

Wiltshire Highways Maintenance Policies



September 2018

Wiltshire Highway Maintenance Policies

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Introduction

Wiltshire Council is the local highway authority and is responsible for the maintenance of the highway network, with the exception of the Motorway (M4) and the Trunk Roads (A303, A36 and A419) which are the responsibility of the Highways England.

Some other roads may be public rights of way, but are privately maintained, or are unadopted highways. Bodies responsible for these include Housing Associations, MoD and private owners.

Wiltshire Council is responsible for maintaining about 4,400 kilometres of road, and keeps a record of the highways for which it is responsible.

The duties and powers of the Council as the Highway Authority are set out in the Highways Act 1980 and other relevant legislation, including the New Roads and Streetworks Act 1991.

This document sets out a number of the policies that the Council has adopted in carrying out its duty as local highway authority. It is not intended to be a complete list of such policies, and there are policies in connection with traffic management, Community Area Transport Groups and speed limits which are not included.

ROADS AND BRIDGES

Inspection of the Highways Network

Wiltshire Council regularly inspects the highway network for which it is responsible. The most important and busiest routes are inspected monthly, with other roads inspected every three months or annually.

In town centres and busy pedestrian areas the footways and pedestrian areas have walked inspections once a month. Other less well used pedestrian footways are inspected annually.

Cycleways which are part of the carriageway are inspected when the road is inspected, and cycleways remote from a carriageway are inspected annually.

The inspection frequencies and investigatory levels for roads and footways are described in the 'Wiltshire Highways Safety Inspection Manual'.

Repairs of defects

Some carriageway and footway defects have to be treated more urgently than others. The priority given to each type of defect depends on its location, and its priority is allocated in accordance with the criteria described in the 'Wiltshire Highway Safety Inspection Manual'.

Serious highway defects are attended to as soon as possible, usually by the end of the next day. Less serious defects are repaired as part of a planned maintenance programme.

In cases where defects are not considered to be an immediate safety hazard, the area of concern may be added to a programme for future planned maintenance, and is monitored for further deterioration and treatment as necessary.

Planned Highway Maintenance

Wiltshire Council carries out regular inspection, testing and surveys of the condition of the highway network using visual and mechanical surveying techniques. This information is recorded for reference and analysis, and is used in developing future maintenance programmes.

Programmes of planned maintenance involving the reconstruction, patching, repair and resurfacing of parts of the highway network are carried out annually. The schemes programmed depend on the availability of funding, the condition and deterioration of the site, the volume of traffic, and the safety implications. This work has to be co-ordinated with the large number of public utilities and others who also have programmes to maintain and renew their own plant and apparatus in the highway.

As well as maintaining the safety of the road network, the planned maintenance of the highway network increases the life of a road so that its condition does not deteriorate so quickly. These factors are taken into account in determining maintenance programmes.

Because of the limited funding available it is necessary to set priorities. A long term programme is developed, but this usually has to be reviewed annually as the condition of the network may change over time and with use.

Road Surfacing Materials

Wiltshire Council uses a variety of surfacing materials on its road network, taking into account local circumstances and the whole life cost. Generally Hot Rolled Asphalt (HRA) with chippings is the preferred material for main roads. On rural roads surface dressing, often referred to as 'tar and chipping', is usually the appropriate treatment if the structural condition of the road is suitable,

Surfacing materials such as porous asphalt or Stone Mastic Asphalt (SMA) are not usually used in Wiltshire because of concerns about long term durability. Some of the 'quieter road surfacing materials', especially SMA have been used in the past, but resulted in a considerable number of surfaces failing and needing replacement earlier than would have been expected, and many highway authorities no longer use them.

When the SMA surfacing fails it generally has to be removed and replaced. More traditional materials can often be overlaid or surface dressed at a much lower cost. Hot Rolled Asphalt surfacing would usually last 20 - 25 years, and in many cases will last considerably longer. With SMA a life of 10 – 20 years may be indicated by manufacturers, but early life failures from as early as 7 years have been known.

On older roads, where the underlying construction was not designed for modern traffic, and drainage systems may not be to modern standards, the use of SMA material is likely to have a shorter life as it tends to be less flexible than other materials.

SMA would probably be a more viable alternative if funding was available to resurface our roads more frequently. This happens in some countries, but is not the case with current funding levels for local roads provided by central government in the UK. Research is continuing by manufacturers to develop more durable versions of the SMA material, but at present it is not a material that this Council would normally use.

The Council will continue to monitor progress on the development of new road surfacing materials, and may carry out trials using new materials where appropriate.

High Friction Surfacing

On approaches to pedestrian crossings and traffic signals, special high friction surfacing has often been provided. This material is comparatively expensive, usually requires frequent renewal, and the light coloured material can make stop lines and crossing zig-zag markings less conspicuous.

On roads with a 30mph speed limit, high friction surfacing would not normally be provided unless there was a particular safety problem or road layout limitation that would justify it.

When high friction surfacing is provided it will usually be gray or black in colour.

Inspections of Bridges and Structures

The Council currently maintains 988 bridges, and there are 265 bridges maintained by other organisations, including those belonging to Network Rail and the Canal & Rivers Trust.

The Council carries out General Bridge Inspections of its own bridges every two years, and now carries out more detailed Principal Bridge Inspections every six to ten years depending on the bridge type and its construction.

The frequency of bridge inspections may change in the future as a result of any published revisions to Highways England guidance. A summary of the current inspection regime is included as **Appendix A** of this document.

STREET LIGHTING

Responding to Street Lighting Faults

The Council is responsible for street lighting on adopted local highways. The legislation does not require the Council to provide road lighting, and a Highway Authority's duty of care does not imply any duty to keep the public lighting lit. However, where street lighting is provided the Highway Authority has a duty of care with respect to maintaining its road lighting and highway electrical equipment in a safe condition.

This Council has over 40,000 street lights and has a target of repairing them within 5 days of faults being identified or sooner if there is a structural or electrical fault. Where possible a repair will be made at the first visit, but sometimes this may not be possible if replacement equipment is required.

Sometimes there are faults with the underground electricity supply. These supplies are usually the responsibility of the electricity supply company, currently SSE in Wiltshire, and the Council's contractors are not allowed to work on their equipment. Under the nationally agreed Guaranteed Standards of Performance put in place by OFGEM they have 25 days to make the necessary repair, or 20 days when multiple units are involved.

Street Lighting Energy Saving

In response to requests from communities in 2010 the Council implemented a scheme, initially in rural areas, to reduce unnecessary lighting by introducing part night lighting where some of the street lights are turned off between midnight and 5.30am. This saves energy, and reduces the Council's carbon footprint.

