

Highways maintenance transparency report

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Transparency report – Core report

How we maintain local roads, pavements, and the wider highway network in Westmorland and Furness

A1 – What we are responsible for maintaining

Westmorland and Furness Council is responsible for maintaining an extensive and diverse highway network comprising

- **Carriageways** – 4,344 km
- **Footways** – 1,431 km
- **Public rights of way** - 2,108 km
- **Cycleway** - 889 km
- **Additional assets include**- bridges, drainage systems, street lighting, traffic signals, signs and street furniture, see [website](#) for more details.

The highway network is the councils most valuable asset and supports connectivity for communities, businesses and tourism across rural, coastal and urban environments. Key challenges include the ageing nature of assets, constrained funding, high seasonal traffic demand and the increasing frequency of extreme weather events affecting asset condition and network resilience. These factors require a risk-based, prioritised approach to maintenance and investment.

A2 – Road conditions in Westmorland and Furness

A2.1. A roads

Year	Percentage of road in red category	Percentage of road in amber category	Percentage of road in green category
2023	3.8%	25.7%	70.5%
2024	4.5%	27.8%	67.7%
2025	3.8%	26.8%	69.4%

A2.2. B and C roads

Year	Percentage of road in red category	Percentage of road in amber category	Percentage of road in green category
2023	12%	38.9%	49.1%
2024	10.2%	38.3%	51.5%
2025	11.2%	38.6%	50.2%

A2.3. U roads

Year	Percentage of road in red category
2023	24.8%
2024	26.9%
2025	26.0%

Councils use road condition surveys to assess the state of their roads. The results are grouped into three categories:

- **Green** – the road is in good condition and no further investigation or treatment is required
- **Amber** – the road may need maintenance soon
- **Red** – the road is in poor condition and should be considered for maintenance

The published [official statistics for road condition](#) include more detail about the methodology, timing and coverage of this data

A2.4. - Additional information on carriageway condition

The Council collects condition data through SCANNER surveys on classified roads and AI-enabled highway inspections across the unclassified network. These complementary datasets provide consistent and repeatable information to support trend analysis, asset performance monitoring and evidence-based maintenance planning. Condition data is considered alongside local engineering assessments, safety inspection records and other asset information to reflect the diverse nature of the Westmorland and Furness highway network, including extensive rural roads affected by weather, agricultural traffic and seasonal visitor demands. Maintenance programmes are developed using a risk-based asset management approach to target investment where it will deliver the greatest benefit. During 2025/26, the Council also invested £1.3 million in improving the condition of unclassified roads. The Council has adopted a preventative maintenance approach to maximise asset life, improve resilience, reduce the need for costly structural repairs and deliver value for money for all highway users.

A3 – What we are doing about potholes and other road defects

A3.1. – What is a pothole?

A pothole is a localised failure of the carriageway surface where material has broken away, creating a depression in the road. Potholes may vary in size and shape and typically develop as a result of traffic loading, water ingress, weathering and the deterioration of the road surface over time.

Westmorland and Furness Council manages carriageway defects using a risk-based approach. Potholes and defects are assessed having regard to factors such as depth, location, road hierarchy, traffic levels and usage. As a guide, carriageway defects are normally investigated when they exceed 40mm in depth, although on minor rural roads the investigatory level is typically 60mm. These thresholds do not automatically trigger repair. Potholes meeting or exceeding the investigatory level are assessed to determine the risk they present and whether remedial action is required, together with the appropriate response timescale.

A3.2. – What we are doing to tackle potholes

The Council's approach to managing potholes combines preventative maintenance with reactive repairs. Each year, over 20,000 potholes are repaired across the highway network, helping to keep roads safe and serviceable for residents, businesses and visitors.

Preventative maintenance remains our primary focus and is delivered through asset management principles and the timely use of treatments such as surface dressing, preservation treatments, resurfacing and other targeted interventions. These treatments are selected using condition surveys, lifecycle planning, engineering assessments and local knowledge to address deterioration before significant defects develop. By applying the right treatment at the right time, the Council can extend asset life, maintain network condition, improve resilience and reduce the future occurrence of potholes.

The Council also operates a risk-based inspection regime to identify and assess defects, taking account of factors such as defect characteristics, road hierarchy, traffic levels and usage. Where intervention is required, repairs are prioritised according to risk. Wherever practicable, permanent repairs are completed at the first visit, although temporary repairs may be used to make the highway safe until a permanent repair can be undertaken.

Through this balanced approach, the Council seeks to minimise pothole formation while maintaining a safe and resilient highway network.

A3.3. How members of public can report potholes and other highway defects

Members of the public can report potholes and other highway defects through a range of channels, including the [Council's online reporting system](#), Customer Contact Centre, and approved third-party websites and mobile applications.

All reports are recorded within the Council's Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system and assessed to determine whether further investigation is required. Potholes are then risk assessed, categorised and prioritised in line with the Council's inspection and maintenance policies.

This risk-based approach ensures that potholes presenting the greatest risk to highway users receive the most urgent attention, while helping the Council allocate resources effectively and apply appropriate response times.

A3.4. What happens after a pothole is reported

When a pothole is reported, it is first triaged to determine whether it is an emergency. Emergency potholes are referred immediately to the standby Duty Engineer, who deploys a response team to make the site safe within two hours. Non-emergency potholes are assessed by a Highways Inspector. Actionable potholes are assigned a response time and scheduled for repair, with a permanent repair undertaken at the first visit wherever practicable. Non-actionable potholes are monitored and the customer advised accordingly. Once works are completed, the CRM system is updated and the reporter informed.

A4 – What we spend to maintain the highway network and where the funding is coming from

A4.1. – Spending on highways maintenance

	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27 (projected)
Total spend on highways maintenance	£44,447,126	£55,383,658	£59,881,350
Of which spent on:			
Carriageways	£31,864,353	£38,772,096	£44,165,423
Footways	£1,316,692	£1,799,437	£2,970,000
Structures (for example bridges or tunnels)	£2,944,538	£3,845,085	£4,914,771
Drainage	£3,095,676	£3,900,100	£2,532,660
Street lighting	£2,275,709	£3,486,790	£3,142,967
Other assets	£2,950,158	£3,580,150	£2,155,529

A4.2 – Where our funding for highways maintenance comes from

Funding sources for highways maintenance	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27 (projected)
Funding received through the Department for Transport / UK Government	£29,318,804	£54,944,226	£43,509,229
[if applicable]: Additional highways maintenance funding provided by the Council or third parties	£9,386,782	£10,333,362	£9,936,350
<u>Total</u>	£38,705,586	£65,277,588	£53,445,579



A5 – Our maintenance plans for this year

A5.1 – Our plans for highways maintenance for 2026-27

The Council plans to invest around **£53 million** in highways maintenance during **2026-27** to improve network condition, safety and resilience. The programme includes carriageway resurfacing, preventative treatments such as surface dressing, and ongoing pothole repairs to extend asset life and reduce future deterioration.

Targeted investment will also support highways, bridges and structures, drainage assets and resilience measures, helping the network cope with increasing traffic demands and severe weather events.

