



Highway Safety Inspection Manual

2026

1. Introduction

Herefordshire Council is the Highway Authority for all highways maintainable at public expense within Herefordshire, with the exception of the 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 related to the management and maintenance of highways.

A number of national guidelines exist for the provision of highway maintenance, and the Council seeks to work in accordance these documents. In particular this Highway Safety Inspection Manual incorporates the recommendations of 'Well Managed Highway Infrastructure', the code of practice for maintenance management published in 2016.

The 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 'Well-managed Highway Infrastructure' is that authorities will develop their own levels of service through a local, risk-based, approach. This Highway Safety Inspection Manual has been developed to set the framework for our approach to delivering risk-based highway safety inspection and the determination of the repair regime for defects on our highway network.

Our approach to delivering a risk-based approach is embedded in every-day decision making. The Council adopted the risk-based approach as promoted by 'Well-managed Highway Infrastructure' following the publication of the code in 2016 and this Highway Safety Inspection Manual is the fourth iteration following periodic review and incorporates the learning gained as a consequence of having worked to a risk-based approach since 2016.

This Highway Safety Inspection Manual sits alongside other documents that describe the way we manage and maintain our highway network. The development of this Highway Safety Inspection Manual has carefully considered the current Corporate Plan, the current and emerging Local Transport Plan and the current highway infrastructure asset management documents.

2. Context

This Highway Safety Inspection Manual 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, it enables the Council to make use of the defence available to it under Section 58 of the Highways Act 1980 through a reasonable system of inspection and repair, whilst delivering on the wider objectives across all assets, as expressed through the related policies and plans.

The development of this manual 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 protected characteristics are taken into account where applicable. These groups are to be considered as part of the risk assessment process when evaluating change in condition across the highway asset.

3. Overview and Purpose

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

This Highway Safety Inspection Manual builds upon the previous versions of the document in its guise as the Highways Maintenance Plan. The foundations for a risk-based approach were first established by the 2007 plan, establishing a method of maintenance that uses the assessment of the risk that 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 reactive maintenance according to the risk posed to the highway user now, and over time, through the long-term integrity of the highway structure.

This manual is structured so that its core (this element) sets the overarching principles for the whole plan and applies to the entire service. Standards, policies and, where appropriate, processes for discrete areas are appended to the manual.

The policies and procedures appended to the manual 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;
- Enable measurement of service performance; and,
- Incorporate best practice.

4. Scope

The Highway Safety Inspection Manual describes the policy and standards, and where appropriate the processes, that will be utilised to support the delivery of the Council's duty to maintain its highways.

The highway network is by far the single most valuable asset in the control of the Council, with an estimated replacement value of c£3.8 billion. The extent, and hence value of this asset, is expanding constantly through new development and improvements to the existing infrastructure.

Herefordshire has in excess of 3,200km (2,000 miles) of publicly maintained highways, 724 bridges and approximately 14,000 streetlights, 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.

5. Link to other Key Documents

Herefordshire Council's policies relating to the highway asset are detailed in the Local Transport Plan. The Highway Safety Inspection Manual 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. The Highway Infrastructure Asset Management Plan (HIAMP) details the methodology that will be used to achieve the Local Transport Plan policy objectives. To provide the service with a longer-term approach to the delivery of work to the highway network, the Forward and annual programme details the specific activities that will be undertaken and the resources assigned to achieve our objectives. Figure 1 illustrates how these documents relate to one another.

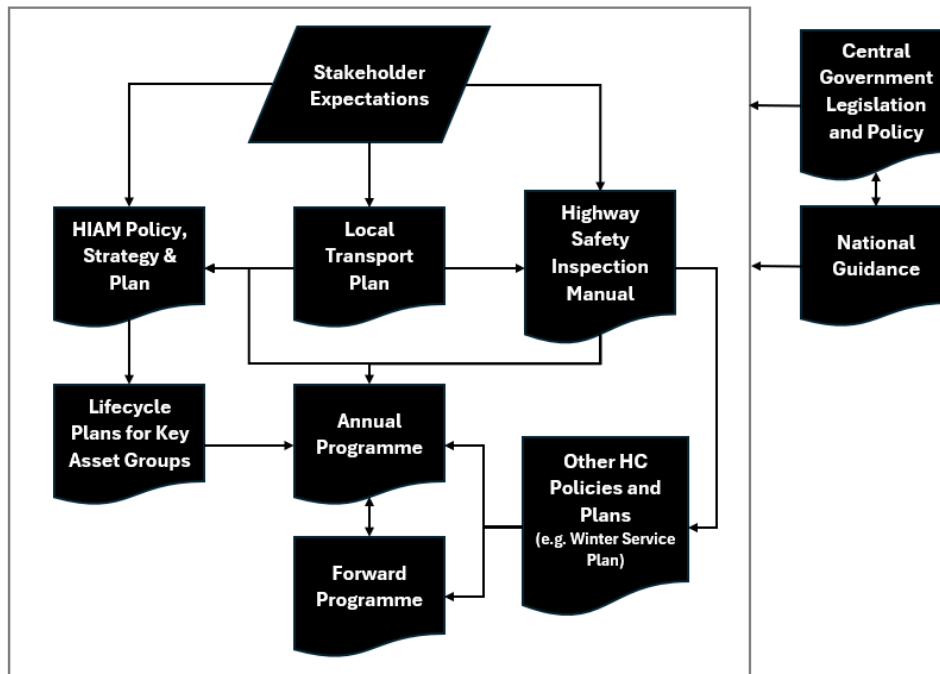


Figure 1: Relationship of Strategic Highway Documents

This manual, 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.