The part night lighting was subsequently introduced in the larger urban areas from 2014. The lighting is usually operated as follows:

About half the street lights operate for part of the night. Generally they are off between midnight and 5.30am.

Lights at junctions, pedestrian crossings and where required for safety remain on all night.

Lighting where there are CCTV systems, in town centres, and in areas where crime is a problem remains on.

The operation of the lights is monitored and alterations may be made to their operation, especially if requested by the police.

The Council has an aging lighting stock. Older units are being replaced by LED and energy efficient units as funding allows. Where LED lighting is used it is generally be subject to dimming to reduce energy consumption when traffic levels are low.

Signs on Street Lighting Columns

Temporary or permanent signs may only be attached to street lighting columns with the authorisation of the Highway Authority. Such signs can be a danger to the public as lighting columns are generally not designed to take the additional wind loading, and the signs can obstruct visibility for drivers and other road users.

The Council may take appropriate measures to have unauthorised signs and obstructions removed.

Street Lighting Columns

Street lighting columns will generally be non painted galvanised steel columns. In conservation areas consideration will be given painting columns, which would usually be black.

Existing cast iron lighting columns in conservation areas will be retained where feasible, and painted. Consideration will be given to replacing with similar types of units should they need to be replaced because of damage or safety reasons.

Festive Lighting

Festive and Christmas lighting adds greatly to the appearance of towns and villages during Christmas and special events, and it is encouraged as they can play an important role in community life.

Installing or connecting decorations to street lighting columns, or placing decorations over a road, needs to be done safely and it is necessary to get permission from the Council and arrange to pay your energy supplier for the energy used.

The Council has adopted guidance and procedures which must be followed in order to reduce the potential risks associated with festive lighting. In order to obtain approval, applicants have to provide information on the lighting to be installed and the connections proposed.

Details of the requirements, limitations and approval process for installing festive lighting are available on the Council's website.

SIGNS AND ROADMARKINGS

Sponsorship of Roundabouts

Where roundabouts or other landscaping maintenance is sponsored by third parties sponsorship signs may be provided. Regulations regarding placement of sponsorship signs within the public highway are covered under section 115(e) of the Local Government Miscellaneous Provisions act 1982.

The Council may issue licences, normally for a ten year period, to enable town and parish councils to enhance the maintenance of roundabouts and the surrounding streetscene amenity.

Any signs placed on the roundabouts must be approved by the Council as local highway authority and comply with the following:-

The sign face:-

1. Should not exceed 0.3 sq metres in area.
2. The sign must contain the wording "Sponsored by" or "Sponsors of"
3. Should not be made of reflective material.
4. Should not use colours that closely resemble traffic signs.
5. Should not contain open hours, telephone numbers and e-mail addresses.
6. Should not promote alcohol, tobacco, political parties or business of a sexual nature.
7. Should be discreet and respect its surroundings.
8. May be illustrated with the maximum of 2 emblems i.e. the Town Crest and the Sponsors logo.

The sign should be erected:-

1. The posts must be erected by the highway authority or an accredited contractor, taking measures to protect underground services and apparatus.
2. At low level between 300mm and 900mm above ground.
3. On a separate post from any sign.
4. Where it does not obstruct sight lines and vehicles.
5. Where it will not be so distracting or confusing that it creates a hazard for, or endangers, road users who are taking reasonable care for their own and other safety.
6. Where it will not present a hazard to pedestrians.

Brown Tourism signs

A policy on the provision of tourism signs was jointly produced by the VisitWiltshire Tourism Partnership and the highways team at Wiltshire Council. A copy of the Tourism signs policy document is available on the VisitWiltshire website at:

<https://www.visitwiltshire.co.uk/information/tourism-signposting>

The policy follows the requirements set out by central government as to the types of establishment that are eligible for tourism signs, the type and number of signs that can be provided, the routes to be followed, and indicates that all costs associated with the signing have to be borne by the applicant.

Initial enquiries about potential tourism signs should be addressed to the Partnership on 01722 323036 or by email at info@visitwiltshire.co.uk

Vehicle Activated Signs

Wiltshire Council no longer installs permanent Vehicle Activated Signs (VAS) for speed limit educational purposes as the long term effectiveness of these signs is in doubt. Existing installations will be removed upon expiry of equipment life and will not be replaced.

Permanent VAS indicating hazards, such as bends, are still installed at those locations with a significant history of speed related collisions or where other measures are not considered appropriate. In order to ensure that the effectiveness of the permanent VAS is maintained it is necessary to avoid proliferation of their use.

Wiltshire Council has a policy that allows Town and Parish Council's to own and deploy Portable Speed Indicator Devices (SIDs) at sites with an identified speed issue. SIDs are used as a tool to raise driver awareness of speeding at specific locations and are in position for short periods to maximise their effectiveness.

A note regarding SIDs has been prepared and is included as **Appendix C** of this document.

Mirrors on the highway

It is not the practice of this Council to authorise the use of mirrors as the road safety benefits are very much in doubt. Mirrors can give a misleading image, and dazzle motorists in sunlight or with headlights reflected at night. They can also become

misaligned and their performance can be compromised by a covering of moisture or dirt. Drivers involved in accidents often seek to apportion blame and the erection of a mirror on the highway could result in claims against the Highway Authority.

As an alternative it may be possible in some cases to seek the co-operation of neighbouring land owners to enable a mirror to be positioned clear of the highway, subject to obtaining the necessary permissions.

Unauthorised Signs

Temporary signs not authorised by the Highway Authority either freestanding or attached to lighting columns and other street furniture can be a danger to the public, and can obstruct visibility for drivers and other road users.

Wiltshire Council may take appropriate measures to have unauthorised signs and obstructions removed.

Advertising and 'A' Boards on the highway

'A' boards, temporary advertising media such as bicycles or trailers are often used outside shops by traders to promote their business activities. This must be undertaken in a manner which does not detract from the street scene, and is sensitive to the needs of all users of the highway.

The requirements in connection with placing advertising boards are included as **Appendix C** of this document.

In general 'A' boards must be placed directly against the frontage of the business and should not extend beyond the frontage of its own premises. On footways a clear pedestrian route must be maintained, which should be a minimum width of 2 metres, and not obstruct emergency exits from buildings. Outside town centres where footfall or traffic is infrequent, a minimum of 1.8 metres should be left between the 'A' board and any space used by vehicles. 'A' boards must be removed when the business is closed, during events, or when the area is closed for community events.

