

**HEREFORDSHIRE COUNCIL
Highway Maintenance Plan
April 2024**

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Definitions:

Defect	Anything that a reasonable person can see and would recognise as a defect in the highway asset, the scope of which is defined in Table 4.
Defect Risk Assessment	The assessment of defects by a competent person to establish the risk to highway users in accord with using Section 9 and Table 7 of this plan.
Inspection	Observation of the highway in accordance with this plan by a competent person in the employ of Herefordshire Council as the highway authority or its agent. These may be driven, walked or cycled as set out in Table 2.
Temporary Repair	Repairs that are intended to address the immediate risk posed by the defect and are expected to fail earlier than the duration of the remaining asset lifecycle. Temporary Repairs are to be followed by a Permanent Repair in accord with the timescales set in this plan for a category 2b Defect. Temporary repairs are to be marked as such.
Permanent Repair	Repairs to defects that are intended to remain in place for the remainder of the duration of the asset lifecycle.
Highway Management Systems	The systems that are used to manage aspects of this plan including the defects arising from safety inspection and reports from members of the public, such as CONFIRM and AMX.
Highways Network Asset Inventory	Information about the number of asset(s) including their condition where known, and information about their hierarchy such as service life and deterioration rates.
Data Management	To ensure that decisions are based upon high quality data a consistent approach to data management will be adopted. This process will follow recognised quality standards, such as ISO9001. Minimising the number of storage locations, clearly defining the structure of the data and where asset data will be stored will enable consistent data to be available.
Forward Programme	The outline plan of the priorities for the provision of the Services prepared by the Service Provider and agreed with Herefordshire Council on a rolling four year basis.
Annual Plan	The plan to be prepared by the Service Provider for each Financial Year
Network Hierarchy	The network hierarchy adopted by the Council reflects the needs, priorities, strategic importance and actual use of each road in the network. The dynamic nature of the network is taken into account as this hierarchy is regularly reviewed, as detailed below, to reflect changes in street characteristics and use. Further details can be found in Appendix 1.
Transport Asset Management Plan (TAMP)	The Transport Asset Management Plan details the way that highway maintenance is delivered in Herefordshire and is available in full on the Council's website.

Vulnerable Road Users	Those road users who are at a greater risk of injury on the highway network. This usually includes pedestrians, cyclists and horse riders. In some situations, these groups may require specific facilities to ensure their safety. Within this category those persons with protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010 may have specific requirements.
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1 Introduction

Herefordshire Council is the Highway Authority for all highways maintainable at public expense within Herefordshire, with the exception of Trunk Roads and Motorways. As a Highway Authority the Council has to fulfil a number of statutory duties, many of which are contained in the Highways Act 1980. In addition, a number of other Acts impose duties and give the Council additional powers relating to the management and maintenance of highways.

The Highway Maintenance Plan (HMP) sets out how the Council will deliver its objectives across all assets, as expressed through the Local Transport Plan, Transport Asset Management Plan and other related policies and plans. The plan also sets out the performance that is required by the Council for it to continue to meet the duty to maintain the highway under Section 41 of the Highways Act 1980. Where there is a breach of the absolute duty to maintain then the plan enables the Council to make use of the defence available to it under section 58 of the Highway Act 1980 through a reasonable system of inspection and repair.

A number of national guidelines exist for the provision of highway maintenance and this plan incorporates 'Well-managed Highway Infrastructure', the code of practice for maintenance management published in 2016. The various recommendations of the Well-managed Highway Infrastructure code of practice are referenced against the activities of the service described in this plan are referenced. Where the Council has chosen to adopt elements of policy, standards or practices that differ from those recommendations, the rationale for those differences is detailed in this plan. For the avoidance of doubt, wherever this Highway Maintenance Plan differs from the code of practice, then this plan shall be taken as the Council's approach to highway maintenance.

The development of the Highway Maintenance Plan has considered all road users, including those which make up the vulnerable road user group. To appropriately consider the use of the highway network by all users and to ensure that Herefordshire Council meets its obligations under the Equality Act 2010 it is necessary to ensure that the needs of people with protected characteristics are taken into account. Vulnerable road users and the needs of people with protected characteristics are considered as part of the risk assessment process when evaluating change in condition across the highway asset.

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RECOMMENDATION 1 – USE OF THE CODE

This Code, in conjunction with the UKRLG Highway Infrastructure Asset Management Guidance, should be used as the starting point against which to develop, review and formally approve highway infrastructure maintenance policy and to identify and formally approve the nature and extent of any variations.

The 'Well-managed Highway Infrastructure code of practice is founded upon the principles of best value and emphasises the use of an asset management approach to highway maintenance. The intention of the code of practice is that authorities will develop their own levels of service through a local, risk-based, approach. This Highway Maintenance Plan does just that and is developed in conjunction with Herefordshire's Local Transport Plan (LTP) and in particular the asset management policy and strategy that is detailed in that plan.

This Highway Maintenance Plan sits alongside the Council's Transport Asset Management Plan (TAMP), which details the mechanisms that will be deployed as we work towards attaining the Council's objectives as expressed in its LTP. This will be through planned performance against the life cycle plans for all major components of the highway asset. These are:

- Carriageways
- Structures
- Drainage
- Footways and Cycleways
- Street Lighting and Traffic Signals

This plan sets out the risk-based approach, which is embedded in every-day decision making and which was adopted as promoted by the Well-managed Highway Infrastructure code of practice, following its publication in 2016. This plan is the third iteration following a previous review in 2020 as part of the requirement to reflect the working practices required by the Covid-19 pandemic, which also adopted many of the recommendations made following a detailed review of highway maintenance practices undertaken by the Council's General Scrutiny Committee, as brought to that committee on 6 March 2019.

This plan builds on the learning and changing network demand and condition since 2020 to further refine Herefordshire Council's approach to best practice. During the development of this plan this approach, along with the referenced guidance material, and the experience of our teams have been used to set standards for undertaking inspections and maintenance. However, it is intended that those standards are to evolve further as the maintenance service environment changes and further understanding of risks arises, which will inform future review of this plan. This evolution of service will be undertaken in the comprehensive and considered manner, as laid out in this plan, and be subject to ongoing review through the Council's governance processes, with operational changes being agreed via the Annual Plan process.

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RECOMMENDATION 28 – FINANCIAL PLANS

Financial plans should be prepared for all highway maintenance activities covering short, medium and long-term time horizons.

Highway works and services are to be developed, delivered and measured through a Forward Programme and each year's Annual Plan. These plans will both inform and be prepared in line with the Council's medium term financial strategy with the aim of delivering its long-term objectives as described through the Local Transport Plan.

2 Overview and Purpose

The core purpose of this Highway Maintenance Plan is to set out the reasonable system of inspection and repair that will be deployed by the Council to ensure that it meets its duty to maintain all publicly maintainable highways for which the Council is the highway authority.

This Highway Maintenance Plan builds upon the 2016 plan, and the foundations for a risk-based approach first established by the 2007 plan. This approach establishes a method of maintenance that assesses the risk of any defect or change in the condition of the highway poses to the current and future usage of the highway by the public as the core decision making tool. The objective is to guide and prioritise maintenance according to the risk posed to the highway user now, and over time, through the long-term integrity of the highway structure.

This Highway Maintenance Plan is structured with the core of the document setting out the overarching principles for the whole plan applying to the entire service. Standards, policies and processes for discrete areas, where appropriate, are appended to the plan.

The policies and procedures appended to the plan have been written to:

- Be flexible to allow the service to adapt to a changing a regulatory, environmental and economic climate
- Be simple to implement effectively
- Enable measurement of service performance; and
- Incorporate best practice.

2.1 Scope

Herefordshire has in excess of 3,200km (2,000 miles) of publicly maintained highways, 724 bridges and 14,356 street lights, illuminated bollards and signs. The Council also maintains some 3,380 km (2,100 miles) of public rights of way. The extent of the highway asset will vary over time as a result of development, improvements and stopping up processes.

Highway maintenance is a wide-ranging function that covers the following general activities:

- Reactive maintenance – addressing defects or change in condition that are causing an immediate or imminent hazard that presents a high risk to highway users.
- Routine maintenance – undertaking consistent and/or cyclical functions to preserve assets in a safe and serviceable condition, wherever possible avoiding the need for reactive maintenance by enhancing the value or life of the asset as part of a whole system of works.
- Programmed maintenance – planned interventions (usually on a more significant scale) that are designed through our asset management processes as works that will enhance the value or life of the highway asset.
- Regulatory functions – requiring or enabling others to undertake works or other activities in, on or around the highway in accord with the Council's authority.
- Winter Service – precautionary salting and the clearance of snow and ice.
- Weather and Other emergencies – providing a planned emergency response to events that cause a significant hazard to highway users or threaten the integrity of the highway.

2.2 Link to other Key Documents

Herefordshire Council's policies relating to the highway asset are detailed in the Local Transport Plan and the Transport Asset Management Plan (TAMP) details the methodology that will be used to achieve the Local Transport Plan policy objectives. The Forward Programme and a series of Annual Plans detail the specific activities that will be undertaken over time and then in each year against the available resources. The Highway Maintenance Plan details the minimum levels of service that arise from the Council's duty to maintain the highway when considered in the context of these wider policy objectives, as well as provide more detailed operational policy for specific areas of service. Figure 1 illustrates how these documents relate to one another.

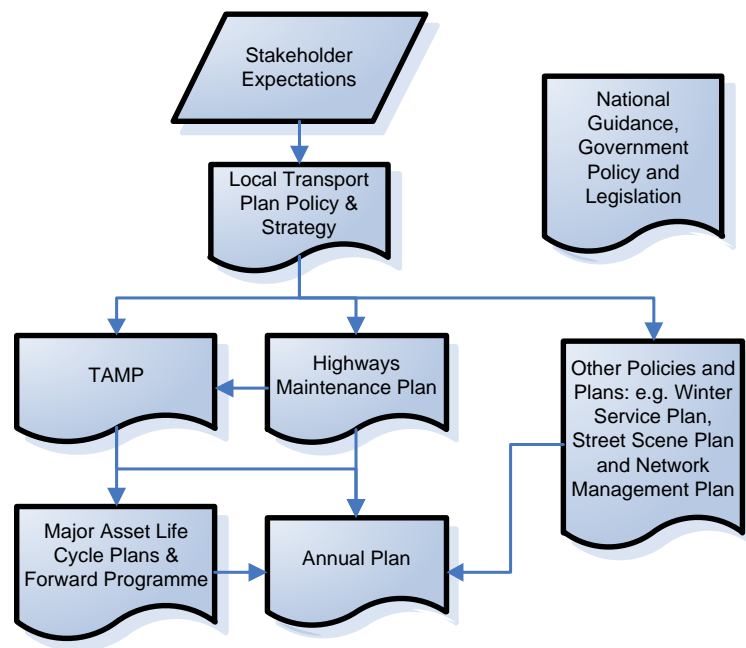


Figure 1: Relationship of Strategic Highway Documents

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RECOMMENDATION 6– AN INTEGRATED NETWORK

The highway network should be considered as an integrated set of assets when developing highway infrastructure maintenance policies

This plan, and the risk-based approach it details, enables the wide variety of highway assets to be managed as an integrated set. It details an approach to assessing and undertaking maintenance that is used across all assets.

3 Asset Management

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RECOMMENDATION 2 – ASSET MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK

**An Asset Management Framework should be developed and endorsed by senior decision makers. All activities outlined in the Framework should be documented.
(HIAMG Recommendation 1)**

RECOMMENDATION 3 – ASSET MANAGEMENT POLICY AND STRATEGY

An asset management policy and a strategy should be developed and published. These should align with the corporate vision and demonstrate the contribution asset management makes towards achieving this vision. (HIAMG Recommendation 3)

The Association of Directors of Environment, Economy, Planning & Transport (ADEPT) defines asset management as:

“...a strategic approach that identifies the optimal allocation of resources for the management, operation, preservation and enhancement of the highway infrastructure to meet the needs of current and future customers.”- ADEPT’s 2004 Framework for Highway Asset Management.

The Local Transport Plan sets the Council’s Asset Management Policy and Strategy, as part of which specific lifecycle plans have been developed for major assets that detail how condition data will be collected and utilised. Such condition data, to the extent that the available resources allow, is used to plan interventions designed to preserve, maintain and enhance our highway assets, taking account of the following factors:

- Minimising whole-life cost and maximizing cost/benefit.
- Following a risk based approach.
- Network priorities and policies set out in the Local Transport Plan and this Highways Maintenance Plan.
- Agreed levels of service

Where resources are unavailable to deliver all planned interventions across all highways assets then the standards and risk-based approach outlined in this plan will be used to deliver a minimum maintenance activity, with the intention of keeping the highway safe for all reasonable use. To ensure that we do meet our duty towards the maintenance of the highway across its full extent it is essential that resources are directed towards the highest priorities and deploy the most effective ways to address these through a risk-based approach.

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RECOMMENDATION 4 – ENGAGING AND COMMUNICATING WITH STAKEHOLDERS

Relevant information should be actively communicated through engagement with relevant stakeholders in setting requirements, making decisions and reporting performance. (Taken from HIAMG Recommendation 2)

As part of the Public Realm Services Contract operating model, Locality Stewards have been deployed into nine locality areas across Herefordshire. These Locality Stewards undertake highway inspections and work with the community to manage the delivery of the public realm services locally.

Locality working ensures that the delivery of our investment programmes is informed by the intelligence gained through working alongside the community. Additionally, it ensures that the work undertaken at a local level complements the activity delivered through our countywide programme of maintenance and improvement works.

4 Risk Based Approach

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RECOMMENDATION 7 – RISK BASED APPROACH

A risk-based approach should be adopted for all aspects of highway infrastructure maintenance, including setting levels of service, inspections, responses, resilience, priorities and programmes.

The Highway Maintenance Plan details Herefordshire Council's risk-based approach to highway maintenance activities, which is in line with latest industry practices described in the Well-managed Highway Infrastructure code of practice.

The purpose of a risk-based approach is to enable the consistent application of a decision-making process to:

- Correctly evaluate the risk posed to all highway users by all defects or deficiencies in the highway asset, having regard to the likely users of the network, in particular vulnerable road users and those with protected characteristics, such as a disability
- Prioritise resources so that the risk is managed effectively
- Ensure the efficient use of available resources
- Understand performance and address any gaps in resources or performance

- Ensure value for money; and
- Enable monitoring of outcomes.

