**Toll relief road 'has failed' report claims**

**A privately-built toll road, which was hailed as the answer to congestion on Britain's motorways, has been an expensive failure according to a new study published today.**

 By [David Millward](http://www.telegraph.co.uk/journalists/david-millward/), Transport Editor Guardian.co.uk, 31 Aug 2010

Traffic jams around Birmingham are at least as bad as they were before the road was opened as motorists refuse to pay to use the 27-mile stretch which was intended to end gridlock on the M6.

The M6 toll road, which runs around the north west of Birmingham, opened in December 2003. It was designed to take some pressure off one the busiest stretches of the motorway in Britain.

When it opened, drivers were charged £2 to use the road. A series of above inflation increases has seen the bill rise to £5. This has coincided with the number of motorists willing to pay falling dramatically, the study says.

In the spring of 2006 it attracted just under 60,000 drivers a day. By the start of this year, the figure had fallen to just over 40,000, marginally more than when the toll opened.

Those who are willing to pay can enjoy a far quicker journey during the rush hour, especially when travelling southbound when using the relief road takes around 40 minutes - about half the time needed on the M6. But at other times the time saving is marginal - in many cases little more than five minutes. This, the Campaign says, means the toll is poor value for the motorists.

Meanwhile there is little evidence of congestion easing significantly on the M6 itself, the report says. Any gains which might have been made have been eroded by steadily increasing traffic levels. .

"The M6 Toll has provided so little congestion relief that the Highways Agency has been forced to allocate hundreds of millions of pounds for additional capacity,"

However an AA spokesman defended the M6 toll road. "Drivers who use it are happy to pay the premium, because it avoids the horribly lorry-congested M6.

**Tasks**

1) Draw an accurate supply and demand diagram to explain what is happening in this article.