Maintenance programmes are developed using highway condition data, risk assessments and network priorities to target funding where it delivers the greatest benefit. Flexibility is retained to respond to emergencies and weather-related damage, helping keep the network safe and operational for all users.

Further information is available in the councils Highway Asset Management strategy on the council's [website](#).

A5.2 - Full list of planned carriageway and footway works

Our website contains information on our planned highways works at this [LINK](#).

A5.3 – How decisions are made on our maintenance plans

Highway maintenance programmes are developed using an evidence-led asset management approach. Decisions are informed by condition data, safety inspection findings, lifecycle plans, customer reports, risk assessments and local engineering knowledge. Priority is given to interventions that provide the greatest whole-life value, improve safety and maintain network resilience. Preventative maintenance is prioritised where appropriate to extend asset life and reduce the need for more costly future repairs. Environmental considerations, network hierarchy, traffic volumes and community impacts are also taken into account when developing annual works programmes. Programmes are reviewed and approved by the Highways Senior Management Team and presented to Cabinet Members for review and approval prior to delivery, providing both professional and democratic oversight of investment decisions.

Transparency report – Technical Annex template

This section of the transparency report is to provide a more detailed view of your service. It will also need to be published on your website and provided to DfT alongside the core report but does not need to have the same level of prominence on your website as the core report.

B1 - Highways maintenance funding and spending figures

B1.1 – Capital funding allocation sources

Financial year	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27 (projected)
Highways maintenance capital funding allocated through DfT	£19,596,000	£32,437,790	£32,104,000
Other DfT capital funding utilised by local authority for highways maintenance	£9,537,313	£22,164,249	£10,902,500
Other Government capital funding allocated by local authority to Highways Maintenance	£454,215	£2,163,156	£1,629,000
Other capital funding allocated to highways maintenance	£803,326	£141,856	£9,000.00
Total Capital funding allocated to highways maintenance	£30,390,854	£56,907,051	£44,644,500

B1.1.2 - Additional information on funding figures

Highway maintenance funding is derived from a combination of Department for Transport (DfT) capital allocations, other government funding streams and Council resources. Funding levels vary between years to reflect one-off allocations, externally funded programmes and the timing of major maintenance and renewal schemes. Capital funding is primarily used to support asset renewal, resilience and preventative maintenance activities, while revenue budgets fund inspections, routine maintenance, winter service operations and reactive repairs.

DfT Highway Maintenance Block funding remains the Council's principal source of highway maintenance investment. Funding is allocated across nine asset groups, including carriageways, footways, drainage, bridges and structures and street lighting, enabling investment decisions to be informed by asset condition, risk and need. This asset management approach allows funding to be targeted towards the highest-priority assets, while also creating opportunities to invest in innovation and service improvement without adversely affecting core maintenance programmes.

In addition to core maintenance funding, the Council has secured and utilised a range of other DfT-funded programmes that contribute towards highway maintenance, resilience and network improvement. These have included the Local Transport Grant, A595 Grizebeck Improvement Scheme (Major Road Network Programme), Safer Roads Programme, Live Labs, Jubilee Bridge works, the Infrastructure Recovery Programme,

Active Travel funding, LEVI (Local Electric Vehicle Infrastructure) funding and pavement channel programmes. The higher funding level in 2025/26 is primarily attributable to delivery of the A595 Grizebeck Improvement Scheme, with the reduction in 2026/27 reflecting the completion of this significant one-off investment rather than a reduction in core maintenance activity.

The Council has also benefited from wider government funding streams that, whilst not directly allocated for highway maintenance by the DfT, have delivered improvements to the highway network and associated infrastructure. Examples include the Brownfield Land Release Fund supporting Cavendish Dock Road in Barrow, Town Deal funding which has contributed to the Abbey Road Active Travel Scheme, and the Borderlands Inclusive Growth Deal which is supporting the See More Lake District Dunmail to Grasmere Active Travel Route.

Additional investment has also been provided through Council resources, including prudential borrowing and other locally generated funding streams. These sources provide flexibility to address local priorities and support key infrastructure assets. Recent examples include investment in Windermere Ferry, which maintains an important transport link across England's largest lake and supports wider network connectivity.

Through this combination of funding sources, the Council seeks to maintain an appropriate balance between preventative maintenance, structural renewal, resilience improvements and innovation. This approach maximises asset life, improves network condition, reduces future maintenance liabilities, reduces the need for emergency repairs, helps minimise the risk of compensation and insurance claims associated with highway defects, and supports delivery of the Council's Highway Asset Management Strategy and long-term maintenance of the highway network.

B1.2 - Spending

B1.2.1 – Total spending

The questions in this section (B1.2.1) relate to the spending condition set out in the 2026–27 [local highways maintenance incentive funding requirements](#). Completion of this section forms part of the evidence required to meet this incentive funding condition.

Please confirm that you understand the answers provided in this section (B1.2.1) relate to your compliance under the 2026-27 local highways maintenance incentive funding requirements, as set out to your authority via letter to your chief executive in April and as published online .	Yes
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Financial year	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27 (projected)
Total highways maintenance capital spend	£36,385,315	£47,810,267	£51,573,000
Total highways maintenance revenue spend	£8,061,811	£7,573,392	£8,298,350
Total spend	£44,447,126	£55,383,659	£59,871,350

B1.2.2 - Additional information on total spending figures

Capital Expenditure

Capital expenditure supports the Council's long-term asset management objectives and is primarily invested in preventative maintenance, structural renewal, drainage, bridges and structures, street lighting, footways, cycleways and network resilience improvements. The increase in capital expenditure during 2025/26 reflects additional government funding allocations and the delivery of major improvement schemes. The projected decrease in 2026/27 is principally attributable to the completion of the A595 Grizebeck Improvement Scheme and does not represent a reduction in the Council's commitment to maintaining and improving the highway network.

Revenue Expenditure

Revenue expenditure supports the day-to-day management of the highway network, including safety inspections, routine maintenance, reactive repairs, winter service operations, asset management activities and emergency response. Variations between years reflect changes in operational requirements, funding sources and the balance between revenue and capital investment.

Total Highway Maintenance Expenditure

The Council continues to invest significantly in its highway assets through a combination of capital and revenue funding. Expenditure is directed using a risk-based asset management approach which considers asset condition, safety, resilience, network importance and whole-life cost.

Strategic and Local Investment

Investment is delivered through both strategic asset management programmes and localised maintenance activities. Strategic programmes focus on lifecycle planning, preventative maintenance and network resilience, while local budgets support planned defect repairs, patching programmes, drainage improvements, road safety interventions and community priorities. This balanced approach enables the Council to address immediate maintenance needs whilst protecting the long-term value and performance of its highway assets.