The principle of a risk-based approach is to assess the likelihood of injury or damage as a result of any defectiveness and the consequences of that event should it occur. Decisions will be informed by data and knowledge derived from the analysis of previous maintenance activities, such as highway safety inspections.

The consequences of defects in the highway can also include:

- Damage or injury to highway users, their property and the resultant claims for damages
- Safety hazards resulting in risk to the community
- Disruption to traffic
- Accessibility becoming compromised for vulnerable road users or those with protected characteristics, such as a disability and who may be more likely to be using sections of the network and requiring specific levels of service
- The devaluing of place
- Dissatisfaction; and
- Economic disruption to businesses.

Prescriptive intervention levels for defects are not used in this plan as defects that present a low risk are often measured and then repaired ahead of smaller defects that by virtue of their location can cause a greater hazard to highway users. A risk-based approach utilises the expertise of the inspector to evaluate defects correctly and consistently in accordance with the guidance established in this plan. Expertise and consistency of inspectors is ensured by training to industry recognised standards and regular comparative inspections, as detailed in section 8.4. These processes are aimed specifically at the impact that defects have on the safety of all highway users, but as a result of these processes and our wider asset management practices many of the other consequences of defects in the highway are also addressed.

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RECOMMENDATION 5 – CONSISTENCY WITH OTHER AUTHORITIES

To ensure that users' reasonable expectations for consistency are taken into account, the approach of other local and strategic highway and transport authorities, especially those with integrated or adjoining networks, should be considered when developing highway infrastructure maintenance policies.

The Council is a member of the Midlands Highway Alliance Plus (MHA+), which is a collective of authorities sharing best practice to drive improvements and efficiencies within the highways and road safety disciplines. The MHA+ Highway Asset Management Group has worked to develop a set of High-Level Principles for the Risk Based Approach to Safety Inspections and Defect Response times, which the Council has considered in the development of this plan.

As well as liaison with MHA+ members, additional liaison occurs with neighbouring authorities who are not affiliated with the MHA+ group, taking place across a diverse range of topics.

In addition, the Local Street Gazetteer (LSG), and its sister dataset, the National Street Gazetteer (NSG) record key parameters about each highway network in England and Wales. These data sets are compared, and any cross-border discrepancies are flagged to the authorities in question to identify any points of difference. This useful feature of the LSG/NSG is a useful tool in developing consistency across area boundaries.

5 Sustainable Highway Maintenance

Sustainability is a key part of the Council's vision, having declared a climate emergency at Full Council on 8 March 2019. More information can be found at <https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/climate-2/climate-change>.

The delivery of highway maintenance is therefore to be undertaken so as to minimise environmental impact, adopt good environmental management and sustain Herefordshire's biodiversity, character and heritage. This includes the selection of materials, treatments and all aspects of delivery.

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RECOMMENDATION 32 – CARBON

The impact of highway infrastructure maintenance activities in terms of whole life carbon costs should be taken into account when determining appropriate interventions, materials and treatments.

As a member of the Midlands Highway Alliance, the Council has signed up to a low carbon concordat (September 2013). Through that concordat the Council is committed to the delivery of surfacing works using low carbon materials such as low temperature asphalt wherever possible. It is intended to go further to minimize our carbon footprint and these low carbon materials have been adopted as the material of choice for all our resurfacing activities. This is unless there is a valid technical reason why the materials cannot achieve the required performance in any particular circumstance, or it is impracticable to use such products, or the use of other materials delivers further benefits through better lifecycle planning.

The Council also takes advantage of locally sourced, and recycled materials, as well as environmentally sound methods to promote value and innovation, and to drive continuous improvement. In each case departures from the approved standards will only take place following an assessment of risk, and with approval of the Council’s Head of Service. In any event if, for reasons of necessity and/or valid engineering reasoning, different materials and treatments are adopted, then a procedure note is submitted to the Head of Service for retrospective approval.

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RECOMMENDATION 33 – CONSISTENCY WITH CHARACTER

Determination of materials, products and treatments for the highway network should take into account the character of the area as well as factoring in whole life costing and sustainability. The materials, products and treatments used for highway maintenance should meet requirements for effectiveness and durability.

The Highway Maintenance Plan focuses along with the Local Transport Plan and TAMP on a methodology and means of maintaining the network to meet the challenges of safety, serviceability and sustainability, in order to provide best value for the Council and local community. The plan takes into account various maintenance considerations as set out in Table 1:

Table 1: Maintenance Considerations

Safety	Serviceability	Network Sustainability
Complying with statutory obligations	Ensuring availability	Minimising cost over time
Meeting users' needs for safety and accessibility	Achieving integrity	Maximising value to the community
	Maintaining reliability Maintaining or enhancing condition	Maximising environmental contribution
The character of the area and its heritage		
The current and desired future usage of the area		
The accelerated reduction in the Council's emissions, with the aspiration to be carbon neutral by 2030		

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RECOMMENDATION 35 – ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT, NATURE CONSERVATION AND BIODIVERSITY

Materials, products and treatments for highway infrastructure maintenance should be appraised for environmental impact and for wider issues of sustainability. Highway verges, trees and landscaped areas should be managed with regard to their nature conservation value and biodiversity principles as well as whole-life costing, highway safety and serviceability.

Herefordshire Council have a duty to 'Enhance & Conserve' Biodiversity under the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006. Section 40 of the Act states that:

“Every public authority must, in exercising its functions, have regard, so far as is consistent with the proper exercise of those functions, to the purpose of conserving biodiversity”.

This duty affects over 900 public bodies including Local Authorities. Guidance on how this might be implemented by Public Bodies and Local Authorities was published on the 22nd of May 2007. The Guidance states that “In demonstrating that it has implemented its Duty a public authority is likely to be able to show that it has:

- Identified and taken opportunities to integrate biodiversity
- Considerations into relevant service areas and functions and ensured that biodiversity is protected and enhanced in line with current statutory obligations
- Raised awareness of staff and managers with regard to biodiversity issues
- Demonstrated a commitment and contribution to Biodiversity Action Plans, where appropriate
- Demonstrated progress against key biodiversity indicators and targets”

In 2008, Herefordshire Council signed the West Midlands Biodiversity Partnership Pledge, showing acknowledgement of biodiversity and expressing the Council's commitment to biodiversity conservation.

The service will develop its maintenance strategies relating to Herefordshire Council's owned highway, public open spaces, sustainable drainage features and public rights of way through annual and forward planning in consideration of Biodiversity 2020: A strategy for England's wildlife and ecosystem services and any subsequent national or local documents.

There is a diversity of habitats within and associated with the county highway network. The habitats are usually small, linear and narrow in extent but within and next to larger route layouts there are some more extensive areas. Highway habitats consist mainly of various types of grassland but woodland and scrub is also common. Routes can also pass through, over or next to other habitats such as wetlands, rivers and estuaries. Features associated with highways can be important for biodiversity, e.g. boundary trees, rocky cuttings, bridges, ditches and balancing ponds.

Highway land can sometimes support remnants of ancient habitats and features, e.g. old meadows on verges and species-rich hedgerows along green lanes. They are often refuges for wildlife and can act as corridors that connect wildlife and habitats across the county. Highway land is particularly valuable if it is adjacent to international, national and local sites designated for their nature conservation importance. Further details of how Verges and Highway Vegetation is managed can be found in Appendix 14 of this document.

Highways works can have adverse effects on biodiversity but with care most of these can be avoided. By managing our working practices, we can actually enhance biodiversity. Threats to biodiversity connected with highway works can include:

- Lack of management leading to the deterioration and loss of open habitats. Absence of mowing can lead to the dominance of coarse grasses and eventual colonisation by scrub. To maintain the value of the extended area of highway land beyond the normal cut swathe it may be desirable in certain situations to carry out a full width cut, e.g. to control scrub on grassland sites.
- Intensive management leading to the detriment of species and habitats, e.g. frequent mowing can prevent plants from flowering and reduces the value of verges for many invertebrates.
- Failure to identify significant constraints such as protected species and SSSIs.
- Physical damage caused by the movement and storage of vehicles, plant and materials.
- Inappropriate restoration and reseedling of damaged or disturbed areas.
- Inappropriate tree planting, e.g. on flower-rich grassland verges
- Use of insensitive management techniques, e.g. flailing of hedgerows and severe pollarding and root pruning of urban trees.
- Poor timing of works leading to harm to species, e.g. scrub removal during bird nesting period and mowing grassland before rare flowers set seed.
- Unnecessary salt contamination and other pollution incidents.
- Lack of control of invasive weeds and non-native plants.
- Use of kerbing and badly designed drainage openings can sometimes trap and kill significant numbers of small mammals, reptiles and amphibians in certain locations.

Roadway repairs due to undermining by animal works. Care must be taken not to harm animals in spite of damage done by them to the highway asset, and all repairs should consider a mutually beneficial solution for human and animal use of land.

6 Maintenance Inventory and Network Hierarchy

6.1 Strategy

The essential elements of an effective highway maintenance strategy are:

- A relevant inventory
- A defined network hierarchy
- Clear policies, objectives and standards for maintenance

6.2 Inventories

The Highways Act 1980 requires highway authorities to maintain a register of roads maintainable at public expense. There is a further requirement under the New Roads and Street Works Act 1991 to maintain information for the purpose of:

- Identifying streets, described as 'traffic sensitive', where works must be avoided at certain times of day
- Identifying structures under or over the street which need special consideration when work is planned; and
- Identifying reinstatement categories used by Statutory Undertakers in their reinstatement of roads and footpaths.

This information is maintained and updated on a regular basis to take into account new developments, changes or amendments to the network and is managed within the framework of the National Street Gazetteer (NSG) in a format that the Statutory Undertakers can access electronically.

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RECOMMENDATION 8 – INFORMATION MANAGEMENT

Information to support a risk-based approach to highway maintenance should be collected, managed and made available in ways that are sustainable, secure, meet any statutory obligations, and, where appropriate, facilitate transparency for network users.

Detailed inventories of the various components of the highway asset, including street lighting and structural assets, are maintained in electronic formats within Highway Management Systems. These systems also are used to collect and store defect information such as the occurrence, type and response times. This enables performance monitoring and reporting to decision makers and network users. In addition, this data informs the risk-based approach set out in this plan.

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RECOMMENDATION 9 – NETWORK INVENTORY

A detailed inventory or register of highway assets, together with information on their scale, nature and use, should be maintained. The nature and extent of inventory collected should be fit for purpose and meet business needs. Where data or information held is considered sensitive, this should be managed in a security-minded way.

Our approach to maintaining the Network Inventory register is detailed in the TAMP.

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RECOMMENDATION 10 – ASSET DATA MANAGEMENT

The quality, currency, appropriateness and completeness of all data supporting asset management should be regularly reviewed. An asset register should be maintained that stores, manages and reports all relevant asset data. (HIAMG Recommendation 5)

Our approach to Data Management is detailed in the TAMP and supported by an Asset Data Quality Plan.

6.3 Network Hierarchies

The network hierarchy is the foundation of the system of routine safety inspection.

The network hierarchy adopted by the Council reflects the needs, priorities, strategic importance and actual use of each road in the network. The dynamic nature of the network is taken into account as this hierarchy is regularly reviewed, as detailed below, to reflect changes in street characteristics and use.

The network hierarchy currently serves to inform the frequency and method of safety inspection and is also used as a weighting factor to inform the response times for routine or reactive maintenance alongside the overarching network hierarchy that is established in the Local Transport Plan as part of the asset management policy.

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RECOMMENDATION 12 – NETWORK HIERARCHY

A network hierarchy, or a series of related hierarchies, should be defined which include all elements of the highway network, including carriageways, footways, cycle routes, structures, lighting and rights of way. The hierarchy should take into account current and expected use, resilience, and local economic and social factors such as industry, schools, hospitals and similar, as well as the desirability of continuity and of a consistent approach for walking and cycling.

The Council believes that the highway asset should provide a network that facilitates the efficient and safe movement of people and goods whilst protecting the quality of life within communities.

The Local Transport Plan sets out our policy objectives in regard to all our public places, which should be safe and enjoyable for all to use responsibly. It is understood that our highway infrastructure is vital to a functioning county should be resilient to the impact of weather and climate and available for all to use, whether they choose to travel by car or through more sustainable modes, such as walking or cycling. This plan describes a system of maintenance that is designed to keep, in as far as is reasonably practicable, our highway's asset safe for use by all transport modes.

The Council has utilised the model hierarchy in the Well-managed Highway Infrastructure code of practice as the basis for the framework, however this has been modified extensively to reflect the individual nature of the highway network in Herefordshire. The overall rurality of the county's highway network is reflected, particularly in the lower rungs of the hierarchy where our country lanes and Byways can be appropriately recognised. The repair strategy for lowest categories of route will be commensurate with the character and usage of these parts of the highway asset. Appendix 1 of this plan sets out the current network hierarchy and describes each category in detail.

The hierarchy considers both carriageways and those parts of the highway network designed to facilitate active travel. It is appropriate to consider these 'Active Travel Routes' as a single network, rather than attempt to separate out footways and cycleways. This approach is also reflected in Appendix 1.

7 Asset Maintenance Standards

For the major asset groups the Council will utilise the asset management approach as detailed in the TAMP, in conjunction with the risk-based approach of the Highway Maintenance Plan to target maintenance resources.

Programmed maintenance will be directed towards timely proactive treatments in accordance with the asset management policy and strategy established in the LTP. This approach will present better value for money, minimise disruption to the travelling public, and is the most effective means of maintaining the overall condition of the asset throughout its lifecycle. This is achieved by identifying assets that are approaching condition thresholds so that cost effective interventions can be made, and targeted condition levels can be achieved where possible. Timely intervention has proved effective at halting the overall deterioration of the network and reducing the demand for reactive maintenance in response to defects that present an immediate hazard to highway users.

Programmes of capital maintenance are maintained on an on-going basis, as part of a Forward Programme with confirmed work for the coming year prioritised, procured, commissioned and delivered as part of each year's Annual Plan.

Routine and reactive maintenance is managed throughout each year utilising the resources identified in each year's Annual Plan. As a minimum the levels of service in regard to the timescale for response and the quality of repair will be as described in this Highway Maintenance Plan.

8 Safety Inspection, Assessment and Recording

The Highway Maintenance Plan describes the regime of safety inspections that the Council will deploy. Associated processes and procedures for condition inspection, assessment and recording for major assets is described in the TAMP.

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RECOMMENDATION 17 – CONDITION SURVEYS

An asset condition survey regime, based on asset management needs and any statutory reporting requirements, should be developed and implemented.

