the Table below the class of motor vehicle is that defined in The Road User Charging and Workplace Parking Levy (Classes of Motor Vehicles) (England) Regulations 2001(b).

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(a) S.I. 2002/1040.

(b) S.I.2001/2793.



DARTFORD – THURROCK RIVER CROSSING  
DISCOUNTED CHARGES FOR LOCAL RESIDENTS USING THE CROSSING

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2. There shall be no charge for any vehicle from 2200 hours up to but not including 0600 hours.

<i>Item</i>	<i>Class of Motor Vehicle and Description</i>	<i>Charges for a single journey using the Crossing</i>
A	Classes A(a) and B(a) For each moped, or motorcycle.	Free
B	Classes A(b) and B(b) For each Item A vehicle which is towing a trailer.	Free
C	Classes C(a), D(a), E(a), L(a), M1(a) For each motor tricycle, light quadricycle, quadricycle, motor caravan or with at least four wheels and no more than eight seats in addition to the drivers seat.	£1.00
D	Classes C(b), D(b), E(b), L(b), and M1(b) For each Item C vehicle which is towing a trailer.	£2.00
E	Classes NAB(1)(a) and MAB(1)(a) For each light goods vehicle, or motor coach or omnibus with more than eight seats in addition to the driver's seat, having no more than two axles.	£1.80
F	Classes NAB(1)(b) and MAB(1)(b) For each Item E vehicle which is towing a trailer.	£3.60
G	Classes NAB(2)(a), NAB(3)(a), MAB(2)(a) and MAB(3)(a). For each heavy goods vehicle, or motor coach or omnibus with more than eight seats in addition to the driver's seat, having more than two axles.	£2.90
I	Classes NAB(2)(b), NAB(3)(b), MAB(2)(b) and MAB(3)(b) For each Item G vehicle which is towing a trailer.	£5.80

## SCHEDULE 3

### CHARGING REGIME B

1. In the Table below the class of motor vehicle is that defined in The Road User Charging and Workplace Parking Levy (Classes of Motor Vehicles) (England) Regulations 2001.

2. There shall be no charge for any vehicle from 2200 hours up to but not including 0600 hours.

<i>Item</i>	<i>Class of Motor Vehicle and Description</i>	<i>Charge for each motor vehicle for a single journey using the Crossing</i>
A	Classes A(a), B(a), C(a) D(a) and E(a). Including mopeds, motorcycles, motor tricycles, light quadricycles and quadricycles.	Free
B	Classes, L(a), M1(a). Including motor caravans, or motor cars with at least four wheels and no more than eight seats in addition to the driver's seat.	£1.50
C	Classes NAB(1)(a) and MAB(1)(a)	£2.00

Including light goods vehicles, or motor coaches or omnibus with more than eight seats in addition to the driver's seat, having no more than two axles.

- D Classes NAB(2)(a), NAB(3)(a), MAB(2)(a) and MAB(3)(a) £3.70  
Including heavy goods vehicles, motor coaches or omnibus with more than eight seats in addition to the driver's seat, having more than two axles.

## SCHEDULE 4

### VARIATION OF THE CHARGING REGIME IN LINE WITH THE RETAIL PRICE INDEX

1. In this Schedule—

(1) “the base month” means the month of December; and

(2) “the revision date” means the day immediately following the end of the period of two months beginning with the 1st day of the base month.

2. On or within the period of twenty-one days following—

(1) the first revision date after the charging regime has been in operation one full year; and

(2) each succeeding revision date falling within the duration of this Order;

the Secretary of State may make a variation order fixing the amounts of the charges in respect of all classes of vehicles in respect of which charges are leviable.

3. Subject to the following provisions of this Schedule, the amount of the charge to be fixed by the variation order in respect of each class of vehicles shall be an amount arrived at by increasing the amount applicable in the case of that class in the charging regime by the same percentage as the percentage increase between the retail prices index for December 2007 and the retail prices index for the base month in relation to the revision date in question.

4. Any amount which falls in accordance with paragraph 3 to be fixed by a variation order under this Schedule—

(1) if it is neither a multiple of ten nor an amount which on division by ten produces a remainder of five shall be rounded to the nearest ten pence; and

(2) if it is an amount which on division by ten produces a remainder of five, shall be increased by five pence.

5. Where the amount of any charge which, in accordance with the preceding provision of this Schedule, falls to be fixed by a variation order made under this Schedule in respect of any class of vehicles exceeds that in force under the last previous variation order so made, the new variation order may fix an amount which does not implement the increase or implements it only in part.

6. A variation order made under this Schedule shall come into force on the 1st day of April.

7. The Secretary of State shall give not less than 7 days notice of his intention to implement the variation by publishing a notice thereof in at least one local newspaper circulating in the relevant area and in the London Gazette.

8. References in this Schedule to the retail prices index means the monthly United Kingdom Index of Retail Prices (for all items) published by the Office for National Statistics; and if that index is not published for any month those references shall be read as references to any substitute index or index figures published by that Office for that month.

## DESCRIPTIONS OF MOTOR VEHICLES EXEMPT FROM THE CHARGING REGIME

1. The following descriptions of motor vehicles are exempt from the Charging Regime—
- (1) a police vehicle, identifiable as such by writing or markings on it or otherwise by its appearance, or being the property of the Service Authority for the National Criminal Intelligence Service or the Service Authority for the National Crime Squad and issued with a Registration Certificate, being used in the execution of duty;
  - (2) a military vehicle, that is, a vehicle used for army, naval or air force purposes, while being driven by persons for the time being subject to the orders of a member of the armed forces of the Crown;
  - (3) a fire engine as defined by paragraph 4(2) of Schedule 2 the Vehicle Excise and Registration Act 1994<sup>(a)</sup> being used in the execution of duty;
  - (4) a vehicle which is kept by a fire authority as defined by paragraph 5 of that Schedule being used in the execution of duty;
  - (5) an ambulance as defined by paragraph 6(2) of that Schedule being used in the execution of duty;
  - (6) a vehicle which is kept by a health service body as defined by paragraph 7 of that Schedule being used in the execution of duty;
  - (7) invalid carriages as defined by paragraph 18 of that Schedule;
  - (8) vehicles used by or kept for use by or for the purpose of a disabled person as defined by paragraph 19 of that Schedule;
  - (9) vehicles used for the carriage of disabled persons by recognised bodies in accordance with paragraph 20 of that Schedule;
  - (10) an omnibus being used for a local service as defined by section 2 of the Transport Act 1985<sup>(b)</sup> and
  - (11) a vehicle being used in connection with—
    - (a) the collection of charges; or
    - (b) the inspection, safety, maintenance, improvement or renewal of or other dealing with the length of highway described in Schedule 1 or any structure, works or apparatus in, on, under or over that length of highway.
  - (12) a vehicle used by or escorted by the Vehicle and Operator Service Agency in the execution of duty.

### EXPLANATORY NOTE

*(This note is not part of the Order)*

Section 167(2)(a) of the Transport Act 2000 authorises the Secretary of State to operate a road charging scheme at the Dartford-Thurrock Crossing. Road charges are currently levied in accordance with The A282 Trunk Road (Dartford- Thurrock Crossing Charging Scheme) Order (SI 2002/ 1040).

This Order revokes the 2002 Order and creates revised charges and new provisions to enable a local discount scheme to be operated. It also revises the exemptions for certain classifications of vehicles and military vehicles.

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(a) 1994 c.22.  
(b) 1985 c. 67.