White Bar Marking at Vehicle Accesses

Where vehicular accesses are frequently obstructed by inappropriately parked vehicles, the Council allow the installation of white bar markings at the applicants cost. The marking itself is not enforceable, but the marking should provide a reminder that parking across a dropped kerb causes an obstruction. Creating such an obstruction on the highway is an offence. The Police may at their discretion issue a fixed penalty notice, but it should be noted the Police may have higher priorities to address.

Requirements for the provision of white bar markings at accesses are included as **Appendix D** of this document.

Advisory Disabled Parking Bays

A disabled parking bay is a parking space in a residential area, marked with white paint with the words 'disabled' at the edge of the box.

A disabled parking bay can be used by any Blue Badge holder, and is not exclusively for the applicant's use. The parking bays are advisory only and not enforceable. A non-blue badge holder may park there without being penalised. Wiltshire Council can mark disabled parking bays on the highway if the resident requesting the disabled parking bay meets the required criteria and if the Council's highways team approve the location.

To be considered for a Disabled Parking Bay, an assessment will be undertaken by an Occupational Therapist employed by Wiltshire Council Adult Social Care. The Occupational Therapist will use the guidance in the Occupational Therapy guidelines to decide whether a disabled parking bay is indicated. To request an assessment a referral should be made to the Adult Social Care Team on 0300 456 0111 or email:

customeradvisors@wiltshire.gov.uk.

When the Occupational Therapist has agreed that the person is eligible for a disabled parking bay, the highways team will assess the location to ensure that it is safe. If the location is approved by the highways team, arrangements will be made for the bay to be painted and an indicative date for carrying out the lining will be given, subject to weather conditions and access arrangements.

The painted lines forming the advisory disabled parking bay markings usually last for about five years. Should an existing parking bay require re-painting, the resident should contact the Adult Social Care team in the first instance on 0300 456 0111. If the provision of the disabled parking bay is still appropriate, the Adult Care Team will contact the Highways Team to arrange the re-painting.

Advisory Disabled Bay Markings are not provided in areas subject to other waiting restrictions as they cannot conflict with legal restrictions.

White edge markings on roads

Most roads in Wiltshire do not have white edge markings. With an extensive road network and limited budgets, the priority is to ensure that centre-line, junction and pedestrian crossing markings are replaced and renewed.

At locations with identified safety issues white edge lining may be provided to define the carriageway alignment on rural roads, where there is adequate road width.

MAINTENANCE ON THE HIGHWAY NETWORK

Co-ordination of Streetworks

Road works are carried out by many different organisations, including telephone, gas and water companies. The Council does not have direct control over these, especially when they need to carry out emergency works to repair leaks and damage, but it does have a responsibility to co-ordinate their work. Statutory meetings attended by all the

relevant organisations are held quarterly, with additional site specific consultation taking place as necessary.

The Council co-ordinates its work on the highway with works carried out by others in order to reduce traffic delays and congestion. This requires the use of appropriate traffic control systems and traffic management during roadworks.

The Council inspects works being carried out on the highway, and can prosecute where work is not being carried out properly or in a safe manner.

Excavation in the Highway

Permission is required from the highway authority before excavating in the public highway. Accredited Streetworks contractors only are permitted to excavate in the highway.

Under the Highways Act 1980 a person may make a temporary excavation within a street that is maintainable at public expense, but the permission of the highway authority is required.

Under the New Roads and Streetworks Act 1991 the authority may grant a licence permitting a person to place or retain apparatus in the street such as electricity cables or water mains. A Streetworks Licence authorises the licensee to carry out the works permitted by the licence.

Drainage of the Highway

Roads have features designed to take surface water off the road, including drains, gullies, grips and ditches. Highway drainage usually has capacity for rainfall falling on the road and footway. It does not have capacity to accommodate surface water running off fields, gardens and adjoining land. Exceptional rainfall, surface water runoff from adjacent land, and rising river levels can cause roads to flood even when the drainage is in good working order.

The Council regularly cleans out carriageway gullies that collect the water from the road, and arranges special visits by gully tankers to respond to sudden blockages. Gullies on the busier roads are cleaned out at least once a year, and the others are usually cleaned every three years. At sites with high safety risks the gullies will be cleaned out more frequently.

Highway drainage problems are identified by the regular inspections of the network, by reports through MyWiltshire, or as a result of calls from the public or town and parish councils, and appropriate action is taken to deal with the identified problems.

Sometimes flooding is caused by burst water mains, and the relevant water company is responsible for repairing these.

The drainage ditches alongside rural roads are usually the responsibility of the adjoining landowner to maintain. The highway authority has the right to discharge water into

them. Landowners should ensure that ditches and watercourses are properly maintained in order to reduce the risk of flooding.

Flooding on the Highway

Flooding can occur because of rising rivers, surface water run-off or rising groundwater levels. In severe cases it may be necessary to temporarily close roads to traffic for safety reasons.

The Council investigates flooding incidents to determine whether flood prevention or drainage improvement measures would be viable. In some cases it may not be practical or affordable to prevent flooding, and mitigation measures may have to be considered to reduce the impact.

Flood risk in Wiltshire is primarily managed through the Operational Flood Working Groups (OFWGs), which are chaired by elected Councillors, and usually attended by the Environment Agency, Water Companies, Highways England, Network Rail, and town and parish council representatives.

The priorities for considering flood alleviation measures are assessed against the following criteria:

- (i) High speed road standing water
- (ii) Property flooding
- (iii) Highway flooding
- (iv) Land flooding
- (v) Agricultural land flooding.

The OFWGs work with land owners, town and parish councils and others to resolve flooding issues.

Obstructions and Encroachment on the Highway

Wiltshire Council as Highway Authority has a duty to keep public highways open, and to remove obstructions and encroachments which may cause a risk or hindrance to highway users.

Before taking any action the Council will carefully consider the extent of the highway and nature of the encroachment.

Measures are taken to remove any encroachment which prevents the legitimate use of the highway. If deemed appropriate, the Council may decide to extinguish highway rights where the encroachment has taken place.

Grass Verges

Highways verges are cut in order to maintain visibility at junctions and bends, to prevent traffic signs from being obscured, to control brushwood and scrub, to reduce the risk of fire and to maintain and enhance the biodiversity of the verges where compatible with highway safety.

Most grass verges on rural roads are generally cut once a year. This cut is usually carried out in May, June or July. However the timing of the cut will depend on the weather and growth.

Visibility Splays at junctions are often cut more frequently on an ad-hoc basis where there may be a risk to the highway user.

Some grass verges are protected or not cut for environmental reasons, particularly where they have high ecological value.

Hedges

The cutting or trimming of hedges is generally the responsibility of the landowner.