Safety inspections are designed to identify and risk assess all defects and changes to the condition of the network that are likely to create danger or serious inconvenience to users or the wider community. Section 41 of the Highways Act 1980 requires the Council to maintain the highways for which they are responsible. Section 58 of the Act provides a statutory defence to a claim made for breach of the Section 41 duty to maintain. This document provides a framework for Herefordshire to use in that defence.

The safety inspection regime forms a key part of Herefordshire Council's strategy for managing the safety of the highway network and the associated liabilities and risk. It comprises the following elements:

- frequency (and mode) of inspections
- items for inspection
- degree of deficiency
- nature of response

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RECOMMENDATION 16 – INSPECTIONS

A risk-based inspection regime, including regular safety inspections, should be developed and implemented for all highway assets.

The frequency of safety inspections for individual network sections is provided in Table 2 below, with the 2005 Code used as the basis for this regime, with variation based upon a risk-based consideration of:

- Category within the network hierarchy
- Traffic use, characteristics and trends
- Incident and inspection history
- Characteristics of adjoining network elements
- Wider policy or operational considerations
- Complaints about condition
- Claims received
- Condition assessments (UKPMS)
- Traffic flows and changes in use
- Defect interventions recorded.

Table 2: Safety Inspections – Categories, Frequencies and Mode

Feature	Category	Frequency	Method
Roads	Strategic Route*	1 month	Driven
	Main Distributor*	1 month	Driven
	Secondary Distributor*	1 month	Driven
	Link Road	3 months	Driven
	Local Access	1 year	Driven
	Rural Access Lanes	1 year	Driven or Walked
	Minor Access Tracks	1 year	Driven or Walked.
	Unsurfaced Routes	1 year	Driven or Walked
Active Travel Routes (footways and cycleways)	Prestige Area	1 month	Walked
	Primary Active Travel Route	1 month	Walked
	Secondary Active Travel Route	1 Year	Driven or Walked
	Link Active Travel Route		
	Local Access Active Travel Route		
PROW	Promoted Routes	3 years	Cycled or Walked
	All other routes: Metalled	Metalled PROW inspected Annually.	Driven, Cycled or Walked
	Un-Metalled	Reactively inspected based on enquiries that have been risk assessed. Any visit by an Inspector for whatever reason will generate a recorded safety inspection.	Cycled or Walked

* - Route categories marked with an asterisk are also inspected annually during the hours of darkness by a driven inspection to assess the suitability of the road markings and studs.

While every effort will be made to achieve the frequency of inspection, timings are subject to the following tolerances:

Table 3: Safety Inspections – Frequency Tolerance

Inspection Frequency	Tolerance
1 month	+/- 7 Days, OR days or the end of the calendar month in which the inspection is due, whichever is soonest.
3 months	+/- 14 Days, OR +14 days or the end of the month period in which the inspection is due, whichever is soonest.
Annual	+/- 28 Days, OR +28 days or the end of the annual plan in which the inspection is due, whichever is soonest

8.1 Risk Based Inspection Frequency

For locations where requests for service or the assessed condition has resulted in the need for regular reactive works to be undertaken, safety inspections may be made more frequent, or introduced where no minimum is listed above. Additionally, if an inspector is concerned that a further change in condition will occur between the survey dates that will lead to highway users being presented with a significant risk, then additional inspections may be scheduled on an ad-hoc basis.

Similarly, the delivery of highway maintenance works, such as surfacing schemes, may trigger a review of the inspection frequency for a certain component of the asset due to the reduction in the risk associated with those components of the asset following their repair. Frequency changes will be determined via risk assessment that takes account of the above noted considerations and will be reviewed and recorded, along with the reason for doing so annually as part of each Annual Plan.

8.2 Mode

Table 2 shows the mode of inspection. Risk assessments dictate whether safety inspections are walked, driven or cycled. This assessment takes account of:

- Current condition
- Expected rate of deterioration
- Third party claims
- Inspector Safety

For driven safety inspections, a passenger undertakes the main role of identifying, risk assessing defects and updating records. Lone inspectors can undertake walked and cycled inspections. In the event of exceptional circumstances where the ability to deploy multiple persons in a vehicle arises then an appropriate risk assessment will be undertaken to vary the inspection mode. This process will consider the overarching principle of maintaining the highway in a safe condition.

All pedal cycle ridden inspections will be conducted at a speed equating to a fast-walking pace i.e. up to 5 mph. All driven inspections will be conducted at approximately 20 mph where it is safe and appropriate to do so. In the event that a section cannot be safely surveyed at 20mph, the reason why this cannot be done will be recorded. The alternative means of safely inspecting the section will be established through a risk assessment process. That assessment will also be recorded along with any known consequences that the alternative survey method may have on the ability of the inspector to recognise and risk assess in accordance with this plan any highway defects that may exist on that section. Where proven technology allows for reliable inspection by the deployment of artificial intelligence solutions this may be used in place of walked, driven or cycled inspection modes.

8.3 Scope of Safety Inspections

Table 4 describes the type of defects that inspectors seek to identify during safety inspections.

Table 4: Scope of safety inspection defects/risks

Inventory Item	Scope of defects/risks to be identified
Carriageway	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Surface defects <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Pothole/Spalling ○ Crowning ○ Depression ○ Rutting ○ Gap/Crack ○ Sunken Ironwork ○ Missing/Defective Anti-Skid Material • Kerbs & Edge defects • Surface skid resistance—visual assessment • Mud, debris, spillage or contamination on running surfaces. • Obstructions • Flooding • Markings, Road Studs • Covers, Ironwork, • Highway Trees • Integrity of Skid Resistant Surfacing in Carriageway

Inventory Item	Scope of defects/risks to be identified
Footways and Cycleways	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Surface defects: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Trip hazards or Potholes ○ Rocking Slab/Block ○ Open Joint ○ Tree Root Damage ○ Sunken Ironwork ○ Defective Coal Plates/Basement Lights, Etc • “Bubbled” Mastic Asphalt in Footway • Kerbs and edge defects: Dislodged/Missing/Loose/Rocking • Highway weeds causing slippery surfaces or trips • Mud, debris, spillage or contamination on running surfaces • Obstructions • Loss of grout • Covers, Ironwork • Changes in condition which impair the use of the asset by all types of vulnerable road users or a person with a relevant protected characteristic, e.g. disability.
Drainage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accumulation of water on the carriageway, footway and cycleway • Blocked drainage that may lead to the above
Embankments and Cuttings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Risk of loose material falling to injure users or causing damage • Slippage causing loss of support to highway
Landscaped Areas and Trees (incl. hedges)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Obstruction of visibility and signage • Hazardous trees and branches • Leaf fall causing slippery surfaces • Root growth causing surface irregularity • Noxious weeds • Other hazards • The above defects may be related to trees adjacent to the highway as well as those within the highway extents
Fences and Barriers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Integrity and location of all highway fencing • The functionality of visibility fences including obstructions • Integrity of all safety barriers, including for instances of strikes
Traffic Signs and Bollards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identification of risk to users • Separation of potential traffic conflicts • Route delineation in darkness and bad weather

Inventory Item	Scope of defects/risks to be identified
Road Markings and Studs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Route delineation in darkness and bad weather Potential for damage and injury if studs are loose Traffic control
Traffic Signals, Pedestrian and Cycle Crossings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Segregation of potential traffic conflicts Key safety contributor for vulnerable road users or a person with a relevant protected characteristic, e.g. disability. Changes in condition which impairs the use of the controlled crossing by all types of vulnerable road users, or a person with a relevant protected characteristic, e.g. disability.
Condition of Street Lighting / Illuminated Signs and Bollards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Damaged or defective lighting columns/illuminated signs and bollards
Standards for Regulatory Functions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Risk to users and adjoining property
Bridges	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Accident and other damage
Street Furniture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Damaged or missing street furniture Damaged or empty grit bins
PROWs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hazardous trees and branches Surface defects such as to render the surface as impassable Mud, debris, spillage or contamination on running Obstructions Flooding Obstruction of visibility and signage Hazardous trees and branches Leaf fall causing slippery surfaces Root growth causing surface irregularity Noxious weeds

8.4 Defect Investigatory Levels

When assessing the risk associated with defects, consideration will be given to its location, the volume of traffic, the nature of such traffic, use by vulnerable road users and those with protected characteristics, e.g. disability, and the extent of visibility at the site. The Well-managed Highway Infrastructure Code of Practice does not set out specific intervention levels and refers to legal precedents.

The item of inventory together with the typical types of defects to be observed is detailed in Table

4. A highways inspector records all defects that may present a risk to highway users and assesses the risk as set out in Table 7 of section 9.1 of this plan. Table 7 sets out the defects that need not be noted by the Inspector due to the low impact and/or probability.

Our defect investigatory level is set as anything that a reasonable person can see and would recognise as a defect in the highway asset when travelling via the mode being used by the highway inspector at the time of inspection.

8.5 Recording Defects

Guidance on the recording of highway defects is provided below, Further information on which defects are recorded are listed in Table 7 in Section 9.1.

To ensure the repair team can quickly identify the precise defect, it is essential that the information provided is simple and easily understood. In order to locate a defect effectively, the repair team requires the following information:

- The location of the defect along the length of the highway.
- The position of the defect across the width of the highway
- The size and type of defect

If possible, a photo of the defect showing adjacent features to help locate it will be taken. Defects shall only be marked with temporary road marking paint where necessary and safe to do so, to enable the repair team to locate them quickly.

Location along the length: This information should be clear, precise and easily understood. This will reduce any lost productivity time of the repair team used to locate a specific defect. Ideally a combination of the following information should be recorded:

- Street name / road number
- House number / building name
- Distance and direction from nearest road junction
- Street lighting (S/L) column number

Location across the width: This information is essential for assisting the repair team to precisely locate the defect, identified by the inspector.

Examples

- Channel of carriageway
- On verge
- At start of radius
- Adjacent to
- On pedestrian crossing
- In central reservation
- In slow / fast lane

Size and Type of Defect: When describing a specific defect the inspector must clearly state the nature of the defect and its approximate size, where applicable. This will enable the repair team to collect the correct materials to carry out the repair. Descriptions such as 'Pothole', 'Broken Flags' and 'Damaged Kerbs' do not convey enough information for the repair team to carry out a repair efficiently. It is essential that all the information required to carry out the repair is recorded by the inspector and passed onto the repair team.

8.6 Competence and Standard Setting

Competence and Training

A vital component of inspections is to ensure that inspectors are able to undertake inspection and assessment duties consistently, accurately and within current guidelines and standards. Inspectors undertake training on a regular basis and appropriate refresher courses are provided. The frequency of such training will be in line with the nationally accepted competency framework as a minimum.

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RECOMMENDATION 15 – COMPETENCIES AND TRAINING

The appropriate competency required for asset management should be identified, and training should be provided where necessary. (HIAMG Recommendation 10)

All highway inspectors will be trained to a standard that is accredited by an appropriately recognised professional body and any required continuing professional development is carried out. This training provides the assurance that all who are inspecting the highway on behalf of the highway authority have the competency to do so and that this can be demonstrated through qualification. All inspector training will make reference to the content of the UK Roads Liaison Group (UKRLG) Asset Management Competence Framework and will accord with the related Inspector Competency Framework.

Inspector Consistency

It is important that inspectors are inspecting consistently and applying the parameters correctly. This will be achieved by holding bi-annual standard setting workshops where inspectors will separately inspect a section of network and then their results are compared and performance moderated. This will be followed by a further joint inspection to resolve differences. This process will give a measure of the consistency and repeatability of the inspections.

8.7 Enforcement

Any enforcement action that the Council deems to be required will be carried out in accordance with Herefordshire Council's Enforcement & Prosecution Policy, which is accessible via the Council's website.

9 Categories of Defect

The Council utilises a risk-based approach to defect categorisation and repair times as set out in Table 7 to enable cost-effective maintenance that is appropriate to the level of risk presented to all highway users, in the context of the entire highway asset for which the Council is responsible. This approach will, wherever practicable, enable a right-first-time approach to permanent repairs that will reduce the risk to the travelling public in the longer term and also result in a reduction in:

- The use of resources on repeat safety repairs
- The exposure of the workforce to danger
- Disruption and overall risk to the highway users; and
- Environmental impact

Defects will continue to utilise the principal categories first described in the 2007 Highway Maintenance Plan, along with the response times for these categories introduced in the 2016 plan, as set out in Table 7. Response times have been set following risk analysis and use a breakdown of priority for Category 2 defects that enables a more tailored response to the risk presented and permanent repairs to normally be undertaken first time.

Defects are allocated one of two categories as follows:

Category 1 – those defects that require prompt attention because they present a significant immediate or imminent risk to highway users or because there is a risk of short-term structural deterioration will result in a significant risk being presented to highway users.

Category 2 defects are those which, following a risk assessment, are deemed not to represent an immediate or imminent hazard or risk of short-term structural deterioration. They can be categorised in terms of high (**Priority A**), medium (**Priority B**), low (**Priority C**) priority with different times for response.

Category 2 defects are all those that are not categorised as Category 1 defects.

9.1 Risk Assessment

Key to selecting the appropriate action for a defect is the risk assessment process. All defects that reach the investigatory level defined in section 8.4 of this plan should be evaluated for their significance and the likelihood of injury or damage to a highway user.

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RECOMMENDATION 14 – RISK MANAGEMENT

The management of current and future risks associated with assets should be embedded within the approach to asset management. Strategic, tactical and operational risks should be included as should appropriate mitigation measures.

(HIAMG Recommendation 11)

Response times for remedial action on defects will depend on where the defect is located on the network. The response time is linked to the need to prioritise, through the asset management policy and strategy, maintenance towards the Strategic Network, which is described in the Local Transport Plan. As such the Network hierarchy, as detailed in the Local Transport Plan asset management policy statement, will be used to determine the timescale for response.