6. Implementing a Risk Based Approach

This Highway Safety Inspection Manual details our risk-based approach to highway maintenance activities. The purpose of a risk-based approach is to provide a 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, particularly vulnerable road users;
- 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 an 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 being compromised, paying particular attention to those groups who are more likely to be using sections of the network and require specific levels of service;
- The devaluing of place;
- Dissatisfaction; and,
- Economic disruption to businesses.

Prescriptive intervention levels for defects are not used in this manual. They can be wasteful with defects that present a low risk often being measured and then repaired ahead of smaller defects that by virtue of their location, 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 15. 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.

The Council is a founding member of the Midlands Service Improvement Group (MSIG), which was amalgamated into Midlands Highway Alliance Plus (MHA+). MHA+ is a collective of Midlands and Northwest County, City and Unitary Councils sharing best practice to drive improvements and efficiencies within the Highways and Road Safety Disciplines of Local Authorities. In particular, the MHA+ Highway Asset Management Service Improvement Group has worked to develop a set of High-Level Principles for the Risk Based Approach to Safety Inspections and Defect Response times. The Council has considered that work in the development of this manual and its predecessor, the Highway Maintenance Plan. The Council will also consider any further changes in accord with the aforementioned principles as we evolve the service. This with a view to ensuring that highway users experience an appropriately consistent approach to highway safety inspection and maintenance.

In addition to the liaison with MHA+ members, additional liaison occurs with the neighbouring authorities who are not affiliated with the MHA+ group. This liaison takes many forms across a diverse range of topics.

7. 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.

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 and 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, so far as is reasonably practicable, our highway asset safe for use by all transport modes.

The Council has utilised the model hierarchy in ‘Well Managed Highway Infrastructure’ 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 which allows our country lanes and Byways to 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. Due to the large numbers of shared and segregated facilities 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.

8. Safety Inspection, Assessment and Recording

Herefordshire’s safety inspection regime forms a key part of the 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

The frequency of safety inspections for individual network sections is provided in Table 1 below. The assignment of specific routes into these categories has been 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

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 Network	Prestige Area	1 month	Walked
	Primary Active Travel Route	1 month	Walked
		1 Year	Driven or Walked

Feature	Category	Frequency	Method
	Secondary Active Travel Route Link Active Travel Route Local Access Active Travel Route	1 Year 1 Year	
PROW	Promoted Routes All other routes: Metalled Un-Metalled	3 years Metalled PROW inspected Annually. 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 Driven, Cycled or Walked Cycled or Walked

Table 1: Safety Inspections – Categories, Frequencies and Mode

* - 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 Marking and Studs.

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

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.

Table 2: Safety Inspections – Frequency Tolerance

9. Risk Based Inspection Frequency

For locations where requests for service or assessed condition has resulted in the need for reactive works to have been carried out regularly, 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 a risk

assessment that takes account of the above noted considerations and will be reviewed and recorded (with the reason for doing so) annually as part of each Annual Plan.

10. Mode

Table 1 shows that the majority of safety inspections are driven. 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 occupancy in vehicles arises 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.

11. Technology and Highway Safety Inspection

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. In the case where video-based technology is deployed, a driver only may be used, with the video capturing the current condition of a route.

Where this technology is deployed the results will be reviewed by qualified highways inspectors to provide the appropriate risk assessment and works ordering process where required. This approach is intended to improve both the effectiveness and efficiency of the inspection process. However, the processes outlined in this Manual will still be followed.

12. Scope of Safety Inspections

The highway network is formed of a number of asset groups, each of which are built up from a number of components. It is important for our highway inspection team to take a 'boundary to boundary' approach to inspection. An indicative list of defects or risks can be found in Appendix 2 to provide example of the scope of our highway safety inspection process.

13. 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, usage by children, elderly and disabled persons, and the extent of visibility at the site. The code of practice, 'Well-managed Highway Infrastructure', 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 Appendix 1. A highway inspector records all defects that may present a risk to highway users as set out in the matrix set out in Table 5 within Section 17.3. This table sets out the defects that need not be noted by the Inspector due to the low impact and/or probability.

The 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.

14. Recording Defects

Guidance on the recording of highway defects is provided below. Further information on which defects are recorded can be found in the Table in Appendix 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 typically 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, and where safe to do so, a photo of the defect with adjacent features in order to locate it will be taken. Defects shall only be marked with temporary road marking paint where necessary and safe to do so, so as 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 of this parameter are:

- Channel of carriageway
- On verge
- At the 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.