Occasionally it may be necessary for the Council to remind land owners of their obligation to prevent their hedge from encroaching on to the highway and obstructing highway users or highway furniture such as traffic signs.

There may be instances when the Council may need to cut private hedges for highway safety reasons.

Generally, any hedge cutting is undertaken outside of the bird nesting season but may be done so when required for highway safety reasons following consultations with the ecologist or others.

Roadside Memorials and Floral Tributes

Whilst it is understandable that as part of the grieving process there is sometimes a need for bereaved relatives to visit the scene of an accident, there can be serious road safety concerns over this practice. The locations of many road deaths, especially in rural locations, tend to be at places where it is not safe to stop and/or walk on the carriageway.

Permanent memorials are not permitted within the highway because of road safety concerns.

Floral tributes are usually permitted to remain for a period of not less than 14 days but generally not more than 30 days. The Highway Authority will arrange for collection and disposal within this period, with the bereaved being given the option of receiving the non-floral tributes which may be placed along with flowers.

Mud on Roads

Some mud or dirt on roads may be inevitable in rural areas where farming is the main activity. However, it is an offence to allow soil or refuse from land adjacent to a public highway to fall, be washed, or carried onto the road. Mud from vehicles and animals can be a potential hazard to other road users, and can be the cause of accidents.

Wiltshire Council usually contacts the farmer or those responsible in the first instance, asking for the mud to be removed. If it is not removed within a reasonable time the

Council may arrange for the work to be undertaken and seek to charge the person responsible. The Police may prosecute for failure to remove.

Positive action is taken in respect of development sites where activity is likely to result in mud being carried onto the roads, either through imposition of conditions on planning approvals or by way of a planning agreement with developers.

Private Maintenance of Highway Verges

In some cases it is possible for the Council to grant a licence under Section 142 of the Highways Act 1980 to allow the planting and maintenance of a highway verge by others. Each case is considered on its merits, taking into account the legislation, location, usage and safety implications.

Scaffolding and Hoardings on the Highway

The law requires that scaffolding operations are properly planned and carried out. It is necessary to have adequate insurance cover in the form of a public liability policy.

A licence must be obtained from the Wiltshire Council for any scaffolding work on the public highway. The licence sets out the standards on such matters as lighting, signing, guarding, protection and maintenance of public passage and any other issues that are site specific.

Consideration is given on an individual basis to each application, and site specific conditions may be included to ensure safety.

Skips on the Highway

Before placing a skip on the highway it is necessary to obtain permission in the form of a licence from Wiltshire Council. It is necessary to prove that there is adequate insurance cover in the form of a public liability policy.

Consideration is given on an individual basis to each application, and site specific conditions may be included to ensure the risk to highway users is minimal.

Materials on the Highway

Before placing building materials, sand or bricks on the highway it is necessary to obtain permission in the form of a licence from Wiltshire Council, and it is necessary to prove that there is adequate insurance cover in the form of a public liability policy.

Consideration is given on an individual basis to each application, and site specific conditions may be included to ensure the risks to highway users is minimised.

Weeds on the Public Highway

Unless required by legislation the Council has a policy of weed control, not eradication. Suitable methods of weed control are determined taking into account safety, size of infestation, effectiveness, and the effect on the environment.

The problems caused by Common Ragwort are appreciated, and it is important that treatment is prioritised according to severity of infestation and proximity to livestock or land used for livestock feed.

In built up areas the Council arranges for treatment of weeds at least once a year.

Third Party Claims

Third Party claims against the Council as highway authority are usually for either personal injury accidents or damage to personal property such as cars, clothing or premises, caused by alleged defects in the publicly maintainable highway.

Section 58 of the Highways Act 1980 provides the Council with a statutory defence against claims where it can establish that reasonable care has been taken to "secure that the part of the highway to which the action relates was not dangerous to traffic".

The Council operates a systematic process of highway safety inspections, intervention and repair to satisfy its statutory obligation under Section 58 of the Highways Act 1980.

The Council determines liability using evidence to ascertain whether it has been negligent or in breach of its statutory duty. Such decisions are based on legal principles. Each claim is considered on its merits, irrespective of value. The Council defends claims where liability is disputed, but if liability is established claims will be settled promptly.

Trading on the Highway

Trading from the highway is discouraged for safety reasons, but it is recognised that there can be situations where trading may be carried out in a safe manner, and may have benefits to the highway user. Planning permission may be required, and other legislation may be applicable.

Where trading from the highway is likely to have an adverse effect on safety, or likely to cause a significant obstruction, the Council will take appropriate measures to keep the highway safe for road users.

Tables and Chairs on the Highway

There is an increasing demand on Highway Authorities to allow tables and chairs on the highway outside restaurants and cafes, especially in pedestrianised areas. In some cases this can be part of a 'Street Scene' project or other urban improvement scheme.

Licences may be granted subject to the approval of the Highway Authority. Provided that free and safe passage for pedestrians can be maintained then such an arrangement may be beneficial, but each case has to be considered on its merits and site specific conditions may be included to ensure reduced risk to the highway user.

Wiltshire Council Structures Inspection Policy

Highway structures and bridges form an essential part of the highway network. The consequence of a structure failing are high, but through a programme of robust inspections and maintenance the risks of such an event occurring can be mitigated to an acceptable level.

Highway Structures are defined as:

Bridges including footbridges, cycle route bridges, bridleway bridges, accommodation bridges, occupation bridges, subways, underpasses and culverts;

Retaining walls

Sign/signal gantries;

Cantilever road signs; and

Tunnels

A structure is generally defined as having a span greater than 1,500mm or a retained height in excess of 1,500mm. Bridges or walls with a span or height of less than 1,500mm are not considered to be structures for the purpose of this policy, and are subject to separate inspection processes. There are currently no sign or signal gantries, cantilever road signs or tunnels in Wiltshire.

There are 1,253 bridge structures recorded as affecting the public vehicular highway network:

988 maintainable by Wiltshire Council

213 maintainable by Network Rail

35 maintainable by the Canal & River Trust

17 privately maintainable

Network Rail and the Canal & Rivers Trust are both public bodies who are responsible for a large number of structures, and they are considered to be competent to manage, inspect and maintain their bridges in a safe useable condition.

Privately owned and maintained bridges typically tend to be smaller and pass under the road. They may be mill races and similar structures. However, there are some larger private bridges over the road, for example Marlborough College Arch. These are the responsibility of the owners and are not usually inspected by the Council.

There are 1,117 recorded retaining walls supporting the road, with a total length of almost 11,000m (11km).