Impact

The impact of a risk occurring is measured on a scale of 1 – 4 (1 lowest, 4 highest) the following table gives guidance:

Table 5: Impact Ratings

Impact rating	Score	Description	Possible Indicators
High	4	The Hazard presented by the defect, or due to the short-term structural deterioration in the defect, could result in serious injury or a fatality.	<p>Impact will result in serious damage to persons or property.</p> <p>Highway users will instinctively react to avoid the defect, and this will place them in peril.</p> <p>The defect could destabilise any vehicle and this will place highway users in peril.</p> <p>Changes in condition which renders an active travel facility unusable to any vulnerable road user or a person with a relevant protected characteristic, e.g. disability.</p>
Medium	3	The Hazard presented by the defect, or due to the short-term structural deterioration in the defect, could result in injury or serious claim against the Authority.	<p>Impact will result in damage to persons or property, from which they are likely to recover.</p> <p>Highway users will instinctively react to avoid the defect.</p> <p>The defect could destabilise any vehicle.</p> <p>Changes in condition which impairs the use of an active travel facility for vulnerable road users or a person with a relevant protected characteristic, e.g. disability.</p>
Low	2	The Hazard presented by the defect, or due to the short-term structural deterioration in the defect, could result in minor injury or claim against the Authority. If untreated the defect will contribute to the deterioration in the overall condition of the Highway Asset. The defect is likely to deteriorate further before the next safety inspection.	<p>Most impacts will not result in any injury.</p> <p>Highway users are unlikely to react to avoid the defect and the impact will not interrupt their passage.</p> <p>The defect will be felt and recognised as a defect by most Highway users, and its presence will be a negative influence on their perception of the Highway Asset.</p> <p>If untreated the defect will accelerate the local deterioration of the Highway Asset impairing the function of an active travel facility for vulnerable road users or a person with a relevant protected characteristic, e.g. disability.</p>

Impact rating	Score	Description	Possible Indicators
Negligible	1	The Hazard presented by the defect, or due to the short-term structural deterioration in the defect, is unlikely to result in injury or claim, but the defect will contribute to the deterioration in the overall condition of the Highway asset. The defect is unlikely to deteriorate further before the next scheduled safety inspection.	<p>The defect will be recognised by Highway Inspectors as requiring attention but is unlikely to be felt and recognised as a defect by most Highway users.</p> <p>The defect is very unlikely to cause injury.</p>

The vulnerability of all highway users, including cyclists and pedestrians to certain highway defects will be reflected in the risk assessment carried out when deciding the category of the defect. In all other areas the degree of regular use of the network by cyclists, or for example equestrians, will be considered in the risk assessment.

Probability

The probability of a risk occurring is measured on a scale of 1 – 4.

Table 6 Probability Ratings

Probability Ratings	Score	Description	Possible Indicators
High	4	More than a 75% chance of occurrence.	<p>Vehicular, cycle and / or pedestrian flows are high.</p> <p>A key active travel link or facility is not able to be used by vulnerable road users or a person with a relevant protected characteristic, e.g. disability, who may pass through the site.</p> <p>The location of the defect and the topography of the site will mean that it is difficult to a highway user to recognise and hence avoid the defect.</p> <p>Forward visibility may be compromised.</p>
Medium	3	40 – 75% chance of occurrence.	<p>Vehicular, cycle or pedestrian flows may be high, but differing modes are less likely to share the Highway at this location.</p> <p>The change in condition may impact upon the usage of the highway asset by vulnerable road users or a person with a relevant protected characteristic, e.g. disability.</p> <p>Responsible Highway users may be able to recognise and take action to mitigate the impact of the defect.</p> <p>Forward visibility is good.</p>

Probability Ratings	Score	Description	Possible Indicators
Low	2	10 – 40% chance of occurrence.	<p>Vehicular, cycle or pedestrian flows are moderate or low.</p> <p>The change in condition will have little impact on the use of the facility by less mobile vulnerable users or a person with a relevant protected characteristic, e.g. disability.</p> <p>Different transport modes are unlikely to share the Highway at this location.</p> <p>The majority of responsible Highway users will be able to recognise and take action to mitigate the impact of the defect.</p>
Negligible	1	Less than 10% chance of occurrence.	<p>Vehicular, cycle or pedestrian flows are very low.</p> <p>The speed differential between users is very likely to be low.</p> <p>The majority of responsible Highway users will be able to avoid the defect.</p>

Risk factor

The risk factor is the product of the impact and the probability and determines the seriousness of the risk. The risk matrix determines the risk factor from the impact and probability assessments.

Table 7: Risk Assessment Matrix Defect Categories and Response Times

Probability Impact	Negligible	Low	Medium	High	Recording Requirements
Negligible	1	2	3	4	Need not be noted by the Inspector due to lower impact and/or probability. The Inspector can note these defects as enquiries for other teams.
Low	2	4	6	8	Must be recorded by the Inspector following risk assessment
Medium	3	6	9	12	
High	4	8	12	16	
Category	Cat 2C	Cat 2B	Cat 2A	Cat 1	
Response Minimum Time Frame	Consider for Forward Programme	2 months	28 days	A&B Roads & Prestige Footways: by end of the following day All other locations: 7 days	

	Category 1
	Category 2A
	Category 2B
	Category 2C
	Not Recorded 2C

These timescales commence at the point in time that the Council or its Service Provider has knowledge of the defect.

A risk assessment is undertaken and the result recorded as appropriate at the time of inspection for all defects that are identified or assessed by an inspector during safety inspection.

The Council and its service provider also receive reports about changes in the condition of its highway network from members of the public and others. These third-party reports are a valuable addition to the intelligence gained through routine safety inspection.

We encourage all members of the public who are reporting any matter that presents **significant hazard** to highway users to call 01432 261800, which operates 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. In such instances details can be ascertained that will enable risk to be objectively assessed or triaged at the time of the call. Triage will result in any recognisable defect reported being taken forward as a Category 1 Defect or recorded as a Category 2b. If triage results in a Category 1 Defect being identified then that defect will be actioned in a timescale as per Table 7 - *Risk Assessment Matrix Defect Categories and Response Times*. Timescales will commence from the time of the call.

All reports via written communication or received out of hours shall be entered into Highway Management Systems on the next working day following receipt. With the exception of those defects that have been identified through triage as Category 1 Defects, the response timescale for matters reported outside of office hours will commence from the time that any report is entered into the relevant Highways Management System.

All third-party reports that are not directly received by phone and as such cannot be objectively triaged at the time of a call, will be progressed as Category 2b Defects. This is unless the matter that is the subject of that third party report has subsequently been identified and assigned a different defect category by an inspector during any inspection. This approach to the categorisation of third-party reports is based on historical analysis of inspection data for defects that have been triggered by third party reports. That analysis shows that the majority of defects that have been reported by third parties were found to be Category 2b Defects when subsequently inspected when using the methodology of this plan. The results of this analysis are correct at the time of writing.

If at the time of inspection the inspector identifies that the matter that is the subject of a third party report should be assigned a higher category than 2b (Category 1 or 2a), then the repair will be progressed to completion within that more urgent timescale from the point of that inspection, this unless the overall timescale for repair would then exceed the originally assigned category 2b timescale, in which case the defect will be progressed to repair in accordance with that originally assigned Category 2b Defect timescale.

If at the time of inspection, additional defects are identified, the matter that is the subject of a third-party report will progress to completion in accordance with the approach described in the preceding paragraphs. All other defects identified during the inspection will progress from the time of that inspection in accordance with the defect category assigned at the time of that inspection.

If at the time of inspection, the inspector identifies that the matter that is subject of a third-party report should be assigned a lower category than 2b (Category 2c), then the repair will be recorded as a 2c Defect and considered in the Forward Programme.

Timescales are designed to enable highway defects to be actioned by a Permanent Repair wherever practicable. This balances the immediate risk posed to highway users with the ongoing risk that will be posed as a consequence of a failed temporary repair. In all cases where a repair is intended to be temporary, it shall be identified as temporary on site (for example it shall be marked as such with a 'T') and shall be recorded in Highways Management Systems as temporary. A Permanent Repair will then follow.

All timescales provide a window within which repair should be actioned. They are not to be taken as the time that will be taken to enact a repair.

9.2 Defect Remedial Actions

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RECOMMENDATION 19 – DEFECT REPAIR

A risk-based defect repair regime should be developed and implemented for all highway assets.

Risk assessment procedures provide the means of determining the appropriate course of remedial action for defects. This action is summarised in Table 8, below:

Table 8: Remedial Actions

Defect Category	Remedial Action
1	<p>Where required to protect the public from immediate harm due to the nature of the hazard created by the defect, and it is practicable to do so, risk mitigation will be undertaken at the time of inspection.</p> <p>This 'risk mitigation' action may constitute erection of appropriate warning notices, cones or fencing. The delivery of such 'risk mitigation' action will not constitute a repair unless the ongoing integrity of the action is assured through a documented system of work. With a system of work in place the action shall be considered to be a temporary repair.</p> <p>All Cat 1 Defects will be actioned as reactive work within the specified timescales either through either Temporary or Permanent Repair.</p> <p>In all cases where a repair is intended to be temporary to manage the risk, it shall be identified as temporary on site (for example it shall be such as marked with a 'T') and shall be recorded as temporary. A Permanent Repair will then follow.</p>
2	<p>All other defects. These are defects which do not represent an immediate or imminent hazard or a risk of short-term structural deterioration. They may represent a safety concern, but this will be of a lesser significance than Category 1 defects. They will be considered under three sub-categories which will determine how they are treated:</p> <p>Priority A. These are defects that may either represent a greater safety hazard or are likely to deteriorate further and become the equivalent to a Category 1 defect before the next scheduled inspection. Remedial works will be prioritised and scheduled as part of a short-term programmes of repair works, this will enable permanent repairs to be carried out. If the repair is to be actioned as part of a programmed maintenance scheme that will not take place within the timescales set by Table 7, the defect will be kept in a safe condition through a Temporary Repair that is designed to last until the programmed maintenance scheme is undertaken. Whenever such Temporary Repairs to Category 2A defects are required, they will be actioned within the timescales set by Table 7.</p> <p>Priority B. These are defects which either represent a more minor safety hazard or may deteriorate further before the next scheduled inspection but are unlikely to become the equivalent of a Category 1 Defect by the next scheduled inspection. Cat 2B Defects will be dealt with within timescales set by Table 7. Priority B defects will be prioritised and scheduled for permanent repair either as part routine maintenance work or as part of a programmed maintenance scheme. If the repair is to be actioned as part of a programmed maintenance scheme that will not take place within the timescales set by Table 7, the defect will be kept in a safe condition through a repair that is designed to last until the programmed maintenance scheme is undertaken.</p> <p>Priority C. These defects, which do not represent a safety concern and are unlikely to deteriorate further before the next scheduled inspection. Where they are assessed as being of high impact, they are noted for the next safety inspection and considered for repair as part of planned maintenance works in the Forward Programme.</p>

10 Maintenance Delivery

The repair regime considerations for the carriageway asset are set out in Appendix 2 of this plan.

The delivery of all highway maintenance activity for the Council is managed through the Public Realm Services Contract. Each year's Annual Plan identifies the resources that have been assigned to deliver the requirements of this highway maintenance plan. The Annual Plan will confirm any specific levels of services over and above the levels required by this highway maintenance plan.

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RECOMMENDATION 18 – MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS AND CLAIMS

Records should be kept of all activities, particularly safety and other inspections, including the time and nature of any response, and procedures established to ensure efficient management of claims whilst protecting the authority from unjustified or fraudulent claims.

Maintenance activities and correspondence regarding enquiries are recorded. These records are utilised for performance monitoring and in the defence against claims. The procedures for dealing with claims are also established with the Council's public realm service provider.

10.1 Review

This plan will be subject to periodic review. The frequency of review may vary and the decision to do so will be risk based with the following given as examples of what may trigger a review:

- the level of achievement of desired and measurable outcomes
- changes in legislation
- significant changes in available resource, and/or overall condition of the highway asset.

10.2 Performance Monitoring

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RECOMMENDATION 26 – PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK

A performance management framework should be developed that is clear and accessible to stakeholders as appropriate and supports the asset management strategy. (HIAMG Recommendation 4)

RECOMMENDATION 27 – PERFORMANCE MONITORING

The performance of the Asset Management Framework should be monitored and reported. It should be reviewed regularly by senior decision makers and when appropriate, improvement actions should be taken. (HIAMG Recommendation 13)

The aims and objectives of the County's highway maintenance service is set out in the Local Transport Plan. The performance management framework utilised to ensure the highway maintenance service achieves these objectives is set out in the TAMP. The specific performance indicators and targets are reviewed annually as part of the annual plan process and changes are agreed through the Public Realm Services Contract and the Council's governance processes. Operational performance is reviewed on a monthly basis. The outcomes from this maintenance plan will be monitored for quality and delivery by routine sampling of output. A poor monitoring score will result in further sampling and corrective action.

Herefordshire Council monitors the performance of its service provider through its monitoring of a set of Performance Indicators established in the Public Realm Services Contract. These are subject to periodic review to ensure that they remain current, and adequately identify the key aspects of service delivery. These are captured in the various Annexes of the Annual Plan.

APPENDIX 1 – Network Hierarchies

Table A1-1: Highway Network Hierarchy

Hierarchy	Network Hierarchy Description	Type of Road - General Description	Detailed Description	Network as Described in Local Transport Plan
1	Motorway and Trunk Roads	M50, A49T, A449T and A40T	Maintained by National Highways and outside of the jurisdiction of Herefordshire Council.	
2	Strategic Network	The principal roads required for economic and community continuity.	A network developed in line with the recommendations of the 2012 Transport Resilience Review. The network comprises of Strategic Links between main population centres and emergency sites. The majority of 'A' roads are included, as well a number of highly used 'B' roads, accesses to principal economic areas as well as roads in principal retail areas.	The Strategic Network The network that encompasses the Resilience Network plus additional highways based on a criterion focused on supporting safety and the economy of the county. A current plan of this network can be found on Herefordshire Council's Website.
3a	Main Distributor	Major Urban Network and Inter-Primary Links. Short - medium distance traffic (A and B Class).	Routes between Strategic Routes and linking urban centres to the strategic network with limited frontage access. In urban areas speed limits are usually 40mph or less, parking is restricted at peak times and there are positive measures for pedestrian safety.	The General Network The majority of the network that is not included in the Strategic Network.
3b	Secondary Distributor	Classified road (B and C class) and unclassified urban bus routes carrying local traffic with frontage access and frequent junctions.	In rural areas these roads link the larger villages and HGV generators to the Strategic and Main Distributor Network. In built up areas these roads have 30mph speed limits and very high levels of pedestrian activity with some crossing facilities including zebra crossings. On street parking is generally unrestricted except for safety reasons.	

