

Daughter of woman killed on M1 near Sheffield calls for smart motorway system to be scrapped

The daughter of a woman who was killed on the M1 smart motorway near Sheffield has said the system should be scrapped.

[By Dan Hayes](#) Tuesday, 18th February 2020, 6:00 am

Nargis Bashir, 62, of Darnall, was killed in a crash near Woodall services in September 2018, after she and her husband had broken down in a so-called 'live lane'.

The smart motorway or all-lane running system is meant to close obstructed lanes by informing drivers of blockages using overhead gantry signs.

But the lane Nargis and her husband were in stayed open for 17 minutes until their car was hit by another driver, and she was tragically killed.



A 16-mile stretch of the M1 is now an all lane running 'smart motoway'.

Nargis' daughter, Saima Akhtar, 38, is now campaigning for smart motorways scrapped before more lives are lost.

She said: "We have lost something that nothing can replace. Our lives have been torn apart and it could have been avoided had Highways England done their job.

"The smart motorways are not working and they are not fit for purpose. People need to know their family is at risk every time they travel on it."

As well as her husband, Nargis left behind five children and nine grandchildren, and was a much-loved and respected figure in the Darnall community which the family called home.

Saima said: “She was our world. She brought up my daughters when I was at work.

“But it has been a massive loss to the community as a whole as well. Everybody looked up to her.”

Smart motorways have been [criticised over recent months and years](#) after it was revealed that 38 people had lost their lives on the network over the last five years.

Campaigners including Claire Mercer, who lost her husband Jason last June after he was killed on the same stretch, have called repeatedly for the system to be scrapped.

She is now [spearheading a campaign](#) calling for a judicial review of the system.

“The smart motorway system needs to be stopped,” added Saima.

“People are in danger and it is not safe. We will do everything in our power to stop it.”

To find out more about the campaign or donate, visit <https://www.crowdjustice.com/case/smart-motorway-jr>.