B1.2.3 Spending on carriageways by type of spend in financial year 2025-26 and 2026-27 (projected)

Carriageway spend related maintenance type	Capital 2025-26	Revenue 2025-26	Capital 2026-27 (projected)	Revenue 2026-27 (projected)
Planned maintenance				
Preventative carriageway maintenance	£7,811,365	£0	£12,082,590	£0
Structural carriageway maintenance	£21,753,509	£0	£15,745,725	£0
Planned carriageway repair / patching programmes	£533,800	£0	£2,687,690	£0



Reactive carriageway maintenance				
Reactive carriageway repairs / patching (temporary repairs)	£367,470.00	£619,177	£550,350	£802,061
Reactive carriageway repairs / patching (permanent repairs)	£843,867	£1,251,167	£550,350	£1,675,367
Reactive carriageway repairs / patching (total)	£1,211,337	£1,870,344	£1,100,700	£2,477,428
Other carriageway-related spend	£16,500,256	£5,703,048	£19,956,295	£5,820,922
Total	£47,810,267	£7,573,392	£51,573,000	£8,298,350

B1.2.4 - Additional information on spending on carriageways by type of spend

Planned Maintenance

The Council adopts a risk-based asset management approach that prioritises planned maintenance activities to maximise whole-life value and maintain network condition. Investment is directed towards preventative treatments, including surface dressing and preservation activities, alongside structural maintenance such as resurfacing, reconstruction and renewal schemes. Planned carriageway repair and patching programmes have increased significantly for 2026/27, supporting early intervention and addressing deterioration before more extensive structural treatments are required. This approach helps extend asset life, improve resilience and reduce long-term maintenance liabilities.

Reactive Maintenance

Reactive maintenance remains an important part of the Council's overall maintenance strategy, ensuring safety defects and unforeseen deterioration are addressed promptly. The Council seeks to deliver permanent repairs wherever practical and continues to utilise a range of repair techniques and materials to achieve durable, cost-effective outcomes. This includes conventional patching as well as innovative repair methods and products that can improve repair longevity and minimise disruption to network users.

Balance of Investment

The Council's long-term objective is to maximise the proportion of funding invested in planned maintenance activities, which provide better whole-life value than reactive interventions. However, appropriate funding is retained for reactive maintenance to ensure the highway network remains safe and serviceable. The balance between preventative, structural and reactive maintenance is regularly reviewed through the asset management process to ensure investment aligns with network condition, risk, resilience and customer priorities.

Other Carriageway Expenditure

Other carriageway-related expenditure includes activities that support the effective management and operation of the network, including inspections, asset management, surveys, testing, drainage, resilience activities, traffic signals, network management and other supporting infrastructure programmes. These activities provide the information and supporting assets required to maintain a safe, efficient and resilient highway network.



B2 – Highway Maintenance Activity (Surface Treatments and Repairs)

B2.1 – Road resurfacing and surface treatments

Financial year	Road receiving preventative road surface treatments (length, km)	Road receiving planned structural maintenance (length, km)	Area receiving planned repair / patching programmes	Area receiving reactive repair / patching (permanent methods)	Area receiving reactive repairs/ patching (temporary methods)
2025-26	110.5km	39.65km	49,908m ²	19,739m ²	4,132m ²
2026-27 projected	113.04km	69.88km	51,555m ²	n/a	n/a

B2.1.1 – additional information on surface treatments and repairs

Does table B2.1 reflect all your carriageway-related road surface treatments & repair activities (for example, including pothole repairs)? If no , please add further information on any other types of treatments (planned to be) delivered and their extent in the table below.	Yes
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B2.1.2 – Further information and context

The Council delivers a range of highway maintenance treatments, from preventative measures such as surface dressing to major resurfacing and reconstruction schemes. Treatment selection is informed by condition surveys, lifecycle planning, engineering assessments and asset management principles to ensure the right intervention is applied at the right time. This approach helps maximise asset life, improve network performance and achieve best value. Reported lengths and areas are based on approved maintenance programmes and asset inventory records. Reactive maintenance areas are calculated using the number of repairs completed and an average repair size of 1m ² .	Yes
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B3 – Pothole repairs

This section sets out how authorities identify and repair potholes and other defects in carriageways, and how this activity fits within their wider maintenance approach. The Department is clear that prevention is better than cure: planned, preventative maintenance should be the foundation of a well-managed network, reducing the need for repeated reactive interventions

B3.1 – Pothole/Defect intervention criteria

Building on section A3.1, please set out in the table below how your local authority defines potholes and other carriageway defects, and the intervention criteria that apply.

Pothole/Defect category name (as used by your authority)	Minimum investigatory or definitional threshold (e.g. depth, area, width – include units)	Additional risk or contextual factors considered (e.g. road hierarchy, traffic levels, location in carriageway)	Target response time – make safe	Target response time – permanent repair
Emergency (Cat E)	40mm depth	Trained highway inspectors use a risk matrix to assess defects, considering the likelihood of a defect being encountered and its potential consequences. Factors including road hierarchy, traffic levels, location, visibility, vehicle speeds and vulnerable users inform the overall risk rating and whether maintenance intervention is required.	2hr	First visit where practicable; otherwise, defect made safe and permanent repair scheduled.
Asset Defect (Cat A) 5 Day	40mm depth	Trained highway inspectors use a risk matrix to assess defects, considering the likelihood of a defect being encountered and its potential consequences. Factors including road hierarchy, traffic levels, location, visibility, vehicle speeds and vulnerable users inform the overall risk rating and whether maintenance intervention is required.	5 days	First visit where practicable; otherwise, defect made safe and permanent repair scheduled.
Asset Defect (Cat A) 20 Day	40mm depth	Trained highway inspectors use a risk matrix to assess defects, considering the likelihood of a defect being encountered and its potential consequences. Factors	20 days	First visit where practicable; otherwise, defect made



		including road hierarchy, traffic levels, location, visibility, vehicle speeds and vulnerable users inform the overall risk rating and whether maintenance intervention is required.		safe and permanent repair scheduled.
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B3.2 – Number of potholes filled

B3.2.1 - Number of potholes filled in 2025-26 (estimate)	23,871
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B3.2.2 - Of these how many do you estimate were resolved using each of the following approaches?

Planned repair / patching programmes	Planned structural maintenance programmes	Reactive repair using temporary repair methods	Reactive repair using permanent repair methods
502	180	4,123	19,066

B3.2.3 - Additional information on numbers of potholes resolved, by treatment type

The Council seeks to resolve carriageway defects through the most appropriate intervention, taking account of asset condition, risk, network hierarchy, whole-life cost and long-term value. While reactive repairs remain essential for maintaining a safe highway network and addressing individual potholes, the Authority's overall approach focuses on preventing deterioration and extending asset life through timely maintenance interventions.

Potholes are addressed using a range of treatment types and repair techniques. Reactive repairs are used to respond to individual potholes and localised defects identified through safety inspections, customer reports, routine maintenance activities and Find & Fix operations. Wherever practicable, permanent repairs are completed at the first visit. Where this is not possible, defects are made safe and a permanent repair is programmed at the earliest appropriate opportunity.

Where deterioration is more extensive, the Council utilises planned patching programmes to repair larger areas of carriageway before more significant failure occurs. These planned interventions often provide a more durable, efficient and cost-effective solution than multiple isolated reactive repairs. Repair techniques include conventional machine and hand patching, innovative Pothole Pro repairs, spray injection patching, thermal patching and specialist repair materials selected according to site conditions and performance requirements.