There are 834 recorded rights of way bridges, which are typically over three metres in span. The smaller ditch crossings consisting of mainly of ex-railway sleepers are not generally recorded.

There are two types of scheduled inspections specifically for bridges:

General Bridge Inspections (GBI) and,

Principal Bridge Inspections (PBI).

In addition there will be occasional unscheduled inspections, usually resulting from a concern raised by a third party. Most bridges are on the routes of the walked and driven highway inspections, and any faults relating to the bridges identified during such inspections are immediately brought to the attention of the bridges team.

Guidance produced by Highways England and the previous Management of Highway Structures Code of Practice stipulated intervals of two years for GBIs and six years for PBIs.

Only the higher priority and more complex Rights of Way bridges are routinely inspected by the Council's Bridge Inspector, the others are inspected when Rights of Way Wardens and user groups identify issues. This is the regime which has been used in Wiltshire for a number of years.

There is currently no formal inspection regime for retaining walls. Any inspections carried out are on a reactive basis, generally following concerns raised by the Council's highway inspectors, technicians or other third parties.

A GBI comprises a visual inspection of all parts of the structure that can be inspected without the need for special access equipment, or extensive traffic management arrangements. Wiltshire Council employs one full time Bridge Inspector who undertakes inspections on all Council maintained road bridges and a number of the larger rights of way structures on a rolling two year programme. GBIs would be expected to cost in the region of £120 per bridge inspection.

A PBI comprises a close examination, within touching distance, of all inspectable parts of a structure. This should include adjacent earthworks and waterways where they could affect the behaviour or stability of the structure. A PBI should utilise as necessary suitable inspection techniques, access and traffic management works. PBIs are undertaken by the Council's term consultant, with support from the Council's term contractor. A typical PBI would be expected to cost in the region of £8,000, taking into account consultant and contractor costs, but may vary depending on the complexity of the structure.

For the most part the bridges in Wiltshire are modest in size and can be fully accessed during a GBI. PBIs are therefore reserved for larger more complicated sites and those where access is difficult or historically important bridges. PBIs are currently undertaken on 52 structures.

Structures Inspection Regime

The recently introduced Well-managed Highway Infrastructure Code of Practice removes the set time intervals for inspections, and instead encourages authorities to develop a risk based approach. This allows some structures to have an increased inspection frequency, and others with lower risks to have less frequent inspections.

Previously a PBI would have been undertaken every six years, however recent guidance published by Highways England gives scope to increase this interval to up to twelve years for lower risk structures. This as an opportunity to increase inspection intervals for low risk structures in order to free up inspection resource for some of the higher risk retaining walls and also the larger private bridges.

No guidance has been published yet on risk ranking structures with regards to suggested inspection intervals. Work is ongoing through bridge owner groups in ADEPT (Association of Directors of Environment, Economy, Planning & Transport) to establish a recognised protocol, but this is likely to be some years away. In the meantime it is proposed that Wiltshire Council maintain the current two year inspection cycle, but be prepared to adopt a risk based inspection regime for GBIs in line with industry uptake and best practice guidance.

Wiltshire Council has adopted the Highways England guidance on risk based inspection intervals with regards to PBIs. Highways England has published a risk ranking tool and this has been used to establish new inspection intervals for specific bridges as shown below:

Bridge Name	Road	Parish	PBI interval yrs	Reason for Inclusion in PBI list
Town bridge	A363	Bradford on Avon	6	Historic Structure
Box Station	A4	Box	6	Rail
Studley	A4	Calne Without	8	Large Structure
West Mead	A4	Chippenham	8	Large Structure
Wharf	A4	Box	6	Rail
Baskerville	A429	Malmesbury	8	Large Structure
Stokeford	B3108	Limpley Stoke	8	Large Structure
Calcutt	B4040	Cricklade	8	Large Structure
Borough Parade	UC/TS	Chippenham	10	Large Structure
Dauntsey Church	C77	Dauntsey	6	Large Structure
Cow Bridge	B4042	Malmesbury	8	Large Structure
Southway Park	UC/TS	Bradford on Avon	6	Large Structure
Atherton	A30	Salisbury	6	Rail
Glenmoor I	A30	Salisbury	6	Rail
French Horn	B3089	Dinton	6	Rail
Norton Bavant	B3414	Norton Bavant	6	Rail
Brick Hill	A350	Upton Scudamore	6	Rail
Imber Road	TS	Warminster	6	Rail
Challymead	A350	Melksham	8	Large Structure
New Road	A361	Trowbridge	6	Rail

Bridge Name	Road	Parish	PBI interval yrs	Reason for Inclusion in PBI list
Hay Lane	B4005	Wroughton	6	Rail
Lacock Abbey	C155	Lacock	6	Historic Structure
Stroud Farm	C155	Lacock	8	Historic Structure
Murray Walk	FP	Melksham	6	Large Structure
Chippenham Town	TS	Chippenham	8	Large Structure
Tubewright	FP	Chippenham	10	Large Structure
Kellaways	C113	Langley Burrell	8	Large Structure
Melksham Town	A3102	Melksham	6	Large Structure
Rey	UC	Lacock	6	Historic Structure
Ludgershall new	A3026	Ludgershall	6	Rail
Ludgershall old	ex A3026 now fp	Ludgershall	6	Rail
Harnham New	A338	Salisbury	6	Large Structure
Butts	FP	Salisbury	8	Large Structure
Countess	A345	Amesbury	6	Historic Structure
Ayleswade	TS	Salisbury	6	Historic Structure
Hawkeridge Link 2		North Bradley	8	Large Structure
Ogbourne Flyover	A345	Ogbourne St George	10	Large Structure
West Court	A346	Burbage	10	Large Structure
Berryfield Brook	A350	Semington	8	Large Structure
Easton Lane	A350	Chippenham	12	Large Structure
Frogwell Bridle	A350	Chippenham	12	Large Structure
Newtown Farm	A350	Semington	12	Large Structure
Semington Aqueduct	A350	Semington	8	Large Structure
Semington Brook	A350	Semington	8	Large Structure
Back (Black Bridge)	Cycle	Chippenham	10	Large Structure
Black Dog cycleway	A4	Calne	6	Large Structure
Brown St Footbridge	A361	Trowbridge	8	Large Structure
Queensbury	C350	Amesbury	6	Historic Structure
Broadcloth	TS	Trowbridge	10	Large Structure
Empire	TS	Hilperton	10	Large Structure
Hammond	TS	Trowbridge	12	Large Structure
Upton Scudamore	A350	Upton Scudamore	12	Large Structure

TEMPORARY SPEED INDICATOR DEVICE SITE ELIGIBILITY AND DEPLOYMENT CRITERIA

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 Speed Indicator Devices (SIDs) are a means of raising awareness of vehicle speeds and educating driver behaviour. They are useful in supporting other methods of direct speed control such as Police enforcement and Community Speedwatch (CSW) programmes. They can provide a means of highlighting speed issues where direct measures cannot be used, such as where speeding occurs at night or at locations with difficult access.
- 1.2 SIDs should only be used at the sites meeting the eligibility criteria.
- 1.3 SIDs should be deployed on a temporary basis and are normally in place at a site for 14 days. To maintain their effectiveness they should not be redeployed until a minimum time of 8 weeks has elapsed. SIDs should only be deployed on roads subject to 20, 30 and 40 mph speed limits. Enforcement activities on roads with higher speed limits remain solely within the remit of the Police.