4a	Link Road	Roads linking between the Main and Secondary Distributor Network with frontage access and frequent junctions.	In rural areas these roads link the smaller villages to the distributor roads. They are capable of varying width and not always capable of carrying two-way traffic. In urban areas they are residential or industrial interconnecting roads with 30mph speed limits, random pedestrian movements and uncontrolled parking.	
4b	Local Access Road	Roads serving limited numbers of properties carrying only access traffic.	In rural areas these roads serve small settlements and provide access to individual properties and land. They are often unsuitable for HGV. In urban areas they are often residential loop roads or cul de sac.	
5	Rural Access Lanes	Roads serving occasional rural properties and providing access to the countryside carrying only access traffic.		
6a	Minor Access Tracks	Routes serving single or infrequent properties and farms. These routes are often unsuitable for HGV's and carry very light traffic flows, much of which may require access for agricultural purposes. These routes may be used more frequently by walkers looking to access the countryside. This category includes metalled Byways Open to All Traffic (BOAT).		
6b	Unsurfaced Routes	Routes not normally used by vehicular traffic.	These routes are unsurfaced routes across the landscape which are not usually used by vehicular traffic and are subject to a maintenance level of service commensurate with our PROW network.	The Low Priority Network In order to ensure that our objectives can be afforded, it will be necessary to reduce the levels of service that will be delivered to an identified component of the network.

For further details relating to other aspects of the public highway network are set out in tables A1-2 and A1-3. Further details on the maintenance regime for public rights of way can be found in Appendix 3.

Table A1-2: Active Travel Network Hierarchy

Category	Category Name	Brief Description	Network as Described in LTP
1	Prestige Areas	Prestige Areas in towns and cities with exceptionally high usage. These may be areas of pedestrianisation or those areas where enhanced materials are utilised.	The Strategic Network
2	Primary Active Travel Network	Busy urban areas, such as near retail and employment areas. These will also be the main active travel routes linking interchanges between different modes of transport, such as railways, bus stops etc.	May form part of the Strategic Network, but where this is not the case forms part of the General Network
3	Secondary Active Travel Network	Medium usage routes through local areas feeding into primary routes, local shopping centres, large schools and industrial centres	
4	Link Active Travel Network	Linking local access active travel routes through urban areas and busy rural footways, including other schools.	General Network
5	Local Access Active Travel Network	Active travel routes associated with lower usage such as internal estate routes and cul de sacs which provide connection onto higher tier routes.	Low Priority Network

Table A1-3: Public Rights of Way Network Hierarchy

Category	Category Name	Description
1	Recreation Routes	Promoted rural and Urban footpaths and bridleways often well used.
2	Public Footpaths	Urban and Rural rights of way registered as public footpaths.
3	Bridleways	Urban and Rural rights of way registered as public Bridleways.
4	Byways Open to All Traffic (BOAT)	Urban and Rural rights of way registered as BOATs.

APPENDIX 2 – Carriageway Repair Regime

1.1 The Defect Repair Regime for Carriageways

Carriageways represent the biggest the highway asset in Herefordshire and as a consequence result in the majority of safety defects. Each section of the carriageway naturally has a life cycle, and we seek to capture this in our lifecycle planning. That lifecycle is illustrated in Diagram 1 below.

Implementing well designed repairs is more cost effective over the whole life of the carriageway asset. This because hastily designed and delivered ‘make safe’ repairs, whilst addressing the immediate risk, may need to be revisited and rectified prior to the next planned treatment, increasing whole life cost. Numerous make safe repairs can limit the treatment options available to address the future condition of the asset. Put simply, poorly designed repair regimes have the potential to significantly increase whole life cost, as is illustrated in Diagram 2.

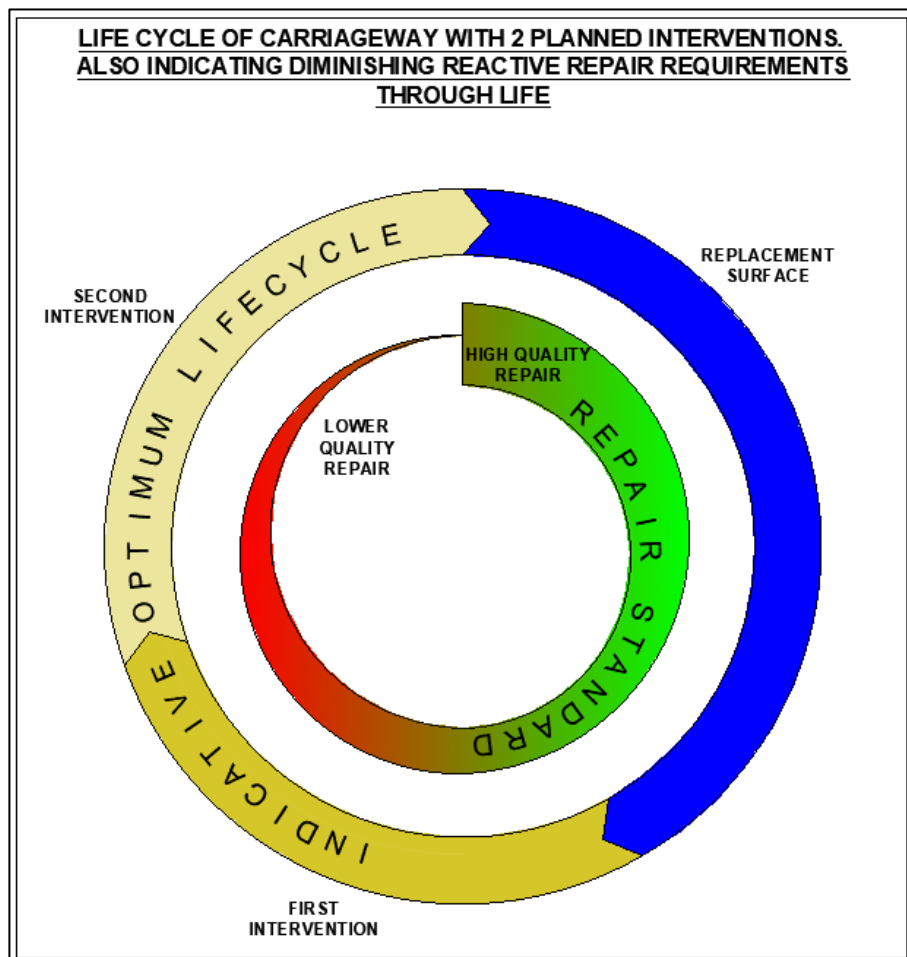


Diagram 1 - Diminishing (surface) Repair Quality Needs Through Carriageway Lifecycle

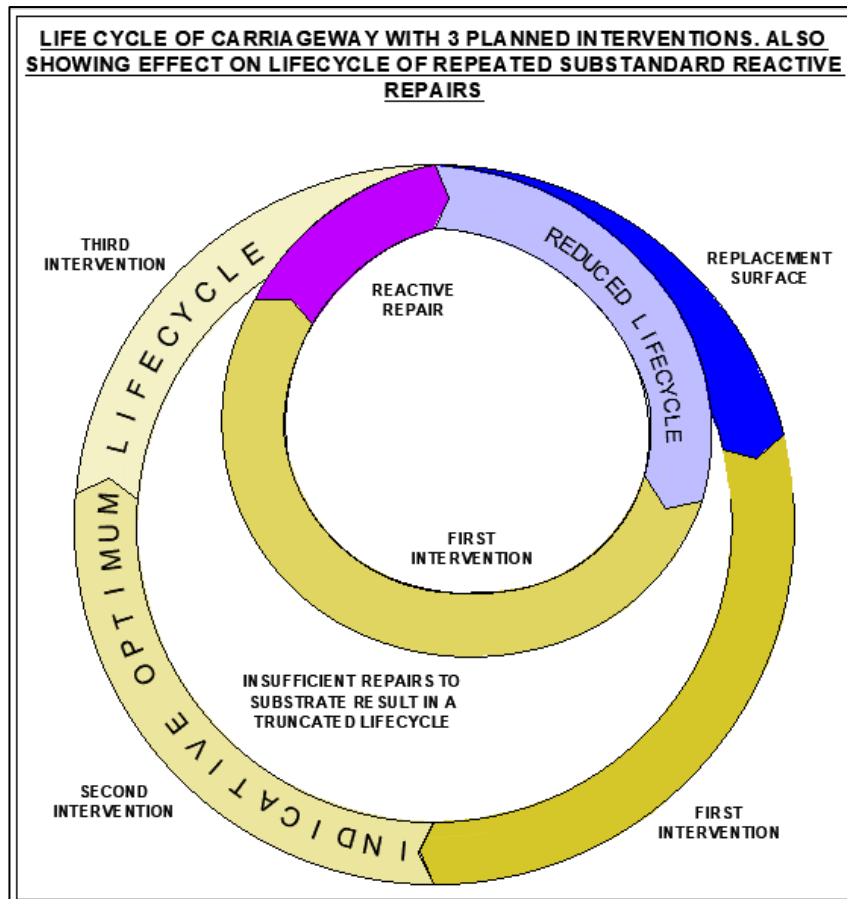


Diagram 2 - Consequences of Insufficient Repairs on Carriageway lifecycle (structure and surface)

In all cases a 'right first time' approach should be taken to repair. Each of the repair options has a service life of its own, for example a cut out, machine laid patch in an asphalt material may have a service life of around 10 years, whereas a hand compacted 6mm cold laid repair may have a service life of 12 to 18 months.

If the residual service life of the carriageway surface in question is in fact drawing to its close, then deploying a reinstatement or repair that has a 12-to-18-month service life is likely to be both adequate and will represent good value. However, if the service life remaining is more significant, then a higher quality reinstatement or repair should, ideally, be deployed in order to secure the condition of the carriageway or as best as is able to, over its residual life. In some cases the preferred response may be a larger patching or paving scheme as assessed by the relevant team.

The residual service life of most carriageways can be gauged by reference to the current programme and the TAMP.

1.2 The Impact of Drainage on Carriageway Assets

Bituminous materials deteriorate because of two primary factors - oxidation and water ingress. Effective drainage will assist in slowing the deterioration of the carriageway asset and reduce the need for repeat repairs.

The development of an effective Life Cycle Plan for the drainage asset will help secure asset life and ensure that the correct intelligence is being fed into the programming process.

Diagram 3 below shows the impact that ineffective drainage has on the lifecycle of the carriageway.

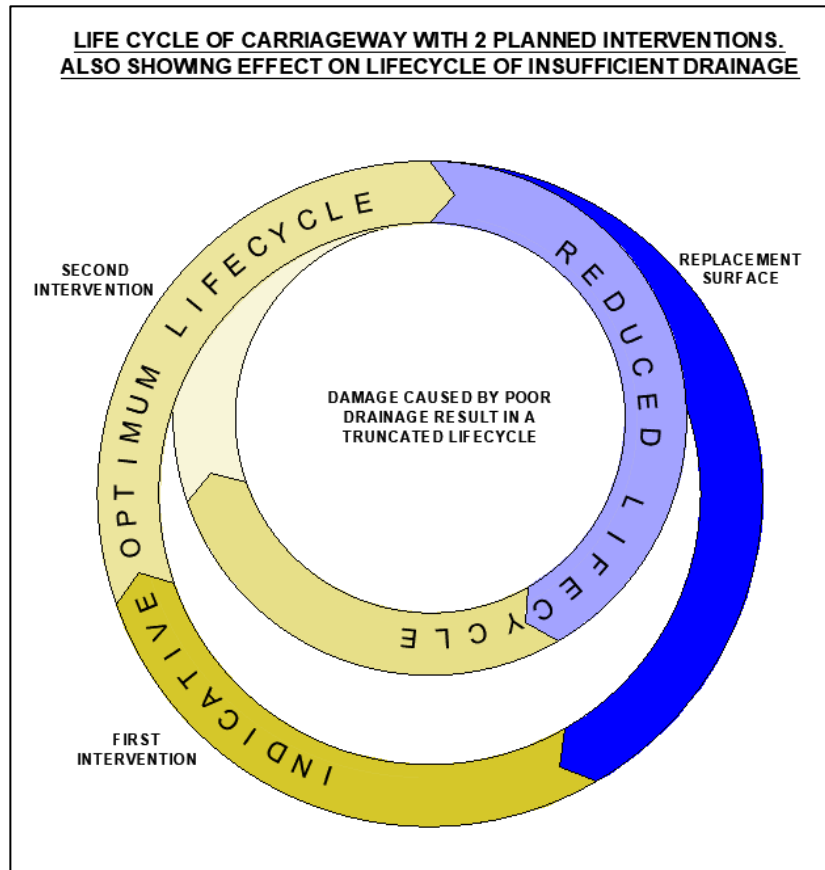


Diagram 3 - Consequences of ineffective Drainage

1.3 Carriageway Reinstatement (Repair) Options

An approved specification and a set of standard detail drawings of the full suite of repair options that will be used is maintained by the Council and its provider as part of the contract between them. This will be regularly reviewed and updates included as part of the Annual Plan.

Responding to Escalation in Demand

It is important to recognise that during and following periods of severe weather and prolonged winter conditions the demand on this service may reach levels that exceed the capacity of the resources that are immediately available to the Council to respond. Triggers will be set in each year's Annual Plan for the number of recorded category 1 and 2a defects that will trigger an adjustment in the allowable repair regimes. It is intended that such action would only be taken for such periods as are necessary to meet such escalation in demand through enabling a higher volume of repairs to be delivered using the available resources.

Innovative repair techniques should be considered where appropriate and evaluated for inclusion in the options utilised on the network.

APPENDIX 3 – Public Rights of Way

Herefordshire has a recorded network of 2159 miles (3475 km) of public rights of way (PROW) at the time of writing which consist of:

- 1873 miles (3014 kms) of footpaths
- 257 miles (414 kms) of bridleways
- 20 miles (32 kms) of byways open to all traffic (BOATS)
- 4 miles (6km) of restricted byway

The network provides important access across the county for the community; it also provides a valuable amenity function.

Legislation

The following are the main pieces of legislation relating to PROW:

- National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949
- The Countryside Act 1968
- Highways Act 1980
- The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981
- The Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000
- Equality Act 2010
- Deregulation Act 2015

Definitive Map and Statement

The legal record of public rights of way is the definitive map and statement, prepared and maintained under the provisions of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, as amended by the Countryside and Rights of Way (CROW) Act 2000 and the Deregulation Act 2015. The definitive map and statement provide conclusive evidence of the existence of rights of way and are referred to whenever questions or disputes arise concerning rights of way.