The Authority works closely with its contractors, suppliers and industry partners to trial and evaluate innovative sustainable maintenance techniques and materials. Through its specialist surface treatment contracts, the Council utilises a range of treatments including spray-applied surfacing, mastic asphalt and thermal repair solutions. Procurement for the 2026/27 contract period is currently underway and seeks to provide additional opportunities to evaluate and introduce emerging treatment types where they can demonstrate improvements in durability, carbon reduction, efficiency, safety or value for money.

In addition to reactive and patching activities, the Council invests significantly in preventative maintenance and carriageway renewal programmes, including surface

dressings, preservation treatments, resurfacing and reconstruction. These treatments address underlying deterioration, improve network condition and reduce the future occurrence of potholes, helping to minimise the need for reactive interventions.

Sustainability is an important element of the Council's maintenance approach. The Authority seeks to maximise the reuse and recycling of highway materials where practical and works closely with its contractors to ensure suitable arrangements are in place for the recovery, processing and reuse of materials. Recycled materials are incorporated into maintenance activities where technically appropriate. Warm mix asphalt is also used extensively on resurfacing and maintenance schemes, helping to reduce carbon emissions associated with production and laying whilst maintaining performance standards.

By combining reactive repairs, innovative repair techniques, specialist surface treatments, planned patching and preventative maintenance, the Council aims to maintain a safe, resilient and cost-effective highway network while achieving best value from available funding.

CAUTION FOR READERS – Authorities have different criteria for identifying potholes and different methodologies for counting how many they have filled or resolved. Summing the figures in the above table across authorities will therefore not provide a reliable estimate of the total number of potholes filled across England.

B3.3 - Prices of pothole interventions

Unit/average cost of a permanent pothole repair on your network (reactive)	£90	Unit/average cost of a temporary pothole repair on your network (reactive)	£35
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B3.3.1 - Additional information on pothole prices (optional)

Costs represent estimated average figures across all repair techniques and vary according to defect size, location, traffic management requirements, access constraints and repair method. The Council adopts a proactive approach to pothole management across a significant rural network, including Find & Fix activities that enable multiple defects to be identified and repaired during a single visit, improving productivity and reducing costs. During 2025/26, the Council attended and repaired over 23,000 potholes across the highway network. This approach helps maximise the number of repairs delivered from available funding while reducing disruption to road users and maintaining network safety.

B3.4 - Defect repair quality

ID	Question	Yes/no
3.4.1	Do you set requirements to those delivering repairs about the longevity of both a) planned repairs/patching and b) reactive repairs using permanent methods?	Yes
3.4.2	If yes, do you base your material and process specifications on these longevity requirements?	Yes
3.4.3	Do you regularly monitor the appropriateness of the carriageway interventions chosen by your workforce or contractor and the quality of work delivered?	Yes
3.4.4	If yes, do you systematically record information about expected and delivered longevity of repairs?	Yes

B3.4.5 - Evidence Summary

The Authority maintains a risk-based defect management process supported by defined inspection frequencies, investigatory criteria and response times. Repair quality is monitored through supervisor inspections, scheme reviews and contractor performance management arrangements. Materials and repair methods are selected to provide durable outcomes appropriate to traffic loading, road hierarchy and site conditions. Information from inspections, customer reports, repeat defects and performance monitoring is used to support continuous improvement and inform future maintenance decisions.

B3.4.6 - Additional information

The Council seeks to maximise the life and performance of repairs through appropriate treatment selection, robust quality assurance processes and ongoing performance monitoring. Repair methods and materials are selected according to the nature of the defect, network hierarchy, traffic loading, site conditions and anticipated asset life, ensuring that the most suitable intervention is applied for each location.

A range of repair techniques is employed, from permanent reactive repairs through to larger-scale planned patching, resurfacing and reconstruction treatments. The Council works closely with its framework contractors, suppliers and industry partners to identify, trial and evaluate new materials, products and repair techniques where they have the potential to improve durability, efficiency, safety or value for money.

Repair quality is monitored through supervisor inspections, site audits, contractor performance management processes and reviews of repeat defects. Information from inspections, customer reports and recurring failures is used to inform future repair specifications, identify opportunities for improvement and support evidence-based decision making.

The Council is committed to supporting innovation and sharing best practice across the highways sector, maintaining awareness of developments in materials, equipment and maintenance techniques to ensure activities continue to reflect current industry standards and emerging good practice.

Sustainability is also an important consideration. The Council seeks to maximise the reuse and recycling of highway materials wherever practicable and works closely with its contractors to ensure suitable storage, handling and processing facilities are available for recovered materials. Recycled materials are incorporated into maintenance activities where appropriate and technically suitable. In addition, warm mix asphalt is now the default material for many resurfacing and maintenance schemes, helping to reduce carbon emissions associated with asphalt production and laying while maintaining required performance standards. The Council has also participated in the ADEPT Carbon Leadership Programme to better understand and manage carbon emissions associated with highway maintenance activities

Through the combination of quality assurance, innovation, sustainable construction practices and continuous improvement, the Council aims to deliver durable repairs, optimise asset life and achieve best value from available maintenance funding.

B3.5 - Public reporting system for defects and other issues

ID	Question	Answer
3.5.1	Are defect reports from the public routinely used as an input into maintenance planning and inspection regimes?	Yes
3.5.2	Do you inform users about the outcomes from their feedback, including when no action is to be taken?	Yes

B3.5.3 - Evidence Summary

The Authority operates an integrated customer reporting system linked to its highways asset management system. Reports from the public on defects and other highway issues are received, assessed and processed through defined workflows. Customers are updated on the outcome of their reports, including where no action is required. Public reports are also used to support maintenance planning and inspection activities. Report volumes are analysed alongside asset condition, risk, inspection findings and performance information to help identify priorities and support fair, proportionate and evidence-based investment decisions across the highway network.

B3.5.4 - Tools used for reporting

Highway defects can be reported through the Council's online reporting platform, Customer Services Contact Centre, elected Members, Town and Parish Councils, and other Council channels. All reports are recorded within the Council's Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system to support investigation, inspection, response management and customer communication.

B4 – Maintenance of highway structures

B4.1 Highway Structures

ID	Question	Answer
4.1.1	Number of highway structures on your highway network	2,385
4.1.2	Number of highway structures with interim measures in accordance with CS470 applied?	1
4.1.3	Number of structures due a General Inspection in 2025-26 in accordance with CS450	639
4.1.4	Number of General Inspections carried out in 2025-26	635
4.1.5	Number of structures due a Principal Inspection in 2025-26 in accordance with CS450	18
4.1.6	Number of Principal Inspections carried out in 2025-26	16

For more information on Bridges and Structures please see the council's website at this [link](#).

B5 – Asset Management

This section focuses on asset management practices that underpin how the authority plans, prioritises and delivers highways maintenance. It is intended to provide confidence that decisions are evidence led, risk based and aligned to whole life value, in line with the Code of Practice for Well Managed Highways Infrastructure.

B5.1 - Asset Management Strategy and Policy

The questions in this section (B5.1) relate to the asset management condition set out in the 2026–27 [local highways maintenance incentive funding requirements](#). Completion of this section forms part of the evidence required to meet this incentive funding condition.

