

## Classic Cars and Smart Motorways

You will probably have heard the controversy about breakdowns on Smart Motorways.

The main difference between a smart motorway and a normal motorway is that a smart motorway doesn't have a hard shoulder for use in case of a breakdown. Normal roads have verges, gateways and the like to pull off on to, normal motorways have a hard shoulder, but smart motorways have none of these.

Coupled with that, when compared with normal roads motorways have much more traffic, the traffic is travelling at much higher speeds, and drivers are often less alert than they might be, simply following the car in front of them – often too closely.

This produces a problem specific to smart motorways in that if you have a breakdown you can be stopped in a live lane, but the smart motorway isn't always smart enough to stop the traffic. Therefore you are at risk of having another car run into the back of you.

That is true of any car, but you should be aware that the sort of safety features built into modern cars had not been invented when the classics were built, so the result of any such accident in a classic car could be more severe.

Technology has advanced so much that breakdowns in today's cars are virtually unknown, but classics are typically around 50 years old and that wasn't the case 50 years ago.

Whilst our classic cars are generally reliable and the likelihood is you won't have any problems, we can't guarantee that.

Therefore it makes sense to plan your journey such that you avoid smart motorways.

There is a lot of advice about smart motorways on the internet. The RAC have <https://www.rac.co.uk/drive/advice/driving-advice/smart-motorways> which includes a section detailing locations of smart motorways, and the government's advice can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/how-to-drive-on-a-smart-motorway>

We can't confirm the accuracy of those sites or advice, but one comment is that it would seem sensible get your passenger to ring 999 if you think you are going to have to stop. That gives the control centre longer to close the lane than if you wait until you are stopped.