15. Competence and Standard Setting

15.1 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 will undertake training on a regular basis, and we will ensure appropriate refresher courses are provided. The frequency of such training will be, at least, in accordance with the nationally accepted competency framework.

All highway inspectors will be trained to a standard that is accredited by an appropriately recognised professional body, and any continued professional development that is required will be 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.

15.2 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.

16. Categories of Defect

The Council will utilise a risk-based approach to defect categorisation and repair times, as set out in Table 5. This will 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 utilise categories together with associated response times. Response times have been set to allow a response which appropriately manages the risk and provides sufficient opportunity to enable the implementation of permanent, right first time.

Defects are allocated one of three categories as follows:

- Category 1 are 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.
- Category 3 defects are all those that are not categorised as Category 1 or 2 defects, but present sufficient risk to warrant recording by the inspector to inform a future programme of work. These defects will have low or negligible impact and probability.

17. Risk Assessment

The key to selecting the appropriate action for a defect is the risk assessment process. All defects that reach the investigatory level defined in section 17.3 should be evaluated for their significance and the likelihood of injury or damage to a highway user.

17.1 Impact

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

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.	Impact will result in serious damage to persons or property. Highway users will instinctively react to avoid the defect, and this will place them in peril. The defect could destabilise any vehicle and this will place highway users in peril. Changes in condition which renders an active travel facility unusable to all types of vulnerable road users.
	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.	Impact will result in damage to persons or property, from which they are likely to recover. Highway users will instinctively react to avoid the defect. The defect could destabilise any vehicle. Changes in condition which impairs the use of an active travel facility for vulnerable users.
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.	Most impacts will not result in any injury. Highway users are unlikely to react to avoid the defect, and the impact will not interrupt their passage. 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. If untreated the defect will accelerate the local deterioration of the Highway Asset such as impairing the function of an active travel facility for vulnerable users.
	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.	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. The defect is very unlikely to cause injury.
Negligible			

Table 3: Impact Ratings

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.

17.2 Probability

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

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 users 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 users.</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>
Low	2	10 – 40% chance of occurrence.	<p>Vehicular, cycle or pedestrian flows are moderate or low, although the use of the facility by less mobile vulnerable users may vary this assessment and the probability increased.</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>

Table 4: Probability Ratings

17.3 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.

Probability Impact	Negligible	Low	Medium	High	Recording Requirements
Negligible	1	2	3	4	The Inspector can note these defects to inform forward programmes of works across the service.
Low	2	4	6	8	
Medium	3	6	9	12	
High	4	8	12	16	
Category	Cat 3	Cat 2	Cat 1		Must be recorded by the Inspector following risk assessment
Response Minimum Time Frame	Consider for Forward Programme	28 days	24 Hours (including weekends and statutory holidays)		

	Category 1
	Category 2
	Category 3

Table 5: Risk Assessment matrix Defect Categories and Response Time

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 (triaged) at 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.

All reports of highway safety defects made by third parties to Herefordshire Council will be:

Either

- Inspected,
- Triaged by a Highway Inspector,

or

- have works to make the defect safe as if were a Category 2 defect

The steps required to understand the risk posed by a defect reported will be completed within 5 working days of the receipt of that report by the Council.

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 2 (Category 1), 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 2 timescale, in which case the defect will be progressed to repair in accordance with that originally assigned Category 2 Defect timescale.

If additional defects are identified at the time of inspection, , 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.

Timescales are designed to enable highway defects to be, wherever practicable, actioned by a permanent repair. 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.

18. Defect Remedial Actions

Risk assessment procedures provide the means of determining the appropriate course of remedial action for defects. This action is summarised in Table 6, below:

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 Category 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>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 5, 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 2 defects are required, they will be actioned within the timescales set by Table 5.</p>
3	<p>These are defects which do not represent a safety concern and are unlikely to deteriorate further before the next scheduled inspection.</p>

Table 6: Defect Categories

19. Performance Monitoring

Operational performance is reviewed on a monthly basis. The outcomes from this inspection manual 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.

20. Review

This policy will be subject to periodic review. The frequency of review may vary and the decision to do so will be risk based. The following items may trigger a review:

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

Appendix 1 – Maintenance 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 the 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 content of this network will be reviewed on an annual basis.	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.	

Hierarchy	Network Hierarchy Description	Type of Road - General Description	Detailed Description	Network as Described in Local Transport Plan
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.		<p style="text-align: center;">The Low Priority Network</p> <p>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.</p>
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.	

Appendix 2 – Indicative Scope of Safety Inspections

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
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.
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 damage facility. ▪ 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

Inventory Item	Scope of defects/risks to be identified
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 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
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 ▪ Changes in condition which impairs the use of the controlled crossing by all types of vulnerable users.
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 surfaces. ▪ Obstructions ▪ Flooding ▪ Obstruction of visibility and signage ▪ Hazardous trees and branches ▪ Leaf fall causing slippery surfaces. ▪ Root growth causing surface irregularity. ▪ Noxious weeds