5.1.1	Please confirm that you understand the answers provided in this section (B5.1) relate to your compliance under the 2026-27 local highways maintenance incentive funding requirements, as set out to your authority via letter to your chief executive in April and as published online.	Yes
5.1.2	Please provide a link to your authority's published highways asset management policy and strategy. Link	
	Highways Asset Management Strategy	
5.1.3	Please provide the date it was last reviewed or updated	Date 21/01/2025
5.1.4	Please provide proof of the review or update.	
	<i>The councils Highway Asset Management Strategy for 2025-29 was reviewed over the course of 2024 and submitted through our internal governance process with Cabinet approving the new strategy on 21st January 2025.</i>	
5.1.5	If your asset management policy or strategy has not been reviewed or updated since 1 August 2024, please confirm that it will be reviewed or updated by 30 September 2027 and provide a brief timetable for doing so.	
	<i>With our asset management strategy having been reviewed and then approved in January 2025 this is not applicable.</i>	

B5.1.6 - Further context (optional)

The Council has established a structured asset management framework comprising the Highway Asset Management Strategy 2025-2029, Highways Asset Management Plan (HAMP), Lifecycle Plans, and performance frameworks. This framework ensures that investment decisions are evidence-based, risk-informed and aligned with the Council's long-term strategic objectives and service priorities

Key aspects of highways asset management approach

To get a sense of how each local highway authority is implementing best practice for asset management, we ask that you provide the following information across a sample of key areas.

B5.2 - Asset data This section seeks to establish whether asset management decisions are supported by appropriate and up-to-date condition data.

Asset type	Asset inventory held? (None / partial / full)	Condition data held? (None / Partial / Full)
Carriageways	Full	Full
Footways and cycleways	Full	Full
Structures	Full	Full
Drainage assets	Partial	Partial
Street lighting	Full	Full
Traffic signals	Full	Full

5.2.1 - Further context (optional)

The Council continues to improve asset inventory and condition information across all highway asset groups. Comprehensive digital records are maintained for carriageways, bridges and structures, street lighting and traffic signals. Asset condition data is collected through Vaisala RoadAI surveys and visual inspections undertaken by trained highway inspectors, providing network-wide condition intelligence and local risk-based assessment. Kaarbontech supports drainage asset management through digital inventory, inspection and maintenance records, helping improve data quality and accessibility. Together, these systems provide a robust evidence base for asset management, lifecycle planning, risk-based decision making and the prioritisation of investment across the highway network.

B5.3 – Asset data integration and management

This section seeks to understand the maturity of how asset data is managed and integrated to support planning and investment decisions.

B5.3.1 – Asset data integration

How is asset inventory and condition data for your key highway assets primarily managed?

Discrete spreadsheets or documents held by individual teams	
Multiple digital platforms with limited integration	
A single digital platform or a set of connected platforms used across the highways service	X
Other (please set out in further context)	

B5.3.2 - Further context (optional)

Highway asset information is primarily managed through WDM HIAMS (Highways Infrastructure Asset Management System) and a suite of connected digital platforms that support asset inventories, inspections, works management and performance reporting. The Council continues to improve integration between systems to enhance data quality, operational efficiency and evidence-based decision making. This supports a whole-asset approach to network management, lifecycle planning and investment prioritisation. Further information on WDM HIAMS is available on their [website](#).

B5.4 – Lifecycle planning and investment decision-making

This section focuses on whether the authority uses **lifecycle planning** to inform maintenance investment decisions, rather than relying solely on reactive demand or short-term pressures.

ID	Question	Yes / No
5.4.1	Do you use lifecycle plans for carriageways to support maintenance investment decisions?	Yes



5.4.2	Do you use lifecycle plans for footways to support maintenance investment decisions?	Yes
5.4.3	Do you use lifecycle plans for structures to support investment decisions?	Yes

B5.4.4 - Evidence Summary

Lifecycle planning is embedded within the Council's asset management approach and is used to support investment decisions for carriageways, footways and structures. Condition data, deterioration modelling, risk, whole-life costs, and budget modelling are considered when developing maintenance programmes. This approach enables targeted investment in preventative maintenance and renewal activities, supporting improved asset performance, network resilience and long-term value for money.

B5.5 – Performance monitoring and continuous improvement

This section focuses on whether the authority monitors the effectiveness of its asset management approach and uses performance information to inform ongoing investment and prioritisation decisions.

ID	Question	Answer
5.5.1	Do you have a defined set of key performance indicators (KPIs) to monitor the outcomes of your highways asset management approach?	Yes
5.5.2	Are these KPIs reviewed on a regular basis (at least annually)?	Yes
5.5.3	Are KPI trends used to inform maintenance planning, prioritisation or changes to forward programmes or investment decisions?	Yes
5.5.4	Have you conducted a value for money review or peer review of your service in the last 3 years	Yes

B5.5.5 - Evidence Summary

The Council monitors performance indicators relating to asset condition, safety inspections, defect response times, maintenance delivery and customer service. Performance data, condition trends and customer feedback are regularly reviewed to inform maintenance planning, investment decisions and continuous improvement. The Council also manages the performance of framework providers, contractors and specialist service providers through bespoke contract-specific Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) that measure quality, efficiency, safety and service outcomes. A comprehensive review of asset management and procurement arrangements is informing future service development, procurement strategies and operational efficiency improvements.

B6 - Maintaining footways and cycleways

ID	Question	Answer
6.1.1	Do you have a defined footway hierarchy (e.g. based on footway function and usage levels) that underpins a risk-based approach to inspection frequencies and maintenance programmes?	Yes
6.1.2	For 2026-27, please provide the length of footways that you have earmarked for structural maintenance / reconstruction / renewal	18.47km
6.1.3	For 2026-27, please provide the length of footways that you have earmarked for preventative maintenance treatments	9.85km
6.1.4	Are priority footways and cycleways included in your winter service (e.g. gritting or snow clearance), and in a routine programme for keeping them clear of overgrown vegetation and debris (e.g. sweeping, cutting back)?	Yes
6.1.5	For 2026-27, are you planning to deliver structural or preventative maintenance to cycleways which is not yet covered as part of your carriageway maintenance programmes or footway maintenance programmes (e.g. segregated cycleways that are not shared with pedestrians or motorists). If yes, please set out the length of such cycleways that you have earmarked for:	Yes
	a. Structural maintenance / reconstruction (in km)	3.4km
	b. Preventative maintenance treatments (in km)	0km

B6.1.6 - Please provide any brief additional information you consider helpful in explaining your approach to maintaining footways and cycleways

The Council manages footways and cycleways using a risk-based asset management approach aligned with the principles of Well-managed Highway Infrastructure. Inspection frequencies, maintenance activities and investment priorities are determined by asset hierarchy, usage, condition and risk. Programmed works for 2026/27 include approximately 18.47km of structural footway maintenance, 9.85km of preventative footway maintenance and 3.4km of cycleway improvements. Priority routes are included within winter service and routine vegetation management programmes where appropriate. Reported lengths are based on approved programmes, with some lengths derived from scheme areas using average asset widths.

