

Council of the Isles of Scilly

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Council of the
ISLES OF SCILLY

Local highways maintenance transparency report

The Department for Transport expects all local highways authorities to publish information about their highways maintenance activities to help local taxpayers see the difference that funding is making in their areas.

Our highway network

The Council of the Isles of Scilly, as Highway Authority, manages a small amount of public highway network, compared to mainland authorities which is reflective of the island's small scale and environment (total area of the Isles of Scilly: 16km²).

The Council manages highway assets on the island of St Mary's only and its responsibilities do not extend to the rest of the archipelago of inhabited off-islands (St Agnes, Bryher, Tresco and St Martin's).

<i>Lengths of highway, footways and cycleways (km)</i>						
<i>A Road</i>	<i>B and C roads</i>	<i>U roads</i>	<i>Total Roads</i>	<i>Footways</i>	<i>Other Public rights of way</i>	<i>Cycleways</i>
7.56km	0km	6.92km	14.48km	6.68km	0km	0km

As part of the Council's Highway network, it manages Carriageways (A roads and Unclassified U Roads), Footways, Railings, Gullies/Manholes and Silt traps, Traffic Signs, Junction Markings, Streetlights, Bollards, Slipways, Verges and landscaped areas, Drainage and Road Markings.

Highways maintenance spending figures

Highway maintenance spending					
Year	Capital allocated by DfT (£,000s)	Capital spend (£,000s)	Revenue spend (£,000s)	Estimate of % spent on preventative maintenance	Estimate of % spent on reactive maintenance
2025/26 (projected)	£53	£126	£92	%	100%

2024/25	£0	£21	£119	%	100%
2023/24	£0	£18	£142	%	100%
2022/23	£0	£16	£115	%	100%
2021/22	£0	£0	£115	%	100%
2020/21	£89	£0	£105	%	100%

Additional information on spending

To date the majority of maintenance work to the highway carried out by the Council has been reactive – mainly on pothole repairs. We are working towards changing the way our highways are managed, by delivering the Highway Maintenance Manual and Asset Management Policy and taking into account lifecycle planning. This will ensure that we develop work programmes for planned maintenance and reducing the amount of resource spent on reactive maintenance alone.

Estimate of number of potholes filled				
2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/2024	2024/25
45	50	45	69	38

Condition of local roads

The Council of the Isles of Scilly commissioned a highway and footway condition assessment in 2022 for all road classes. We have no data on the highway condition prior to this date.

Surveys were carried out using a specialist Road Assessment Vehicle (RAV) which complies with the Department for Transport SCANNER specification. A walked Detailed Visual Inspection (DVI) of the footways, and those parts of the highway which were inaccessible to the RAC, due to their width or alignment was also carried out.

The nature and highway network on St Mary's is such that in practical terms the highway network needs to be looked at in the round, as each individual section of carriageway is an important component part of the highway asset as a whole.

Using mainland assessment criteria would lead to an overspecification for the A roads and potentially highlight sections of the carriageway that are, in reality, fit for purpose. To ensure an objective, sensible assessment of the whole network the Condition Surveys assessed the survey data against the mainland C road thresholds, irrespective of the nominal classification assigned.

- 1% of highway length over the 100 (red threshold);
- 33% of highway length over the 40 (amber threshold) and;
- 60% below the 40 (green) threshold.

This is indicative of a network which is generally in good condition. This largely reflects the investment made by the Council in 2014 when the roads were resurfaced.

The Road Condition Index (RCI) is good and compares favourably with mainland statistics.

The areas of highway (carriageway) which show Amber or Red results are largely those areas that were not resurfaced in 2014.

There are clearly some areas of highway that will require some treatment, but on the whole, there isn't a significant amount of the network in need of immediate maintenance from the 2022 survey.

Year	Percentage of roads in each condition category		
	Red	Amber	Green
2020	n/a	n/a	n/a
2021	n/a	n/a	n/a
2022	0.99%	33.32%	65.69%
2023	n/a	n/a	n/a
2024	n/a	n/a	n/a

Road condition assessments on the local classified road network in England are currently made predominantly using Surface Condition Assessment for the National Network of Roads (SCANNER) laser-based technology.