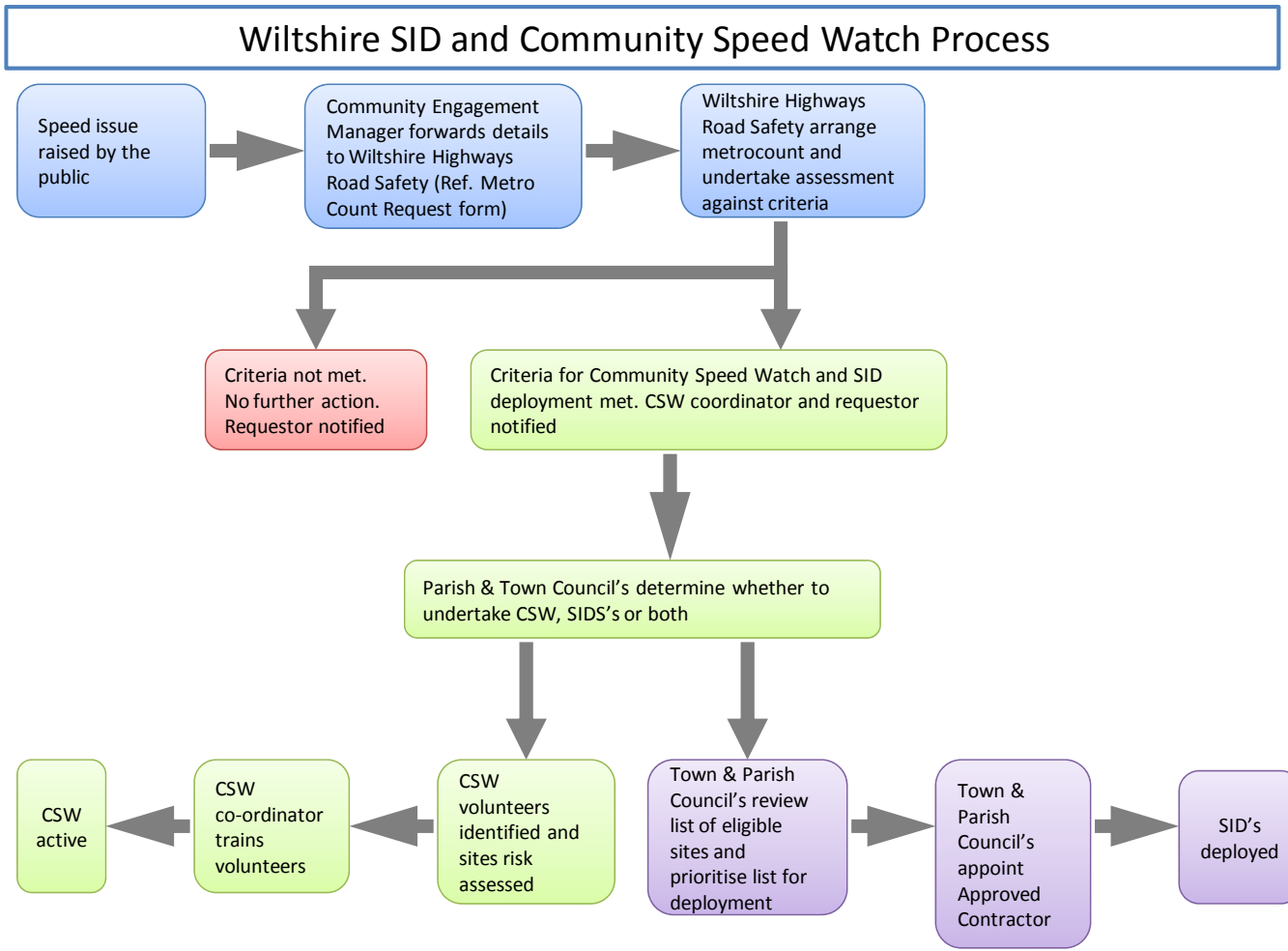
2.0 Eligibility Criteria

- 2.1 The Council will undertake Metrocounts at each requested site in order to measure vehicle speeds and allow assessment against the criteria. The Metrocounters will be in situ for a week at each site and will record vehicle speeds and volumes at all times during that week. If the request indicates that speeding is a problem at certain times of the year this will be taken into account. This enables determination of any trends relating to speed at certain times of the day or night. No site will be considered for SID deployment until a traffic count is undertaken.
- 2.2 The eligibility criteria for the use of SIDs is set out in the table below. The threshold levels have been set to accord with the National Police Chiefs Council (NPCC) speed enforcement guidelines.

Speed Limit	Speed Indication Device (SID)
20 mph limit	85 th ile speed 24.1 mph and over
30 mph limit	85 th ile speed 35.1 mph and over
40 mph limit	85 th ile speed 46.1 mph and over

The 85th percentile speed is that speed not exceeded by 85% of the vehicles using the route. The threshold levels for SID's are the same as those used for Community Speedwatch.

- 2.3 A flow chart illustrating the process is included below.
- 3.0 SID Deployment
- 3.1 SIDs should be deployed on a temporary basis and should not be insitu for more than 14 days. Research by the Transport Research Laboratory has indicated that the effect of the SID on speed reduction is greatest within the first two weeks of deployment, with sites having SIDs in situ for longer recording little or no further speed reductions after two weeks ('Effectiveness of Speed Indicator Devices on reducing vehicle speeds in London', TRL, 2008).
- 3.2 Town & Parish Council's either singularly or in collaboration are responsible for the sourcing and purchase of suitable SID units.
- 3.3 The Town and Parish Council's will be responsible for putting together, monitoring and reviewing a programme for SID deployment.
- 3.4. Deployment of the SIDs can be undertaken by any approved Contactor. The approved Contractor must have Streetworks accreditation (for more details see www.gov.uk/government/publications/street-works-qualifications-how-to-qualify-register-and-re-register) and Public Liability Insurance of at least £5,000,000. Responsibility for checking and approval of suitable contractors rests with the Town & Parish Council's and is therefore self policing.
- 3.5 It will be for the Town & Parish Council's to decide on how many contractors are engaged and how any payment mechanism should work. Deployment by members of the public or other groups is not permitted due to safety and liability considerations.
- 3.6 Town and Parish Council's are encouraged to review, amend or add to the deployment programme not less than every six months to take into account new sites or to allow sites which may not have been deemed a priority during the initial programme to be incorporated.
- 3.7 Other factors relating to SID deployment are set out at below.