B6.1.7 - Evidence Summary

The Council maintains a defined footway hierarchy which supports a risk-based approach to inspection, maintenance and investment decisions. Condition data, safety inspections, asset inventories and customer reports are used to identify and prioritise maintenance needs. For 2026/27, the approved programme includes approximately 18.47km of structural footway maintenance, 9.85km of preventative footway maintenance and 3.4km of cycleway improvements associated with active travel infrastructure schemes. Priority footways and cycleways are also included within winter service and routine vegetation management programmes where appropriate. Reported lengths are derived from approved maintenance and capital programmes.



B7 – Drainage

ID	Question	Answer
7.1.1	Please provide an estimate of your drainage maintenance expenditure split (in percentages) between:	
	a) Reactive (incident- or failure-driven) maintenance	14%
	b) Planned maintenance (routine/cyclical and/or risk-based)	86%
7.1.2	Does your authority utilise a digital drainage management platform, covering asset inventory, inspection history, sensor data, and risk scoring?	Yes
7.1.3	Do you maintain a record of locations where drainage issues are known to cause or contribute to carriageway deterioration or surface water ponding?	Yes
7.1.4	Do you utilise smart sensors or other remote monitoring technologies to monitor performance of your drainage assets. If yes please provide some high level information in bullet points below	Yes
	The Council is working with Kaarbontech to develop and trial innovative drainage monitoring technology across the highway drainage network. The project is exploring the use of sensors to provide real-time asset performance and condition data. This information will support risk-based maintenance planning and investment decisions, enabling drainage activities to be prioritised based on asset performance and network need rather than road hierarchy alone. Please see this LINK to a case study of our previous work with Kaarbontech.	

B7.1.5 - Evidence Summary

The Authority maintains a digital drainage asset inventory and inspection record within its asset management systems. Drainage defects identified through highway inspections, customer reports, flooding investigations and routine maintenance activities are recorded and prioritised according to risk. Known flooding and ponding locations are monitored and used to inform maintenance programmes and investment decisions. Both planned and reactive drainage maintenance activities are undertaken, with programming based on historic issues, asset condition, network hierarchy and operational risk. Information is used to support service planning and the development of annual drainage maintenance programmes.

B7.1.6 – Further context on approach to drainage asset management

The Authority adopts a risk-based approach to drainage asset management, using routine maintenance, inspections, customer reports and local knowledge to identify priorities. Drainage assets and known flooding hotspots are reviewed in collaboration with the Flood Risk Management Team to target investment where it will deliver the greatest benefit. Locations with recurring flooding, ponding or drainage-related deterioration are monitored and considered when developing maintenance programmes.

The Authority is also working with Kaarbontech to explore drainage sensors, providing real-time data to support maintenance planning and improve network resilience.

B8 – Skills and training

ID	Question	Answer
8.1.1	Do you have an up-to-date training and development plan for those responsible for highways asset management in your authority?	Yes
8.1.2	Do you or your main highways contractors support professional development through a recognised professional training scheme (e.g. Institution of Civil Engineers (ICE) or Institution of Highway Engineers (IHE))?	Yes
8.1.3	Does your authority contribute towards the cost of professional membership or professional development required for relevant highways roles?	Yes
8.1.4	Do you employ a professionally qualified engineer (e.g. Chartered Engineer (CEng) or equivalent competence) with responsibility for the management of highway structures (either in house or through a contracted arrangement)?	Yes
8.1.5	Does your authority define competence requirements for key highways asset management roles and take steps to address any identified gaps (either directly or through contractual arrangements)?	Yes
8.1.6	Do you or your main contractors support early career development in your local area, for example through apprentice schemes, traineeships or pre-apprenticeship programmes, sponsored qualifications (e.g. HNC/HND, degree, MSc), graduate schemes etc	Yes

B8.1.7 - Evidence Summary

The authority maintains an up-to-date training and development approach for highways asset management staff and supports continuing professional development through recognised professional institutions. A number of employees hold memberships with organisations such as ICE, ILP, CIHT and IHE. While professional memberships are funded by individuals, the authority supports attendance at relevant CPD events, technical training and professional development activities. Competence requirements are defined for key roles, including professionally qualified engineers responsible for highway structures. Apprenticeships, graduate development and contractor-led training opportunities are used to build capability, address skills gaps and support succession planning.

B8.1.8 – Further context on skills/training (optional)

The Council supports early career development through its corporate apprenticeship programme, including opportunities in highways maintenance and civil engineering. Apprentices gain practical experience across a range of highways disciplines, helping to develop future technical and operational professionals. The service works closely with contractors and supply chain partners to promote skills development, knowledge sharing and collaborative learning. This includes CPD, product awareness and carbon-efficiency training delivered with partners including Kiely Bros and Heidelberg Materials, covering surface dressing, surfacing materials, construction techniques and sustainable maintenance practices. Recent examples include a joint internal workshop with Kiely Bros on preventative maintenance approaches and a collaborative training and skills event with Multevo, providing practical exposure to emerging technology and innovation within highway asset management. Training requirements and career development opportunities are identified through the Council's "Let's Talk" process and supported through site visits, supplier events and dedicated skills days.

B9 – Adapting roads to withstand climate pressures

Climate and environmental factors, such as heavy rainfall, prolonged heat, and freeze-thaw cycles, are integral to effective highways asset management, as they influence asset performance, deterioration rates and long-term resilience. Understanding both the impacts of a changing climate and the carbon implications of maintenance activities supports better decision-making, helping authorities to optimise durability, manage risk and deliver best whole life value from their assets.

ID	Question	Yes/no
9.1.1	Have you updated your asset management policy and strategy to reflect the increased probability of extreme-weather and/or geohazards now and in the future?	Yes
9.1.2	Have you identified your resilient network and agree this with senior decision-makers	Yes
9.1.3	If yes when did you last update this.	03/04/2023
9.1.4	Have you identified locations that are repeatedly affected by extreme weather (e.g. flooding, heat damage, storms)?	Yes – formally recorded
9.1.5	Which climate-adaptation measures are currently implemented on your network?	
	- Targeted drainage upgrades or maintenance	Yes
	- Natural flood management / SuDS	Yes
	- targeted slope / ground stability / landslip mitigation	Yes
	- Heat-resilient materials or surface treatments	Yes
	- Tree planting / shading for heat management	No
	- Other (please specify)	Yes-appointed an adverse weather manager
	- None of the above	No
9.1.6	Have you measured and benchmarked the greenhouse gas emissions from your highways maintenance service using a recognised industry standard? Or do you have arrangements in place to do this, such as by signing up to the DfT funded ADEPT Carbon Leadership Programme.	Yes
9.1.7	Have you formally engaged with the DfT funded ADEPT live labs 2 Programme, to understand what lessons your authority can utilise to increase the efficiency of your operations and support decarbonisation efforts?	Yes

B9.1.8 - Evidence Summary

Climate resilience is a key consideration within the Council's asset management approach. The Authority monitors locations affected by flooding, scour, landslips and other weather-related impacts, with maintenance and renewal programmes including targeted drainage improvements, resilience measures and slope stabilisation works where appropriate. Investment decisions reflect the increasing effect of extreme weather on network performance and reliability. The Council has successfully completed the ADEPT Carbon Leadership Programme and has an update to date Carbon Benchmarking Assessment. With the findings being utilised to reduce carbon emissions and to strengthen carbon management within highways planning and service delivery.