A number of parameters measured in these surveys are used to produce a road condition indicator which is categorised into three condition categories:

- Green – No further investigation or treatment required
- Amber – Maintenance may be required soon
- Red – Should be considered for maintenance

From 2026/27 a new methodology will be used based on the BSI PAS2161 standard. Local Highway Authorities will be required to use a supplier that has been accredited against PAS2161. This new standard will categorise roads into five categories instead of three to help government gain a more detailed understanding of road condition in England.

Further details are available at <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/road-condition-statistics-data-tables-rdc#condition-of-local-authority-managed-roads-rdc01>

Plans

Overall strategy

The Council of the Isles of Scilly's Highway Maintenance Manual (HMM) sets out how the Council manages, and risk assesses the maintenance of its highways to fulfil its statutory obligations and deliver a safe and serviceable highway network. The HMM considers the National Code of Practice to promote an integrated risk-based approach to the management of all highway infrastructure taking into account local circumstances and environment.

The HMM seeks to provide a transparent approach to safety and serviceability, taking account of the smaller scale and nature of use of the highway managed by the Council when compared to many other authorities.

The HMM covers the following:

- A detailed inventory of relevant components of the highway asset
- A defined hierarchy of all elements of the network
- Levels of service linked to the core objectives of the Code of Practice

The requirement to provide a safe, serviceable and sustainable network in relation to its use underpins the service standards – namely what, when and how highway maintenance is delivered.

The Council's Highway Asset Management Policy further supports delivery of the highway service and the Council's long-term vision. The policy describes a logical regime which is reflective of the island's scale and remoteness from the mainland. The Council's ability to achieve full benefit from asset management principles is reduced because of limited economies of scale, challenges in accessing specialist plant and equipment and the additional resources and skills that may be required. Cost implications for delivering on the islands is likely to be higher due to these issues.

Specific plans for 2025/26

Due to the potential availability of kit and equipment being made available on the islands in 25/26, the Council is seeking opportunities to resurface some larger areas of highway that fall into the Amber and Red categories from the Condition Inspection report as part of our reactive works.

There are some areas of footway that are required to be resurfaced falling from condition assessments and local inspection as part of our planned works.

Following a trend from previous years, there is likely to be in the region of 40 potholes that require re-filling as part of our reactive works.

There is no preventative works planned at present for 25/26 as the priority work required falls into reactive.

Moving beyond 25/26, a prioritised programme of works for a rolling three to five years will be held for each major highway asset. The schemes on this programme will be derived from the annual service, specialist surveys and inspections.

Streetworks

The Council of the Isles of Scilly has recently improved its management and coordination of Streetworks over the last year. The Council issues licences to ensure Streetworks are planned and coordinated effectively across the small network of Highway.

Climate change, resilience and adaptation

The islands are significantly at threat from Climate Change, specifically sea-level rise and increased storm activity, which poses the greatest risk in terms of the future sustainability and viability of some areas of the highway and other critical infrastructure. The Council's Resilient Island Strategy highlights the need to develop specific action plans to identify the adaptation pathways to develop resilience against climate change risks posed to infrastructure, such as the highways.

The Council's Climate Change Action Plan, 2022 sets out how the Council will achieve net zero emissions by 2030. In relation to highways and transport in general, Objective 4 of the Action Plan is *'to ensure our transport infrastructure supports clean, safe methods of travel, promoting active travel wherever possible'*. Council is also seeking ways to reduce carbon emissions from its operations and activities, which includes highway management. However,

options for maintaining the highway must consider other factors such as cost, serviceability, resources and our limited economies of scale.

Additional information on plans

The Council adopted the Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) in 2023 which aims to develop a long-term approach to identifying cycling and walking improvements required at the local level. The LCWIP will assist the Council to:

- Identify cycling and walking infrastructure improvements for future investment in the short, medium and long term;
- Ensure that consideration is given to cycling and walking within local planning and transport policies and strategies;
- Make the case of future funding for cycling and walking infrastructure.

Using Active Travel England grant funding, the Council has worked with the community to develop concept scheme designs for areas highlighted as priorities by the local community.

Future planned maintenance of the highway and footways should take account of the need to improve the infrastructure to deliver the ambitions of the LCWIP.