Temporary Speed Indicator Devices (SID) Deployment Guidelines

1. These guidelines apply to all SIDs used on the Wiltshire Highway network regardless of the funding source, ownership and location for the SID.
2. Sites should meet the eligibility criteria as set out in the Wiltshire practice note.
3. The SID should not be in situ for more than 14 days at the chosen eligible site.
4. The SID should not return to monitor a site within 8 weeks of the previous visit.
5. The exact location of the SID within the eligible site can be varied within the site limits at each visit
6. Any additional infrastructure required to enable SID deployment to take place must be funded by the Area Board / Community Area Transport Group or the relevant Town / Parish Council and approved by Highways officers prior to installation
7. Trigger Speeds are set to match the Police threshold levels for prosecution and as such should not be altered. In a 20mph limit the trigger speed is 24mph, in a 30mph it is 35mph and in a 40mph it is 46mph.
8. SID's need to be mounted at a minimum height of 2.0metres above ground level (to avoid damage / vandalism) in areas where no pedestrian or cycle movements take place, and 2.4metres where pedestrian and cycle movements do take place. They must have an edge clearance to the running carriageway of 450mm minimum. They cannot be fixed to telegraph poles or concrete street lighting columns. No ladders, step ladders or other aids should be placed in direct contact with or leant against the lighting column or post as the additional weight could actually cause them to fail / fall over. It will be for the Town & Parish Council's to ensure that the Approved Contractors are aware of these requirements. Any damage to Highway furniture will be recharged.
9. When deployed on a street lighting column permission should be obtained from Wiltshire Council, providing the dates of deployment, the road name, and the column identification number.
10. SID's require a straight road on the approach, free of obstruction, to allow the radar to accurately assess the vehicle speed. Dips in the road will affect the operation of the SIDs, as can bus shelters reflecting the sun. Consideration needs to be taken for local residents as SIDs can shine / reflect through nearby property windows. SID's should not be positioned close to the speed limit terminal point.

Speedwatch and SIDs Frequently Asked Questions

1. *Why can SIDs only be deployed on roads subject to 20, 30 and 40 mph speed limits?*

Enforcement of speed limits on roads subject to limits over 40mph has to be done by Police Officers who are suitable trained using in car or hand held speed enforcement devices. This is national practise agreed by the National Police Chiefs Council (NPCC) not just applicable to Wiltshire.

2. *Why can't SIDs stay at one location for longer than 14 days?*

Research by the Transport Research Laboratory has indicated that the effect of the SID on speed reduction is greatest within the first two weeks of deployment, with sites having SIDs in situ for longer recording little or no further speed reductions after two weeks. In addition, case studies from Kingston upon Thames, where the use of SIDs is wide ranging, have shown that SIDs effectiveness reduces over time.

3. *Why does a metrocount have to be carried out before SID deployment takes place?*

Metrocounts are undertaken to establish if there is speeding taking place, the extent of the speeding problem and to identify the correct solution. Pedestrians and residents routinely over estimate the speed of vehicles passing by and it is vital that factual data is used. This helps to identify those locations which genuinely have a speeding problem and also means that further comparative metrocounts can be undertaken to establish whether the problem has been addressed.

4. *Can a SID be used to collect traffic data?*

The data capture capability that some SIDs have has not been utilised due to concerns over the reliability of the data. The presence of the SID itself may alter driver behaviour and collecting data from it may give a false impression or different set of results that may not be representative. In addition data is only collected in one direction. To enable comparison between before and after speeds, those sites where SIDs are deployed may be subject to further Metrocounts as these provide more reliable data.

5. *What does the 85th percentile mean and why is it chosen? Doesn't this mean that speeding is being tolerated?*

The concept of the 85thile speed has been developed from the considerable body of research and observation carried out to analyse driver behaviour. It is the highest speed at which most drivers can be considered to be driving sensibly and in a manner appropriate for the prevailing conditions. Those drivers exceeding the 85thile value are therefore much less likely to conform to reasonable patterns of behaviour and consequently would pay little regard to safety enforcement measures. The 85thile value can therefore be regarded as a

cut off point beyond which safety measures would have no reliable practical or statistical value.

The 85%ile speed is defined as that which reasonable people tend to adopt according to the road environment and is calculated by recording the speeds at or below which 85% of all vehicles travel under free flowing conditions past a nominated point. For example if a count records the speeds of 100 vehicles then the top 15 are discounted and the resulting highest speed is then the 85%ile value.

6. *Can we have a permanent SID like the ones we see elsewhere in other Counties?*

National evidence has shown that the effectiveness of permanently installed vehicle activated signs for speed education purposes reduces with time. The use of temporary SID's is intended to maximise the impact of this type of sign on motorists.

7. *Can SID's be used at sites not meeting the criteria?*

The Town and Parish Council's may, at their discretion, choose to add sites that have been subject to an automatic traffic count but that do not meet the eligibility criteria to the SID deployment list. . It will be for the Town & Parish Council's to decide if the SID deployment is justifiable in these circumstances. However use of SIDs at sites where there is no speeding problem is not encouraged as this may impact on the availability and frequency of deployment at those sites with a speeding problem and lessen the overall impact that SIDs are intended to have.

8. *How often do they need service / recalibration?*

Annually

9. *What is an Approved Contractor?*

An approved contractor is a company, business, group or individual who holds Streetworks accreditation and has a minimum £5,000,000 of Public Liability Insurance.

POLICY FOR THE USE OF ADVERTISING BOARDS ON THE HIGHWAY OR COUNCIL LAND

Objective

- To protect the public right of passage, particularly for those with impaired vision, mobility problems, older people or those with young children.
- To support business's that will benefit from the use of 'A' boards outside their premises.
- To maintain clear access for all, including street cleansing operations, emergency service access and special events where streets may be closed.
- To have a consistent approach across the County.
- To provide guidance on acceptable use.