The Council maintains the Definitive Map of Public Rights of Way for Herefordshire. The Definitive Map is used by the Ordnance Survey as its source of information for publicising rights of way on its Landranger and Explorer maps, and so the Council seeks to ensure that the record is as accurate and up to date as possible, within its available resources.

The definitive map and statement can only be updated by making Modification Orders, which legally alter the documents to show changes to the rights of way network which have already taken place. These modifications come in two forms:

- Legal Event Modification Order (LEMO)
- Evidential Modification Order (EMO)

The Council has published a statement of priorities setting out how applications for Definitive Map Modification applications will be managed in order to add benefit to the network and maximise usage of current resources (see ROWIP).

Network Condition

There is no statutory duty for the Council to carry out condition inspections of the PROW network however Promoted Routes are inspected on a 3-year cycle.

Network condition is monitored by reports from parish and town councils, members of the public, other stakeholders and by ad-hoc inspections by staff. Inspections are also carried out on a risk-based approach as outlined above.

Maintenance

The public rights of way network is to be maintained with regard to the character and usage of the route in question and the approach to network condition set out above.

The responsibility of maintaining the network falls to both landowners and Herefordshire Council. Landowners are responsible for maintaining stiles, gates and other structures used to enable access through hedges, fences and other boundaries. Landowners are also responsible for ensuring rights of way do not become blocked by obstacles such as crops, trees, and overhanging vegetation. The Council is responsible for maintaining signposts, waymarking, watercourse crossings, steps and surface vegetation. They are also responsible for ensuring landowners meet their legal obligations.

The Council will investigate problems reported on the network. Whilst investigating issues, potential access improvements such as replacing stiles with gates or improving the surface may also be identified. Once work has been identified either the landowner will be requested to carry out the work or the work will be carried out by the Council depending on the nature of the problem.

This policy, which forms part of the Highways maintenance policy, is to be used in conjunction with the following:

- Highway Safety Inspection Policy (HMP App. 2)
- Highways Enforcement Policy (HMP App. 9)
- Rights of Way Improvement Plan (ROWIP 2),

Rights of Way Improvement Plan

Herefordshire has produced a statutory Rights of Way Improvement Plan (ROWIP 2), which gives comprehensive detail on PROW management in Herefordshire. This document should not be used as a replacement for ROWIP2 and that plan should always be used to inform any decisions to be made.

APPENDIX 4 – Structures

Structures are an important asset to the County and enable movement across or past obstacles that would otherwise prevent or delay transit. The function provided by many of the county's structures is vital for community and economic connectivity.

The TAMP and Structures Life Cycle Plan should be referred to for details of the asset management approach utilised for this asset group.

This policy covers certain highway structures that Council is responsible for maintaining, specifically:

- Highway Bridges with spans of 1.5m or more
- Footbridges of spans 7.5m or more that carry PROW; and
- Retaining Walls 1.35m high
- Subways

Moiety Bridges are structures on the County boundary and are the joint responsibility of the Council and the neighbouring authority. Amenity Bridges are bridges owned by the Council generally found away from the highway network in parks and open spaces.

Private structures are those adjacent to, over or under highways that are vested in and maintained by third parties.

Inspections

Highway Bridges and Footbridges will have regular inspections carried out to monitor their condition and to ensure, so far as is reasonably practical, that they are safe and fit for lawful use by the public, identify maintenance needs and enable a prioritised maintenance programme to be developed. Inspections will be undertaken in accordance with the Code of Practice for Well Managed Highway Infrastructure (2016). General Inspections will be undertaken every two years, except when a Principal Inspection is due to occur. Principal Inspections intervals will generally be undertaken every six years, but the interval may be increased or decreased if assessed to be appropriate and agreed as such in each year's Annual Plan. Such assessments will be based on the risk-based approach outlined in the Code of Practice and BD63 Inspection of Highways Structures (2007) and consequence of failure and be recorded. As per the requirements of BD63, where the interval between successive Principal Inspections has been increased beyond six years, a General Inspection shall be carried out in their place.

In certain circumstances more frequent safety inspections may be required, for example, when a structure is known or suspected to be subject to a rapid change in condition or circumstances. In such circumstances the Supervising Engineer should supplement the General Inspection with other inspections/activities, for example:

- Special Safety Inspections – may be appropriate where specific parts of the structure require more frequent inspection to ascertain condition, e.g. bridge piers situated in a fast-flowing river. Other prompts for a Special Inspection might be where visible defects are not explained by a single cause, or where the extent of a defect needs to be ascertained. In these situations further investigation and testing would be appropriate.
- Monitoring Safety Inspections – periodic or continuous monitoring may be appropriate to check against a specific problem from worsening, e.g. crack growth and deformations.

Special Inspections and Monitoring Inspections will be deployed based on risk.

Amenity Bridges and Private Bridges will only have Safety Inspections carried out.

Retaining walls will be inspected following identification of possible defects stemming from Highway Safety Inspections or enquires from members of the public.

Prioritisation of Maintenance

Maintenance to address defects is prioritised using the risk-based approach outlined above and as set out in the Structures Lifecycle Plan. Category 2 defects are held in the structures forward programme and are prioritised based on Asset Management principals. This includes the following factors:

- The hierarchy of the highway/route the structure supports.
- The most efficient and effective use of funds
- The timing of the intervention and the escalation of cost should a maintenance window be missed.
- Meeting the Local Transport Plan Objectives
- Public Interest

Statutory Consultation

A number of the County's bridges are listed structures or Scheduled Ancient Monuments. Where this is the case, we will consult with and seek approval for works to these structures from the appropriate Heritage Authority prior to undertaking maintenance.

Many of our bridges cross water courses that are regulated by the Environment Agency. Where this is the case, we will consult with and seek approval for works to these structures from the Environment Agency prior to undertaking maintenance.

Capacity Assessment and Substandard Structures

Between 1989 and 1999, as the result of a European Directive, Highway Authorities were charged by Central Government with assessing the strength of bridges carrying the adopted highway and, where appropriate, carry out strengthening to ensure adequacy for the 40 tonne European Standard introduced to roads in the UK on 1 January 1999. These assessments are also utilised in the planning of abnormal load movements, as detailed below.

Assessments are carried out in accordance with the *Design Manual for Roads and Bridges (DMRB) Volume 3, Section 4, Part 3 'BD21'* or its successive developments. In the event of the assessment indicating inadequate strength, a further assessment is undertaken. For road over rail bridges this is to BE4, to determine whether the load-bearing obligation for the structure was met.

A structure that does not meet the requirements of standards used in its assessment is termed a 'substandard structure'. The forward programme of structures maintenance works will include schemes to deal with any shortfalls of strength and meet the desired loading requirements for the route. Schemes are prioritised alongside other Cat 2C structure defects and given the available resources it is likely that a number of substandard structures will exist for a prolonged period on the network.

Substandard Structures will be managed in accordance with DMRB: *BD 79 The Management of Sub-standard Highway Structures*. Prior to strengthening or replacement, all substandard structures will be considered as representing a risk to the public. Where such works have to be deferred, detailed risk assessments are to be undertaken and where appropriate interim measures implemented as soon as possible. If there is deemed to be an immediate risk to public safety formal interim measures which effectively mitigate the risk will be put in place until the identified remedial action is implemented.

Management of Abnormal Loads

An abnormal load is any vehicle that is outside the classification of normal permitted traffic by virtue of its gross weight, length, width or axle configuration according to current axle configurations.

Abnormal loads will be processed in accordance with the elementary system as defined in the Code of Practice for the Management of Highway Structures and in accordance with the requirements of the Construction and Use Regulations.

Rail Bridges

Bridges carrying railways or waterways over highways are usually owned by the respective Boards or their successors. Adequate consultation and liaison take place before either the other owner or the highway authority does any work that could impact upon the interests of the other.

Disused railway bridges are the responsibility of the residual body of the Rail Property Board. However, such disused bridges will be inspected for safety as part of our inspection regime.

At the time of writing, within the county the railway network is divided into two areas, Network Rail (Wales), are responsible for the Newport to Shrewsbury line and Network Rail (Western) are responsible for the Hereford to Worcester line.

There are three types of live Rail Bridges:

- Bridges vested in and maintained by a Rail Network Operator, normally those carrying the railway over the highway.
- Bridges vested in the Council and maintained by a Rail Network Operator as the Council's agent, normally by agreement.
- Bridges vested in and maintained by the Council, normally those bridges carrying the highway over the railway.

Bridges in the first two categories will not be routinely inspected by the Council.

Responsibilities for Rail Bridges

- The Rail Network Operator is responsible for the maintenance and repair of their bridges excluding (in most cases) the surfacing, kerbs and footways.

- By virtue of Section 116 of the Transport Act 1968, highway surfaces over railway bridges are maintained at public expense by the Council excluding bridge waterproofing and bridge expansion joints.
- Rail Network Operators are responsible for ensuring that the bridge is capable of carrying loads in accordance with BE4 design loads for bridges constructed at or before 1968. This translates to 24-tonne capacity for live loading to today's standards. Where the bridge is known to have a capacity less than the required design loading, Rail Network Operators is responsible for any signing and costs associated with this weight restriction.
- The Council is responsible for ensuring that the parapet meets modern load requirements; Rail Network Operators are responsible for ensuring the general integrity of the parapet.

Road-Rail Incursions

Where there is the possibility of a road vehicle getting onto the railway, sites are jointly assessed with the appropriate Rail Network Operator for the risk of road-rail incursions. This inspection and risk assessment is carried out on a 3 yearly cycle as recommended in the DfT document Managing the Accidental Obstruction of the Railway by Road Vehicles (2003).

Low Bridges

The Council is responsible for signing of low bridge sites across its highway network. Where highway works and/or signage will affect a Rail Operators Bridge the Council will notify and agree requirements (as far as is reasonably practical) for the works with the Operator.

Moiety Bridges

The Council will agree inspection and maintenance liability works for Moiety Bridges with neighbouring authorities. They will seek to work in coordination with neighbouring authorities to ensure Moiety Bridges are maintained to the same standards as the rest of the bridge stock.

Privately Owned Structures

Under Section 41 of the Highway Act, the Council is responsible for ensuring the safety of the general public when using the highway.

- Where the bridge is owned and maintained by an experienced and responsible owner, the Council shall inform that owner of any defects that require attention. Any defects shall be corrected at the expense of that owner.

- Where the bridge is owned and maintained by a member of the general public, charitable group, resident group etc. then an agreement will be made with that group or individual to ensure the safety of the general public and, if necessary, consideration shall be given to the use of existing powers under Section 93 of the Highways Act 1980 to transfer the ownership and maintenance of the structure to the Council.

Emergency Works Affecting Other Owners' Bridges and Structures

Defects affecting other owners' structures or bridges that affect the highway should be reported to the Council. Where damage to the structure is considered to affect the strength and/or integrity of the structure the Council shall immediately request an inspection and take appropriate action to maintain the safety of the public, either directly or in liaison with the landowner. Any costs associated with the inspection, on site attendance by the contractor and repairs shall normally be recovered from the owner.

Statutory Undertakers' Apparatus

Work done on, under or adjacent to Highway Structures by Statutory Undertakers (or their Contractors) shall always be inspected by Council's Structures staff or their Engineering Consultant's staff to ensure that damage to the structure and/or any waterproofing membrane is avoided.

APPENDIX 5 – Highway Drainage and Flood Assets

Highway drainage systems are installed to capture surface water run-off to reduce flooding and protect the fabric of the road. Flood alleviation schemes are installed to reduce the risk of flooding to settlements.

The Council is responsible for maintaining the following:

- Drainage assets that have been installed by or on behalf of the Local Authority and where responsibility for these assets has not been novated to the Riparian Landowner.
- Drainage systems for the sole purpose of accepting surface water run-off from the highway.
- Drainage assets that cross the highway, i.e. pipes or culverts carrying watercourses.
- Flooding alleviation assets that have been adopted by the Council.
- Historic drainage assets or watercourse on Council owned property, where the Council has Riparian duties.

Many open ditch drainage systems are historic and are the responsibility of the adjoining riparian landowner. The Council has powers to cleanse and restore the profile of these ditches as appropriate.

Policy

- To provide safe and efficiently maintained highway drainage structures
- To identify through a system of risk-based inspections, highway drainage and flood alleviation systems requiring maintenance
- To prioritise any necessary maintenance (repairs or cyclical) identified to utilise the available funds most effectively.
- Where a statutory duty exists on the Council to act and the cause of the issue is due to a third party's fault, the Council will seek to recover the associated costs from the negligent party.

Table A4: Frequency of Ordinary and Cyclic Maintenance

Drainage Asset Type	Minimum Frequency of Maintenance
Gullies, Catchpits and Interceptors	The features recorded on the inventory are to be cleansed at a frequency that is designed in response to the risk that the consequence of blockage will present to highway users. This is to, so far as is reasonably practicable, reduce the risk to highway users to an acceptable level through planned operations
Soakaways, Gully Connections, Piped Drainage Systems, Piped Grips, Grips, Grills, Filter Drains, Fin Drains, Roadside Ditches that are the responsibility of the Council, Culverts, Balancing Ponds, Sluices, Tidal Flaps etc	Inspected and cleaned out when blockages are identified through highway safety inspection or issues reported through third party reports.
High Risk Drainage Assets	Risk based approach to establish specific inspection and cyclical maintenance requirements
Pumps and Other Specialised Equipment	In accordance with manufacturer's maintenance recommendations

The number of high-risk assets with cyclical inspection and maintenance regimes will be identified and set within the Annual Plan.

APPENDIX 6 – New Roads and Street Works Act 1991 (NRSWA)

The Authority has a duty to:

- Maintain the street works register.
- Co-ordinate works in the street.
- Grant a street works licenses.

The Authority also has the powers to:

- Inspect public utilities' street works
- Carry out investigatory works to ascertain compliance
- Carry out remedial works and recharge the utility company
- Direct utilities in the timing and duration of their works
- Charge for prolonged occupation
- Prosecute utilities for failure to co-operate or carry out works correctly
- Charge for a temporary traffic order
- Charge for works or damage caused by a diversion
- Enter into an agreement with an undertaker to carry out street works

Inspections of Works

Under Section 72 of the New Roads and Street Works Act 1991, the Council is empowered to carry out inspections of undertaker's street works. Following the NRSWA Code of Practice, a structured random sample of works are inspected at various stages during the works and reinstatement guarantee period as follows:

- Category A inspections - Undertaken during the progress of the works.
- Category B inspections - Undertaken within six months following reinstatement.
- Category C inspections - Undertaken within the three months preceding the end of the guarantee period.