B9.1.9 - Further context on your adaptation / resilience activities

Westmorland and Furness has an extensive rural highway network exposed to flooding, landslips, coastal influences and increasingly frequent severe weather events. The Council maintains records of known resilience hotspots and uses this information to inform inspection, maintenance and capital investment programmes. Targeted drainage improvements, culvert maintenance, embankment stabilisation and bridge works are undertaken to improve resilience and reduce the impacts of extreme weather.

As part of its ongoing highway hierarchy review, the Council is undertaking a resilience network review to better understand the effects of current and future climate pressures on key transport routes. This includes assessing the resilience of critical structures and bridges to support future investment and risk-based asset management decisions.

The Council commissioned a joint climate review with MetDesk, which has informed winter service and wider adverse weather arrangements. Enhanced weather intelligence, including rainfall forecasting, WX-Horizon road surface temperature forecasting and a network of 17 weather stations, supports operational decision-making. A river level monitoring system alerts the structures team to significant rises in water levels, triggering risk reviews and, where required, emergency inspections of vulnerable bridges and highway structures. Winter route optimisation and support for local communities further strengthen network resilience and preparedness for future climate challenges.

B10 – Innovation

ID	Question	Yes / No
10.1.1	Do your procurement and contracting approaches encourage and reward innovative practice?	Yes
10.1.2	Can you demonstrate that innovative materials and practices are regularly reviewed and, where appropriate, integrated into business as usual operations?	Yes
10.1.3	If you have conducted innovation trials, have you shared the findings of these publicly or with professional networks?	Yes

10.1.4 - Evidence Summary

The Council actively promotes innovation through the adoption of new technologies, materials and ways of working across the highways service. A dedicated annual innovation fund is established through the highways budget, with an internal bidding process allowing teams to seek funding for innovative trials and pilot projects. Recent initiatives include AI-enabled road condition surveys, smart drainage monitoring, lower-carbon construction materials and digital asset management improvements. The Council works closely with contractors, suppliers and industry groups, including the LCRIG Northwest Materials Group, to evaluate emerging technologies and share learning, helping successful innovations move into business-as-usual delivery.

B10.1.5 - Further context on your innovation activities

Innovation is embedded within the Council's asset management approach, supporting improvements in safety, efficiency, sustainability and customer service. The Council maintains a dedicated annual innovation fund, enabling officers to submit business cases for trial projects and evaluate new technologies, materials and delivery methods before wider implementation. Current initiatives include climate resilience studies, AI-enabled condition surveys, carbon reduction measures, smart asset monitoring, alternative

surfacing materials, electric plant and equipment trials, and service improvements. Outcomes are reviewed and shared across the service to ensure lessons learned inform future investment decisions and operational practices.

10.2 – Examples of innovations that have been adopted

Materials and Treatments

Over the past decade the Council has worked collaboratively with its framework partner, Heidelberg Materials, to develop and implement an innovative single-layer asphalt solution based upon an asphalt concrete specification. The material is designed to provide the functional characteristics of a conventional surface course whilst being laid in a single layer of up to 120mm depth, subject to aggregate size and design requirements.

This approach is particularly beneficial across Westmorland and Furness's extensive rural road network, where traditional resurfacing would typically require separate binder and surface course layers. The single-layer solution enables schemes to be completed in a single paving operation, reducing construction time and disruption.

Benefits include:

- Improved structural performance of the carriageway.
- Reduced material wastage through retention of existing construction.
- Fewer construction vehicle movements to and from site.
- Reduced plant movements on site.
- Shorter road closures and less disruption to road users.
- Compatibility with warm-mix production methods, helping to reduce embodied carbon.

During 2025/26 the Council delivered 23 surfacing schemes using this approach, laying approximately 17,400 tonnes of material across the highway network.

The Council utilises innovative pothole repair processes and maintenance interventions to deliver durable, efficient and cost-effective repairs. Techniques include specialist patching, Pothole Pro repairs, spray injection patching, thermal patching and specialist mastic repair materials, with treatments selected according to site conditions and performance requirements.

The Authority also seeks to maximise the reuse and recycling of highway materials wherever practical and works closely with contractors to ensure suitable arrangements are in place for the recovery, processing and reuse of materials. Recycled materials are incorporated into highway maintenance activities where technically appropriate.

Additional material innovation initiatives include warm-mix asphalt, bio-binder trials and low-carbon surfacing solutions. A recent example is the Alston Carbon Exemplar resurfacing scheme, which involved 1.473km of the A689 between Harbut Lodge and Alston War Memorial. Delivered in collaboration with Heidelberg Materials through the Council's highway framework agreement, the scheme utilised CarbonLock asphalt technology, which incorporates biogenic material within the binder to absorb and permanently store atmospheric CO₂, even when the material is subsequently recycled.

The Council has also participated in the ADEPT Live Labs 2 programme through innovative street lighting trials in Ambleside. This work has explored the use of lower-height lighting columns and directional lighting focused on pedestrian routes rather than

evenly illuminating the full highway corridor. The approach aims to provide appropriate lighting where it is needed most while reducing energy consumption, lowering carbon emissions, minimising light pollution and simplifying future maintenance through the use of lower and more accessible column heights.

Digital and Data

The Council continues to increase the use of digital technologies to support evidence-based asset management and maintenance decisions. AI-enabled road condition surveys are used alongside traditional condition data to provide enhanced network intelligence and support maintenance prioritisation.

Westmorland and Furness and its predecessor authorities have a long history of innovation in this area, including participation in the DfT-supported Digital Inspector trial before the Covid-19 pandemic. This helped establish a culture of innovation and digital data collection that continues today.

The Council now uses Vaisala RoadAI technology, which is PAS2161 compliant, to support highway inspections. Video surveys and artificial intelligence provide additional support to trained highway inspectors by identifying carriageway condition issues and collecting inventory information such as signs, road markings and other highway assets. The Authority has also participated in beta testing of emerging Vaisala technologies, including automated pothole detection tools which are now used to supplement inspector observations.

Digital asset management systems integrate inspection, condition, maintenance and performance information, enabling improved lifecycle planning and investment decisions. The Council is also trialling smart drainage monitoring technology to provide real-time asset condition and performance information.

The Authority continues to work closely with Vaisala to explore connected vehicle data and assess how emerging datasets may complement traditional SCANNER, SCRIM and road safety information in future asset management decisions.

Winter service innovation has been strengthened through a comprehensive climate and weather review undertaken with MetDesk, which informed the redesign of forecast domains and increased the number of weather domains across the Council area. The Council now operates a network of 17 strategically located weather stations, including paired high and low altitude locations and battery-powered sensors, providing more detailed and accurate localised forecasts. Enhanced forecasting capabilities including daily rainfall prediction, improved road condition forecasting and the use of WX Horizon road surface temperature forecasts to support operational decision-making during both winter conditions and periods of extreme heat.