1. Introduction

- 1.1. 'A' boards outside shops are often used by traders to promote their business activities. This must be undertaken in a manner which does not detract from the street scene and is sensitive to the needs of all users of the highway or Council owned land. 'A' boards includes any temporary advertising media such as bicycles or trailers.
- 1.2. In order to reduce bureaucracy, 'A' boards will be by monitoring against this policy rather than by the issue of permits.

2. Conditions

- 2.1. 'A' boards must be placed directly against the frontage of the business and should not extend beyond the frontage of its own premises.
- 2.2. On footways a clear pedestrian route must be maintained. This should be a minimum width of 2 metres. Emergency exits from the premises or adjacent buildings must not be obstructed. Outside town centres where footfall or traffic is infrequent, a minimum of 1.8 metres should be left between the 'A' board and any space used by vehicles.
- 2.3. In pedestrianised areas a larger clear area may be required to aid the passage of emergency and delivery vehicles; disabled persons or in the area of bus stops, outside theatres or schools; or other places where the passage may be additionally narrowed by groups of pedestrians.
- 2.4. 'A' boards must not show information that may cause offence.
- 2.5. The design of the 'A' board should be well defined so as to be clear to people with visual impairment and include solid elements near to ground level which are detectable by stick (visually impaired walker). Ideally the board should be placed in the same position each day to aid the visually impaired in learning the streetscape.
- 2.6. 'A' boards should be removed when the business is closed or during events or when the area is closed for community events.
- 2.7. No 'A' boards will be permitted on the highway where the business has a private forecourt or inset doorway that could be used to accommodate them.

- 2.8. Only one sign board will be permitted per premises. Where multiple occupancy premises share joint access only one sign board will be permitted.
- 2.9. No 'A' board to be placed within 2.5 metres of tactile paving or road crossing point.
- 2.10. 'A' boards will not be permitted at World Heritage Sites, in Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), in Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) or in other places at the request of the area board or town/parish council in historic town centres.
- 2.11. 'A' boards may not incorporate lights and must not cause a visual distraction or obstruction to vehicle sight lines.
- 2.12. 'A' boards must not be fixed to street furniture or features i.e. tree, lamp column, post, guardrail, bollard, seat etc.
- 2.13. 'A' boards must be stable and not easily blown over. In the event of high winds and/or inclement weather they should be removed from the footpath completely.
- 2.14. Rotating or swinging signs, boards are discouraged due to increased risk.
- 2.15. 'A' boards should be no wider than 800mm and no higher than 900mm above ground level (including any support).
- 2.16. The Council or the Police may require the immediate removal of any 'A' board, for any reasonable cause.

3. Liability

- 3.1. Any person or organisation that places items on the highway or council land is potentially liable for any injury caused by that item and could face legal action from that injured person. Owners should therefore obtain public liability indemnity insurance to cover such claims.
- 3.2. The owner is solely liable for any damage attributable to the items placed on the highway and for ensuring that any aspects of operation and equipment comply with appropriate legislation and health and safety requirements.
- 3.3. Nothing in this policy absolves those concerned from their legal responsibilities under the Highways Act (1980) and other legislation, including any content of the sign that may breach the Public Order Act (1986).

4. Procedure for the removal of 'A' boards

- 4.1. Where an 'A' board is deemed to be unreasonable or located in an unreasonable position as defined in this policy, but does not constitute an immediate hazard, the owner will be requested to remove or reposition it in accordance with this policy. If the problem persists the 'A' board will be removed and either returned to the owner, if known and practicable, or retained by the council
- 4.2. Any 'A' board that is deemed a hazard will be removed from the highway immediately and either returned to the owner, if known and practicable, or retained by the council.
- 4.3. Any items removed will be taken in to storage and retained for collection by the owner. If the items are not collected within a period of one month they will be disposed of accordingly. The council will seek to recover the expenses incurred in removing such items from the owners.

ROAD MARKING FOR VEHICLE CROSSING (BAR MARKINGS)

What is a Bar Marking?

It is an elongated white “H” which is located across a vehicular crossing, typically a driveway.

The line is white and normally 75mm wide and extends across the dropped kerbs of the vehicular access.



Are they legally enforceable?

The marking itself is non-enforceable. The purpose of the marking is to provide a reminder that parking across a dropped kerb causes an obstruction to people wishing to access or leave their property. Creating such an obstruction on the highway is an offence and the Police may at their discretion issue a fixed penalty notice. However it should be noted the Police may have higher priorities to address.

Can you park your own car on a bar marking?

The marking is provided solely to highlight the presence of your driveway / vehicular access to others wishing to park on that road. Should you park in the bar marking then it devalues the meaning and may indicate to others that you do not use your driveway.

What can the Council do?

The Council recognises that a bar marking may be useful where on-street parking causes regular obstruction of a vehicular crossing.

For the Council to consider and approve your application you are required to:

- Provide evidence of obstruction i.e. photographic evidence,
- Provide evidence of visibility issues for vehicles exiting the drive or access,
- Provide evidence of commuter parking,
- Where a marking is required for a shared drive then the agreement of the neighbour is needed,
- Provide a plan of the proposed bar marking showing extents and dimensions
- Provide details of your preferred contractor to undertake the work

What the Council cannot do.

- The Council will not consider a bar marking where it may not be obvious an obstruction is occurring,
- A marking cannot be placed where yellow lining or zig-zag markings are present.
- The marking cannot be sited on the opposite side of the road to the driveway,
- You must have an appropriately constructed driveway / access. This means tarmacadam or other construction across the verge or footpath together with dropped kerbs.
- As a non-statutory service the council will authorise the positioning of a bar marking only. The installation of the marking will need to be executed by an approved contractor commissioned directly by the applicant.

How to apply.

You will need to apply by sending an email to the Council at one of the following addresses:

centralhighways@wiltshire.gov.uk

northernhighways@wiltshire.gov.uk

southernhighways@wiltshire.gov.uk

There is an administration charge of £62.50 which covers the cost of inspecting the location and the Council agreeing the application with you.

The application is subject to Highway Engineer approval. The fee will not be reimbursed in the event the application is declined. Therefore you should reflect on whether the bar marking is really necessary and that all the provided information has been considered.

You must provide details of a suitable contractor to undertake the work. The Council's own contractor Ringway is the preference but you may seek out others. However your choice of contractor will be subject to approval by Wiltshire Council. You will be required to arrange payment for the work directly with your chosen contractor.

What happens when your application is approved?

Your chosen contractor will undertake the work at their convenience. You should be aware that during winter months there may be delays due to temperatures being too low for painting white lines.

After the bar marking is in place Wiltshire Council will take no responsibility for ongoing maintenance.