The number of sample inspections for any year shall be based on the actual number of units of inspection averaged over the previous three financial years for each undertaker. The number of inspections in each of the above categories shall be 10% of the number of inspection units, thus each year 30% of an undertaker's inspection units over the previous three years will be inspected. The Council may inspect a higher number of inspection units however payments for additional inspections above the 30% is not recoverable from the undertaker. Undertakers are notified of any defects identified through these inspections and the undertakers are then responsible for carrying out any required remedial works.

Defective Reinstatements

In addition to the sample inspections mentioned above, the Council has the power under Section 72 of NRSWA to carry out such investigatory works as appear necessary to check on whether or not an undertaker has complied with the duties placed on it in respect of reinstatement of the street. This may be in the form of visual inspections or involve the digging up of a street or carrying out other investigatory techniques such as a coring programme. If such a failure is disclosed the undertaker is notified and are then responsible for the reimbursement of the investigatory works and for carrying out any remedial works. In safety related circumstances, the Council may intervene and undertake precautionary works if the relevant utility cannot be identified, contacted or mobilised to respond. NRSWA provides the Council with the powers to recover all costs incurred.

Defective Apparatus

Upon discovery or report of defective utility apparatus, the Council will inform the relevant undertaker of the defect and may issue a Section 81 Defective Apparatus Notice. Where the undertaker fails to maintain the defective apparatus after it has been reported or where immediate emergency work is required to make a site safe, the Council has the power to execute any emergency works needed as a consequence of the failure and may recover from the undertaker any costs reasonably incurred in executing the works.

Restriction of Works Following Substantial Road or Utility Works

Under Section 58 of NRSWA, where substantial road works (resurfacing or carriageway reconstruction) are to be carried out, the Council has the power to restrict the execution of Streetworks for a period of three years for resurfaced roads and 5 years for new or reconstructed roads, for other major works the duration of restriction is twelve months following the completion of the works. Advance notice in the form of a proposed restriction is given at least 3 months prior to the commencement of the major works to enable undertakers to carry out any works required before the restriction becomes enforced.

Coordination of Streetworks

The Council has a duty to coordinate the execution of Streetworks undertaken on its network. This duty extends to the coordination of the Council's own works and the works of other street authorities that affect the Council's network. In addition, the Council has the power to give directions to undertakers as to the timing and placement of apparatus if proposed works are likely to cause serious disruption to traffic.

APPENDIX 7 – Adoption of Highway Infrastructure

The Council may by agreement, under Section 38 or 278 of the Highway Act 1980, adopt highways so that they become public highways and maintainable at the public expense. Typically, such agreements relate to new highway developments that are being constructed by third parties. Where this is the case inspections will be undertaken by the Council to ensure that the works are being constructed in accordance with the approved drawings and specifications. This ensures that the Council does not inherit undue maintenance liabilities beyond the scope of the Section 38 agreement.

The cost of making the agreement, approval of proposed designs, specifications and inspections are all met by the third party under the terms of the Agreement. On-going maintenance liability of any non-standard infrastructure is funded via a commuted sum, paid by the third party.

Unless agreed otherwise, Section 38 inspections will be undertaken at the following stages:

- The commencement of works
- At completion of formation levels
- Prior to backfilling drainage
- At completion of sub-base levels
- At completion of binder course levels
- Prior to the commencement of the maintenance period
- Prior to adoption

Inspections may also be carried out at any other occasion deemed necessary by the inspector. Identified defects are remedied at the third party's expense.

Remote footways forming a separate access to the individual or small group of properties shall not normally be adopted, nor shall separate areas allocated for vehicle parking/or access to remote garages and parking areas and drives to individual or small groups of properties.

There is scope for external bodies to manage and maintain planted and landscaped areas of designated highway subject to agreement and licence arrangements with the Council.

APPENDIX 8 – Licensing

The Council, as the Highway Authority, has the power to enter into agreement for licensing a number of activities on the public highway. These include the following under the Highways Act 1980:

- Section 38: Adoption of new developments by agreement
- Section 115-E: Permitting occupation of the highway (e.g. Table and Chairs)
- Section 116: Stopping - up or diversion of highways
- Section 139: Control of builders' skips
- Section 142: Licence to plant trees in highway
- Section 169: Control of scaffolding
- Section 171: Control of deposit of building materials and making of excavations in street
- Section 177: Restriction on construction of buildings over highways
- Section 178: Restrictions on placing rails, beams etc. over highways
- Section 184: Vehicle crossings over footways and verges

Inspections are undertaken to identify un-licensed activities on the public highway and to ensure that, where licenses are in place, any required precautionary measures are being adhered to.

APPENDIX 9 – Winter Service, Weather and Other Emergencies

Winter Service

Ice and snow affect the safety of the traveling public and the availability and reliability of the highway network throughout the winter period. As such the successful delivery of the winter service is key to supporting the economic and social well-being of Herefordshire.

The Council's policies and strategies associated with winter service are detailed in the Winter Service Plan available via the Council's website.

Weather and Other Emergencies

The management of major emergencies will tend to be led by the emergency services. As a Highway Authority has an important role in ensuring resilience and continuity of service of the highway network. The Council will seek to minimise the impact of extreme weather events, flooding, natural disasters and civil emergencies by coordinating their resources with emergency services. The Council will develop and maintain plans to enable efficient and effective response to highway related emergencies.

During such events Reactive Maintenance processes are typically adopted to manage the immediate effects.

In the event of severe flooding in Herefordshire, procedures defined in the County Flood Plan will apply. At such times, the aim of the Highway Maintenance Service is to endeavour to provide its normal range of services, as far as is practicable. Emergency support provided by voluntary agencies will enhance our response capabilities. The Council will liaise with utility companies and national agencies, including Government, where necessary.

We may also implement the Major Emergency Response Plan and activate the following:

- Traffic diversion schemes (incl. publicity thereof), in conjunction with the Police and Highways Agency
- Undertaking emergency engineering work
- Maintaining school transport services
- Issuing sandbags
- Officers attending Control Centres
- Co-ordinating the Council's response from its Emergency Control Centre and Directorate Control Points

- Implementing and co-ordinating voluntary action support
- Arranging emergency transport facilities
- Assisting in the provision of a media and information service, including a public help line telephone number which has been notified through the media services
- Providing traffic diversion information, in conjunction with the Police and Highways Agency

In the event of other major emergencies affecting Herefordshire the procedures defined in the Major Emergency Response Plan apply. We will respond alongside other organisations with the role of the Service is summarised below:

- Provide staff, equipment, transport, plant and other resources
- Maintain essential routes and bridges
- Provide geographical and technical information
- Carry out enforcement duties
- Implement elements of the relevant County Emergency Plans

Following such events and where the opportunity exists to do so, we seek to obtain grant aid to:

- Meet the cost of reactive measures.
- Provide alleviation works.

Where successful in its application, the Council directs all resources obtained, in accordance with any specified spending instructions, and, for highway maintenance, towards routine and programmed works to mitigate the long-term effects of such events on the sustainability of the highway network.

APPENDIX 10 – Street Lighting, Signals and Signs

Street Lighting

The Council understands that the provision of lighting can provide a safer, more secure night-time environment and its proper management is important to minimise environmental impact.

There is no statutory duty to provide street lighting but where it exists then we have a duty to maintain it. The Council's approach to the provision of street lighting is as follows:

- Roads in rural areas are generally not lit except where problems of night-time road safety and perceived personal security exist
- Roads in urban areas are generally lit

Traffic Signals

Due to the rural nature of the county, the Council is only responsible for a limited number of traffic signals. Traffic signals provide a vital role in enabling efficient movement of traffic in urban areas as well as safe crossing points for pedestrians.

Within Hereford City the traffic signals form part of an Urban Traffic Control (UTC) system. This is configured to provide a more efficient traffic flow through the city. A key feature of this is including the various components of the UTC in the Traffic Signals lifecycle plan so that it always remains current.

Illuminated Signs

Illuminated signs are generally provided in urban areas where visibility of traffic signage at night is specifically required.

All street lighting, traffic signals and illuminated signs units managed by the Council shall be maintained to a standard that ensures so far as reasonably practicable, their safe, economic, effective and reliable operation. The approach will be detailed in the Council's TAMP and specific street lighting and traffic signals Life Cycle Plan. The Council shall:

- Carry out planned inspections that attempt to act in a preventative manner to reduce in-service faults; these will take place on a cyclical basis on all electrical assets to test for satisfactory operation and verify the inventory details.
- Seek to maintain an up-to-date inventory of all illuminated street assets to assist satisfactory implementation and management of the network and to ensure accurate assessment of the electrical energy consumed.

- Have reactive repair capability to ensure prompt responses to identified defects within timescales appropriate to the problem.
- In conjunction with our inspections, undertake preventative maintenance on the integral components, to seek to achieve the optimum life of each as well as maintaining acceptable levels of illumination.
- Utilise industry best practice guides, such as the Code of Practice for Street Lighting (“Well Lit Highways”) to develop specific and detailed processes and procedures.

Non-Illuminated Traffic Signs

The Council will via regular highway inspections identify signs that present a risk to users. These defects will be dealt with in the timescales set out in this document.

All signs will be in accordance with the current Traffic Signs Manual and the Traffic Sign Regulations and General Directions (2016). Post/sign type, material and size will be as appropriate for the particular site.

Minimising Sign Clutter

Well-managed Highway Infrastructure – A Code of Practice

RECOMMENDATION 36 – MINIMISING CLUTTER

Opportunities to simplify signs and other street furniture and to remove redundant items should be taken into account when planning highway infrastructure maintenance activities.

The Council recognises the potential impact that excessive signs can have on the environment. Where opportunities have been identified, the Council will work in line with Department for Transport and recognised guidance to undertake audits of areas of the highway where signage clutter may exist. Signs and street clutter that have the potential to be removed will be identified and consultation undertaken with stakeholders prior to carrying out signage improvement works.

APPENDIX 11 – Skid Resistance

As a road surface ages the skidding resistance will change, typically this will result in a reduction of skid resistance. There are a number of factors contributing to this, traffic flow, weathering, seasonal changes, geographic location and the type of stone and binder used in the road surface. The maintenance of adequate levels of skidding resistance on running surfaces is an important aspect of highways maintenance, and one that contributes significantly to highways safety.

Skidding resistance is an important carriageway attribute as it ensures that vehicles can grip the carriageway, particularly when cornering or breaking. Loss of control because of poor skidding resistance can be a cause or contributory factor in accidents. A road surface provides its skidding resistance from its texture, which comes primarily from the aggregate.

As the surface ages and is used it gradually loses its original texture properties; this is not uniform however and specific sections of road will be subjected to increased wear i.e. bends, junctions etc. Accordingly, to ensure potential risks are managed effectively, there is a need to monitor skid resistance, particularly on the more heavily trafficked parts of the network.

The Council will seek to minimise the risk of skidding on high-speed roads by undertaking a programme of skid resistance testing, treatment and warning measures.

Relevant Documentation

- Well Managed Highways Infrastructure: A Code of Practice (UKRLG)
- Traffic Signs Regulations and General Directions (2016).
- Traffic Signs Manual – Chapter 4 (2013).

Policy

This policy follows recommendations for methods of working set down in Section B 5.6 of the Code of Practice.

Skid resistance testing is carried out annually on the A Road Network and the B road sections that constitute the higher speed 'Strategic Network' (as Appendix 1) as defined in section AM13 of Herefordshire Council's Local Transport Plan (2016-2031), these are detailed at the end of this section. Additionally ad hoc testing on sections or sites may be undertaken, where a risk-based review has identified the specific need, anywhere on the network where the surfacing is suspect or where there is a history of loss of control accidents. The method of any ad hoc testing may include the use of other survey methods to provide data in a timely fashion.

Sites that are below the investigatory level and a subsequent investigation requires maintenance intervention, works are prioritised for maintenance in an annual surfacing programme, or the forward programme.

Measurement of skidding resistance

Our existing approach to maintaining skid resistance levels has evolved over time to meet the changing needs of our network. Surveys have been carried out in both directions of the A road network and Broad sections that are part of the Strategic Network annually. The Sideways Force Coefficient Routine Investigation Machine (SCRIM) (in accordance with BS 7941, Part 1) is usually used to collect skid resistance data. The results will be calculated using 100m SCRIM Data, where the average of 10m values is taken to form the 100m value. The primary ranking will be done on this value set.

Investigatory Levels

The findings of these surveys will be used (in conjunction with accident statistics and other data sources) to analyse trends and to initiate further investigations to assess maintenance needs to ensure the safety of road users. Investigatory Levels are based upon the recommended levels set out in Table A11.1 below:

Site Category	Definition	Minimum Investigatory Level
B	Dual Carriageway non-event	0.30
C	Single Carriageway non-event	0.35
Q	Approaches to and across major or minor junctions, and approaches to roundabouts	0.45
K	Approaches to pedestrian crossings and other high-risk situations	0.50
R	Roundabout	0.45
G1	Gradient 5-10%, longer than 50m	0.45
G2	Gradient 10%, longer than 50m	0.45
S2	Bend (not subject to 40mph limit or lower) >100m and <500m	0.45
S3	Bend (not subject to 40mph limit or lower) <100m	0.55

Table A10.1: Site Categories and SCRIM Investigatory Levels

Investigatory levels will be reviewed regularly as required by the network developments, the time interval between reviews shall not exceed 5 years. This period reflects the rate at which the highway network evolves but enables reviews that are more frequent if network developments require them.

This review will take into account site investigations that recommend alterations in IL, but a network level review is not required to implement single site changes as required. The review will be undertaken by experienced assessors and the results recorded and retained as the basis for future reviews.

Ranking Sites at or Below the Investigatory Level

All sites at, or below the Investigatory Level (IL) will be analysed and ranked annually. Sites are then grouped into categories based on the scoring of the ranking process outlined in the following paragraphs.

The ranked list is generated using commercially available software from WDM. This software considers the survey data and other relevant data sets, as set out below. The sites are ranked taking into account key parameters that are combined to establish a prioritisation of the system. The ranking points are distributed across these parameters in the following way:

Condition Parameter	Ranking Column Name in Scheme Manager	Maximum Score for Parameter	Minimum Score for Parameter
SCRIM Definition	PMS	50	0
Texture Definition	Texture Depth Rank	20	0
Collision Data	Herefordshire Dataset	20	0
Historic Cluster Site	Herefordshire Dataset	10	0
Overall Ranking Score		100	0

Table A10.2: Parameter Scores

SCRIM Data

The sites identified have SCRIM Deficiency based on 10m CSC (Characteristic SCRIM Coefficient) Processed Values.