The Council also utilises Stormchain, a dedicated incident and severe weather recording system, to improve situational awareness, incident management and post-event learning. Organisational resilience has been further strengthened through participation in "Worst Day Ever" emergency planning exercise, testing response arrangements, decision-making processes and service continuity during severe weather and network disruption events.

Vehicles, Plant and Equipment

The Council and its delivery partners are exploring the use of lower-emission vehicles, electric plant and electrically powered construction equipment to reduce carbon emissions

associated with highway maintenance activities. Trials of electric plant and paving equipment are being undertaken alongside wider fleet decarbonisation initiatives.

Working alongside the Council's Corporate Fleet Service, the highways service is reviewing its pool vehicle fleet to identify opportunities to reduce vehicle emissions while maintaining the operational capability required to support inspection, maintenance and emergency response activities.

The Council is also reviewing depot infrastructure and electrical capacity requirements to facilitate the future expansion of electric vehicle charging facilities. This work will help support the gradual transition to lower-carbon vehicles and equipment as technologies continue to mature and operational requirements can be met.

Additional innovation includes the use of specialist maintenance equipment and treatment techniques designed to improve productivity, reduce intervention times and minimise disruption to road users.

Delivery and Process Innovation

The Council operates a collaborative delivery model that encourages innovation from both internal teams and external partners. A dedicated innovation funding process enables officers, service teams and contractors to submit proposals for trials and service improvements. Innovation extends beyond materials and technology to include operational resilience and emergency planning. The Council has implemented Stormchain as a dedicated platform for recording and managing incidents, including severe weather events affecting the highway network, improving real-time information sharing, coordination and post-event learning. The service has also undertaken a resilience "worst day" exercise involving duty officers and partner organisations to test emergency response procedures, strengthen decision-making processes and improve preparedness for significant weather-related and wider network emergencies.

The highways service is also evolving its procurement arrangements to support a mixed-economy delivery model, combining internal resources with specialist contractor expertise. This approach encourages market innovation, increases flexibility and provides opportunities to trial new techniques, materials and delivery methods.

The Council actively encourages its contractors, suppliers and delivery partners to propose innovative materials, technologies and ways of working through regular engagement, contract management arrangements and collaborative trial projects. Successful initiatives are evaluated and, where appropriate, incorporated into future programmes and specifications.

Examples include smart traffic signal technologies, innovative patching techniques, specialist surfacing treatments and carbon reduction projects delivered through collaborative contractor partnerships.

Workforce and Capability

The Council recognises that innovation is dependent upon developing a skilled and capable workforce. Officers engage with regional and national innovation networks, including ADEPT, LCRIG and Live Labs programmes, to share learning and identify best practice.

The service contributes to national industry development through officer involvement with professional bodies, including representation on the Institute of Highway Engineers (IHE)

Highway Inspectors Board, which helps shape nationally recognised training and competency standards for highway inspectors. This enables the Council to contribute directly to the development of future industry best practice.

Training initiatives include carbon literacy training, professional development activities and knowledge-sharing events delivered jointly with contractors, suppliers and industry partners. The Council actively encourages professional membership and development through organisations such as the IHE, ILP, ICE, CIHT and IPROW.

Formal training plans support workforce development across all areas of the highways service, helping staff remain aware of emerging technologies, changing industry practices and opportunities to improve service delivery.

The Council has also established governance arrangements to ensure successful innovation trials are evaluated, lessons learned are captured and proven solutions are embedded into future service delivery.

B11 – Working with utility companies to reduce disruption to road users

ID	Question	Yes / No
11.1.1	Do you routinely monitor and enforce utility works quality as part of your streetworks management?	Yes
11.1.2	Have you undertaken a senior-endorsed assessment of whether a lane rental scheme would be suitable for your area?	Yes
11.1.3	Do you seek input from utility companies when determining your highways maintenance programme to help reduce disruption?	Yes
11.1.4	Have you conducted and published a permit scheme evaluation within the last three years?	Yes
11.1.5	Have you conducted a traffic sensitive review in the last three years?	Yes

11.1.6 - Evidence Summary

Between April 2025 and March 2026, the Council completed 14,250 street works inspections, resulting in three prosecutions for non-compliance. Utility works are routinely monitored through inspection and permit processes to ensure compliance with statutory requirements and quality standards. Regular coordination meetings are held with utility companies and internal teams to minimise disruption and identify opportunities for collaborative working. The permit scheme was reviewed in 2023, with a further review planned in 2026. A senior-level assessment of a lane rental scheme has been undertaken as part of wider network management considerations. Further information is available via the Council's permit scheme [webpage](#).

B11.1.7 - Further context

The Council works closely with utility companies, developers and internal highway teams to coordinate activities and minimise disruption to road users. Utility companies are consulted during the development of highway maintenance programmes to identify opportunities for collaboration and avoid conflicts on the network. The Council also publishes information on planned works and other network activities through the One.Network platform, helping improve visibility and coordination across the highway network. Phase 1 of the Traffic Sensitive Network review was completed in 2026, with

Phase 2 currently being delivered in partnership with GeoPlace. This review informs future network management decisions.

B12 – Managing highways maintenance contracts effectively

Only answer this sections if you utilise a contractor to deliver any of your **carriageway** maintenance operations, including: structural maintenance, planned repairs / patching, or reactive repairs / patching

ID	Question	Yes / No
12.1.1	Does your authority retain in-house technical capability to independently assess maintenance interventions proposed by contractors?	Yes
12.1.2	Do you routinely analyse actual unit costs (for example £/m ² of road surface treatments, or £/pothole repair) for core highways maintenance activities delivered under contract and compare them against benchmarks or historic performance?	Yes
12.1.3	Do you have defined KPIs for your highways maintenance contract(s), and are they actively monitored by your authority to manage performance?	Yes
12.1.4	If reactive pothole repairs are delivered by a contractor, do your contracting arrangements incentivise single-visit permanent repairs where it is safe and appropriate to do so?	Yes

12.1.5 - Evidence Summary

The Authority retains in-house technical expertise to independently review, challenge and approve contractor proposals and designs. Contract rates and costs are periodically assessed against historical data and market benchmarks to ensure value for money. Defined contract KPIs are in place and are actively monitored to manage performance, quality and delivery. Reactive carriageway repairs delivered through the specialist patching framework are intended to provide permanent repairs in a single visit where appropriate, reducing repeat interventions and improving network efficiency. Contract management arrangements support robust governance, quality assurance and continuous performance improvement.

B12.1.6 - Further context

The Authority adopts an informed client approach, maintaining suitably qualified in-house technical staff to oversee, scrutinise and challenge contractor recommendations where required. This enables independent assurance that maintenance interventions are appropriate, cost-effective and aligned with asset management objectives. Commercial performance is monitored through periodic reviews of rates, costs and contractor performance, particularly where market testing opportunities are limited. Contract KPIs are regularly reviewed and used to drive service improvement and ensure expected outcomes are achieved. Reactive carriageway repairs are delivered through specialist patching contracts that seeks to achieve permanent repairs at the first intervention wherever practicable. While no specific financial incentives are included for single-visit repairs, the contract specification, performance measures and quality requirements support an approach focused on durable repairs and minimising repeat visits. This contributes to improved network resilience and more efficient use of resources.