

Potholes and Carriageway Defects

Briefing Note



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Potholes and other defects appear in our roads not only because of the age of the surfacing material, but because of the effects of weather, traffic loading and ground conditions. Wiltshire Council has an extensive programme of road resurfacing, but with a backlog of maintenance required on the road network nationally, it is necessary to make localised repairs to keep our roads safe.

Repairs are prioritised so that the most urgent defects are dealt with first.

Wiltshire council uses a number of processes to treat potholes, including tubs of ready mixed materials, excavating and laying new material, and velocity patching which sprays material into the defect. The type of treatment can depend on the nature of the defect, its location and weather conditions.

The repairs may not look attractive, but their purpose is to keep the road safe.

Safety Inspections are carried out on the highway network to identify all defects likely to create danger or serious inconvenience to users of the network or the wider community. Such defects include those that will require urgent attention within 24 hours as well as those where the locations and sizes are such that longer periods of response would be acceptable.

This document summarises the standards applied when responding to potholes and defects on the highway network.

Potholes on main roads

(A, B and some C class roads)

On main roads defects more than 75mm deep are treated as priorities.



Size of Pothole	Response
More than 75mm (3") deep and wider than 250mm (approx 10").	Normally dealt with within 24 hours. In some cases where an immediate repair is not possible temporary signing and guarding may be required.
Potholes between 40mm and 75mm (3ins) wider than 250mm (approx 10")	Normally dealt with within 7 working days. In some cases where an immediate repair is not possible temporary signing and guarding may be required.
Potholes less than 40mm (1 3/4") deep.	Site would be considered for inclusion in future maintenance programme, and will continue to be monitored.

Carriageway defects of less than 40mm depth, including areas of delamination (where the road surface is deteriorating) will be considered for repair or resurfacing as resources permit.

Other surface depressions and irregularities may require temporary signing to warn of uneven road surface or slippery road signs, depending on circumstances.

Potholes on minor roads

(Most C class roads and all unclassified roads)

On minor roads defects over 100mm are treated as priorities.



Size of Pothole	Response
More than 100mm (4") deep and wider than 250mm (approx 10").	Normally dealt with within 24 hours. In some cases where an immediate repair is not possible temporary signing and guarding may be required.
Potholes between 40mm and 100mm (4") wider than 250mm (approx 10")	Normally dealt with within one month. In some cases where an immediate repair is not possible temporary signing and guarding may be required.
Potholes less than 40mm (1 3/4") deep.	Site would be considered for inclusion in future maintenance programme, and will continue to be monitored.

Carriageway defects of less than 40mm depth, including areas of delamination (where the road surface is deteriorating) will be considered for repair or resurfacing as resources permit.

Other surface depressions and irregularities may require temporary signing to warn of uneven road surface or slippery road signs, depending on circumstances.

Verge over –run

During wet weather rural grass verges can be damaged by vehicles leaving the carriageway. Verge over-run adjacent to main roads is prioritised.



Type of Road	Type of defect	Response
On main roads (A, B and some C class roads)	An area immediately adjacent to the road more than 150 mm deep and width greater than 200 mm.	Normally dealt with within one month. In some cases temporary signing and guarding may be required.
Minor Roads	An area immediately adjacent to the road more than 150 mm deep and width greater than 200 mm.	Will be considered for future treatment.

Verge over-run damage less the 150mm deep or 200mm wide will be monitored and considered for treatment as resources permit. In the winter or during wet weather extensive damage can be caused to verges by large vehicles and repairs may have to wait for better weather in order to be treated.

Footways and cycle tracks

Footways trips with upstands greater than 20mm are treated as priorities, but temporary signing and guarding may be required.



Defect	Defect	Response
Footway and cycle tracks trip hazards	Trip with upstand greater than 20mm.	Normally dealt with within 24 hours. In some cases where an immediate repair is not possible temporary signing and guarding may be required.
Footway and cycle track potholes	Potholes greater than 20 mm deep with a maximum dimension greater than 150 mm.	Normally dealt with within 24 hours. In some cases where an immediate repair is not possible temporary signing and guarding may be required.
Footway cracks and gaps in main shopping and urban areas.	Footway in main shopping and urban areas crack or gap with a width or depth greater than 25mm.	Normally dealt with within 7 days.
Other footways cracks and gaps.	Footway crack or gap with a width or depth greater than 25mm.	Normally dealt with within 3 months.