The CSC is used as the base data in line with the national guidance and this method takes the three SCRIM Surveys of the most recent three years and averages them to produce the values used in the process. The SCRIM surveys are undertaken at different times of the year (early, mid and late) to ensure any seasonal variations are accounted for. In some cases, the values may be skewed by surfacing works or other external factors and for this reason, keeping good records of works is important.

The SCRIM data is referred to as CL and CR. This is carriageway left lane (CL) and carriageway right lane (CR). Normally CL will be Eastbound and CR is Westbound. This is not always achievable due to the directions some of the routes. The level of SCRIM Deficiency attracts weighting as set out in table A10.2 below. The deficiency is calculated adding the deficient lengths ranking together and then dividing that value by the total scheme length. This generates an average score based on the length of the site:

SCRIM Processed - Description	Ranking Points	Range Name
< 0.15 Below Investigatory Level	50	CAT 1
0.10 to 0.15 Below Investigatory Level	40	CAT 2
0.05 to 0.09 Below Investigatory Level	25	CAT 3
>= 0.04 Below Investigatory Level	10	CAT 4
Above IL	0	CAT 5

*Table A10.3 – SCRIM Deficiency Ranking**Texture Depth Data*

In addition to the values recorded by the SCRIM survey, the texture depth found on the road surface is also an important component that contributes to the overall skidding resistance of the surface. The UKRLG's Well Managed Highways Infrastructure: A Code of Practice sets out that sites with both low texture and SCRIM readings should be considered for investigation.

To ensure this is adequately accounted for the following weighting is applied to the percentile of values found across the network where the SCRIM surveys are undertaken:

Texture - Description	Ranking Points	Range Name
90 th Percentile of Texture Values	20	CAT 1
80 th Percentile of Texture Values	16	CAT 2
70 th Percentile of Texture Values	12	CAT 3
60 th Percentile of Texture Values	8	CAT 4
50 th Percentile of Texture Values	4	CAT 5
Less than the 50 th Percentile	0	CAT 6

*Table A10.4 – Texture Depth Deficiency Ranking**Collision Data*

After this process, further points can be allocated to each identified sites if they have been the scene of loss of control collisions and if the site is an historic cluster site. The collision data used is a three-year period to keep it current with the surface condition. In the event that the data is incomplete due to delays within West Mercia Constabulary, the most up to date data will be used.

The collision data that has been used to add weighting to the sites is as follows. The collisions used are those with a coding of 'loss of control' in the contributory factors field or those where the vehicle manoeuvre is on a bend. This has been tested in a number of rankings and found to be the more reliable query conditions. The ranking point criteria for this is set out below:

Collision Data - Description	Ranking Points	Range Name
4 or More Personal Injury Collisions	20	CAT 1
3 Personal Injury Collisions	15	CAT 2
2 Personal Injury Collisions	10	CAT 3
1 Personal Injury Collisions	5	CAT 4
No (0) Personal Injury Collisions	0	CAT 5

Table A10.5 – Personal Injury Collision Ranking

Historic Cluster Sites

A further 10 points are then added to the totals of the SCRIM points and Collision points scoring if the site has been an historic cluster site. In the event the site was not a previous site, 0 points are allocated.

Ranking Equation

This leads to the final equation, which establishes the ranking points for each site:

$$\text{Site Points} = \text{SCRIM Ranking} + \text{Texture Score} + \text{Collision Points} + \text{Historic Cluster Site Points}$$

Process for setting Thresholds for Investigation

The threshold for triggering a site inspection will be based on the desktop investigation annually. The desktop investigation will be subject to all sites at or below the SCRIM IL, in accordance with the previously explained ranking.

The total list of sites will be reviewed, and a risk-based approach will be taken to establish which of those sites with deficiency warrant further investigation. An appropriate assessor will document this in the site investigation report, which will be retained.

The program of works will then be developed from this list. This takes into account works done since the prior survey, as well as cross checking with other works programs to look for common sites.

During the site investigation, any defects found have been logged in Confirm for attention by routine/reactive works.

Site Investigation

- Sites that are assessed as requiring a drive and walk through site visit will be investigated and this operation will seek to determine whether a surface treatment is justified to reduce the risk of accidents, specifically wet-skid accidents, to determine whether some other form of action is required or
- to determine whether the site should be kept under review.

Site investigations will be carried out as soon as is practicable by suitably experienced highway assessors. The results of a site investigation will be recorded and retained in an appropriate format for easy access. The investigation will be recorded on a standard form with any other relevant data to ensure a consistent approach is taken to site investigation.

The outcome of a site investigation will result in one or more of the following:

- Keep the site under review.
- Change the investigation level (IL).
- Treatment to mitigate the risk of wet-road skidding accidents.

Use of warning signs

In the time between the investigation and the implementation of the treatment, warning signs may be used.

Permanent warning signs (slippery road warning sign Diagram 557, Traffic Signs Manual Chapter 4.) will be erected following a site investigation, they will provide an effective warning and be securely mounted this will be done as soon as is practicable if recommended following a site investigation.

A programme of removal of the signage will follow treatment. The removal will be scheduled to coincide with the investigation of the following years sites so the signage can be moved to the recently identified sites.

Newly Laid Road Surfaces

When new construction and resurfacing is carried out, the Polished Stone Value (PSV) of the stone specified shall comply with the requirements below. The texture depth of the new surface shall comply with the requirements of MCHW Series 900 or any other corresponding documentation as appropriate to the system being used.

It is important to acknowledge the sustainability of the highest quality road stone produced for use on the highway network. In order to ensure that the highest quality is reserved for the sections of the network that most benefits from it.

Herefordshire Council will look to update its requirements on aggregate used on the various sections of the network through its various specifications.

Prioritisation of treatments

With limited budget resources, treatment to mitigate the risk of wet road skidding accidents must be prioritised so that highest risk sites are dealt with first. The ranking process outlined above is the first step to identifying these sites. Site Investigations refine the selection to ensure the right sites are addressed. The following site characteristics are taken into account when prioritising resources:

- If there is a history showing a clear risk with wet-skidding accidents.
- Where skidding resistance is substantially below the IL; and,
- Low skid resistance combined with low texture depth.

ROAD	FROM	TO
A40	County Boundary (Glos.)	Hildersley Roundabout
A4103	A480 Stretton Sugwas	County Boundary (Worcs)
A4110	A438 Whitecross Roundabout	A4113 Leintwardine
A4111	A438 Willersley	A44 Headbrook Roundabout
A4112	A4111 Eardisley	County Boundary (Worcs)
A4113	County Boundary (Powys)	County Boundary (Salop)
A417	A49 Trunk	County Boundary (Glos)
A4172	A438 Trumpet Crossroads	County Boundary (Glos)
A4137	A49 Trunk	A40 Trunk
A438	County Boundary (Powys)	County Boundary (Worcs)
A44	County Boundary (Powys)	County Boundary (Worcs)
A449	M50	County Boundary (Worcs)
A456	County Boundary (Salop)	County Boundary (Salop)
A465	County Boundary (Gwent)	A44 Bromyard
A466	County Boundary (Gwent)	A49 Trunk
A480	A44 Lyonshall	A438 Hereford
B4221	M50 Travellers Rest	County Boundary (Glos)
B4529	A44 Leominster	B4360 J/W B4529 at Burnt House
B4361	A44 Leominster	B4361 Luston
B4399	A49 Grafton	B4399 Rotherwas

Table A10.6: SCRIM Survey Roads

APPENDIX 12 – Safety Barriers and Highway Fences

Safety fences and barriers provide separation for traffic and vulnerable road users from each other and other hazards, e.g. watercourses.

Barriers

The Council shall ensure that all safety barriers owned as the highway authority are inspected for structural defects biennially by an appropriately qualified inspector. Where remedial works have been identified to any lengths of barrier, these shall be prioritised for repair using a risk-based approach specific to safety barriers as described in the relevant Annual Plan Annex

In addition to the structural inspections, barriers are inspected in accordance with section 8 of this Highways Maintenance Plan, Safety Inspection, Assessment and Recording. The Scope of these inspections are set out in Table 4: Scope of safety inspection defects/risks.

Fences

Fences may be installed by the Council for the protection of road users and/or pedestrians. Fences covered under this policy include steel fences, pedestrian guard rail, concrete barriers, fences installed for visibility purposes (excluding safety fences which are treated as barriers), walls, antiglare screen fences and environmental barriers.

Highway visibility fencing condition will be monitored via highway safety inspections detailed in this plan. Defects will be dealt with in accordance with the risk-based categorisations and prioritise set out above.

Fences may also be used to define the boundary of an adjacent property owner's land. In most cases this fencing will be owned by the adjacent property owner. Should 3rd Party fencing become defective, we will contact the owner of the fencing to request them to make it safe.

In general, the decision to fence land rests with the owner and occupier of the land fronting onto the highway, subject to planning consent where appropriate. In most locations they will be liable if damage is caused by his animals straying onto the highway. The Council on the other hand has no general obligation to fence off its highways. Any fencing along the boundaries of the highway is therefore generally the responsibility of the adjoining landowner/user. In some circumstances, however, fencing for the protection of wildlife may be the property of the Council.

APPENDIX 13– Trees, Shrubs and Hedges

The Council recognises that trees, shrubs and hedges are important for amenity and nature conservation reasons and should be preserved, but that they can present risks to the highway users and adjoining land users if they are allowed to become unstable or block visibility.

Any tree that may overhang or have the potential to fall on the highway, not just those located on highway land has the potential to cause a highways issue. In rural areas work to highway trees will be mainly reactive and in response to safety concerns raised by the public or identified via highway safety inspections. In urban areas proactive management will be used where possible complimented by safety inspections and reactive concerns from members of the public. The safety inspection and defect remedial action and re-inspection process outlined in this document will ensure that risk from highway trees is monitored, reviewed and action taken when necessary.

Where tree maintenance is required then a qualified arboriculturalist will be used to inspect trees of specific concern. Work is only undertaken after informing/consulting with adjacent property owners unless it is very urgent. Work to trees in Conservation Areas and trees subject to Tree Preservation Orders will require the authorisation of the Tree Preservation Officer.

The Council shall attend to trees and shrubs on the highway to abate a statutory nuisance or a hazard or to carry out remedial work to make good damage or decay or deformed growth. Where a tree owned by an adjacent property is considered to present a risk to the safety of the highway user or encroaches onto the highway then the Locality Steward will contact the owner of the land and require him to undertake work at his expense to mitigate the effect.

With the exception of recently constructed highways where land has been procured by the council, almost all hedges are owned by the adjacent property owner. Where a problem is identified the property owner will be contacted and asked to cut back branches that are overgrowing the highway. If the owner fails to undertake this work within a reasonable period (usually 21 days) then the Council may, by serving notice in accordance with the provisions of Section 154 of the Highways Act, require the owner to undertake the work. If this work is not completed within 14 days, then the Council may undertake the work themselves and seek to recover any costs from the property owner concerned.

The Council will carry out other work such as pruning to reduce shade or to remove branches overhanging adjacent property only in exceptional circumstances.

Where an obstruction to a sight line, streetlight, road sign etc or a potential hazard (as defined in the appropriate Procedure) has been identified, these shall be prioritised to allow works to be undertaken as part of the cyclic maintenance programme.

Any person(s) responsible for the design of a new planting scheme on highway land shall seek the approval of the Council's Arboriculture Officer and the Highways Asset Manager.

With the exception of urgent safety work, work to trees and hedges will be undertaken outside the bird nesting season.

APPENDIX 14 – Verges and Highway Vegetation

Grass is cut for safety purposes to maintain visibility for highway users and to ensure that road and footway widths are not reduced by overgrowing vegetation. In locations where no footway exists there may be a need to provide a safe refuge on the highway verge for pedestrians, particularly on busy roads, however there is no legal obligation to provide this.

Grass cutting in urban areas, and on housing estates, is typically carried out for amenity purposes to a higher frequency than that required for highway safety.

Rural carriageways will, unless agreed otherwise by the Council, be cut with a single swathe width (1 metre), increasing in width to incorporate appropriately sized visibility splays at junctions, bends and in front of signs, which will be depended upon assessment at each location unless those carriageways have been identified as roadside verges requiring a specific plan for biodiversity and managed accordingly. The extent of these areas will not include visibility splays or pedestrian refuge areas that are vital to support road safety.

Herefordshire Council is willing to engage with communities to identify areas of verge that can be subject to a lesser cutting regime to enhance environmental factors in these areas. These areas will only be designated if the site-specific management arrangements do not result in an undue escalation in the risk presented to highway users by the resulting vegetation and there is support from the elected representatives of the parish and ward for the alternative management regime.

Often verges are wider than 1 metre and the vegetation beyond this point will remain largely untouched at these locations, so allowing nature to run its course. With the exception of those verges that are being managed for biodiversity and have site specific management plans in place, rural and urban highway verges will be cut a minimum of two times per year. The first cut will generally be undertaken for completion before the late May bank holiday. The second cut for completion before the August bank holiday.

All areas designated as being managed for biodiversity or as wildflower verges will be recorded in each year's Annual Plan.

In line with a risk-based approach, the number of cuts for verges will be subject to ongoing monitoring and review, should the growth in any season result in a significant escalation in the risk presented to the safety of highway users the number of cuts may be increased and site-specific management regimes may have to be changed.

In parishes where Lengthsmen or other schemes are in place, responsibility for highway and amenity cutting may be transferred to the parish.

Urban grass cutting for amenity purposes will be based on agreed levels of service established in each year's Annual Plan.

Should invasive plant species such as Japanese knot weed, Ragwort, Broad Leaf Dock, Curled Dock, Creeping Thistle or Spear Thistle be identified and confirmed through inspection to be on land that is owned by or under the responsibility of the Council then an assessment of the measures needed to remove the causes of future risk shall take place. Identified measures will be introduced into the programme of works in the current Annual Plan and where applicable the Forward Programme.

APPENDIX 15 – Parish Lengthsman and P3 Schemes

Both the lengthsman and P3 schemes have been successful in encouraging and engaging with Parish Councils and communities to improve the condition of minor roads and footpaths and footways. A number of Parish Councils have entered into an agreement to carry out minor highway maintenance works via locally employed Parish Lengthsman to meet the requirements of both the Council and the Parish. Council maintenance standards are specified in a Parish Lengthsman Scheme Agreement.