



# Parish Handbook on Highways

A handy guide for  
parish and town councils  
partnering with Devon County Council

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## Why the Handbook was written

The poor state of the road network was a key issue in County Council Elections in May 2025. Devon voters returned new County Councillors, 80% of whom had never been Councillors before. I was one of these.

As a local resident, I was not informed about the cause of the appalling state of our roads and why this had been allowed to happen. I campaigned hard for 'transformation' in road maintenance and my campaign was accusatory in tone. All candidates did this! I was wrong.

As a County Councillor, I kept an open mind, and researched the facts to find the way out of the pothole pandemic. I found it - it is the Road Warden Scheme. This Handbook focusses on this strategy and the information herein has been fact-checked by the most senior DCC Officers. I am grateful.

Questions raised by parish councils on other Highways issues, from zebra crossings to speed limits were a challenge to me. I researched how these decisions are made and brought together this guide for parish councils on how to progress a wide range of local Highways projects.

I was supported in this learning process by my Neighbourhood Highways Officer. Together, and with the support of our parish councils, we piloted Parish Highways Priority Lists to better inform the Local Highways Asset Management Plan. As a result of closer engagement, came greater understanding. Now many of our parish councils are subscribing to the Road Warden Scheme. Volunteers are stepping forward as Road Wardens to help fix 'non-defect' potholes. Partnership fixes all potholes.

This Handbook is shared with all fellow County Councillors, District Councillors, from all parties, and Parish/Town Councillors. I want it to support the forthcoming Unitary Councillors too. Our Councillors can serve their communities better, if they understand the financial and technical constraints so they can partner fully with DCC to win the Battle of the Roads!

**Cllr Louise Wainwright**  
DCC Salcombe Electoral Division





# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This handbook addresses the angry concerns of road-users head on. Its purpose is to re-build the trust and teamwork, critically needed if the deterioration of our road network is to be transformed within the meagre budgets available to us. Understanding and cooperation are bankable assets. We must invest in our future road network together.

Consecutive Governments of all parties have irresponsibly deployed punitive budget cuts to the annual grants to all county councils. Since 2011 the annual grant to DCC has been slashed by 72% in real terms. This gross under-funding has precipitated the deterioration of roads across the country. The legally permitted increases in Council Tax are barely able to compensate for inflation, let alone the loss of revenue needed to maintain our roads.

Misunderstanding by the electorate of why our roads have deteriorated, in spite of increasing council tax, must be urgently addressed if partnerships are to be re-built.

This Handbook navigates the vast and complex hierarchy of delivery teams, communication networks and decision making processes which are needed to deliver our statutory road repairs and maintenance targets. It offers an understanding of the issues, a transparency of the processes and our progress to date.

This is the foundation of a partnership between Devon County Council and our parish and town councils. Our problems - our solutions.

It's simple. Water is the enemy of our roads. Its role in the deterioration of our roads and the cause of the pothole pandemic needs to be fully understood by everyone. See Birth of a Pothole (p 10). Water must be kept off the roads. Our road drainage network must be pro-actively and consistently maintained by the communities which they serve.

In **prioritising safety defects** (which meet the DCC criteria), DCC experiences capacity

issues in keeping pace with the volume of repairs driven by winter weather and climate change. Carrying out pothole repairs in the depths of winter is very challenging.

**Achieving good compaction in cold temperatures is very difficult and wet roads prevent a good bond.** It is possible that the repair materials will wash out if storm waters continue to flood the roads. The pothole will need to be **Reported again** and the **same pothole re-filled** - even if the roads are still too wet for a permanent solution.

Local Road Wardens can, however, provide critical, simple, timely interventions to keep the road drainage systems flowing, until improved **weather allows a permanent repair to be made.**

If the pothole is on a C or Unclassified road - 'non-defect' potholes can be fixed by local volunteers in a **Road Warden Scheme.** Local teams are more agile because they can choose to make **timely repairs** during **weather conditions conducive to a permanent repair.**

With a tsunami of pothole reports during the winter period, DCC is not only forced to prioritise repair of 'defect-only' potholes, but they have had to develop a **risk-assessed hierarchy of defects** to justify the **speed** at which the reported defect pothole will be dealt with. The **risk to life** is judged to differ depending on the **position** of the pothole in the road and the **amount of traffic** on the road. With some potholes allocated a 28 day response time - expectations need to be managed.

Prevention is better than cure. If water is not kept off the road, the pothole will get bigger and the damage to vehicles will be worse. There is an unavoidable focus of 'fixing defect potholes only' because **county councils have a statutory duty to keep roads safe.** As with all County Councils in the country, DCC has **had to define 'defects'** and focus what remains of their budget on these. DCC has developed the **Report It portal** and an

**emergency hotline** for life-threatening defects to provide a rapid response.

DCC is hoping to develop a **complementary portal** for **registered Road Wardens** to **Report Non-Defect** potholes. This would enable Road Wardens to **liaise** with their **Neighbourhood Highways Officer** and **parish councils** to prioritise and fund alternative repair programmes under the **Enhanced Road Warden Scheme**.

Salcombe Division (16 parishes) will run the **first pilot scheme** in Devon to test this **co-funded scheme**. This essential intervention is now imperative. Together we can leverage all available funds, all available knowledge and commitment to solve this problem. Anger will not fill potholes - partnerships will.

Climate Change has forced us to refocus our joint attention on prevention (keeping water off the roads) because extreme winter weather makes it impossible to keep up with the accelerated pace of deterioration.

We now have a **repair backlog** in excess **£400 million** of road repairs just to bring the roads into a structurally sound state. During the winter of 2025/26, there has been an extraordinary weekly reporting rate of many thousands of potholes across Devon, and damage to our vehicles has reached epidemic proportions.

More water - more potholes. Blocked drains, gullies, buddle-holes, grips and other easements are a siren call for local action. The powerful, persistent flow of storm waters falling on our roads, gouges out small potholes, creating craters within hours.

Devon is disproportionately affected because we have the largest road network (8,000 miles) and we are the second wettest county in the country. The rural nature of our countryside means that unusually, 87% of our roads are in the minor category - C and Unclassified roads. The remoteness of some roads increases the cost of servicing them. And yet - **HM Government** has, without consultation, **withdrawn the Rural Services Delivery Grant**. This affects the delivery of

all services. DCC has lost £10 million per year from this cut. The 'extra' £80 million provided to DCC in 2025, does little to redress the dire financial situation when our backlog of road repairs is increasing by about £15 million per year due to years of underfunding.

If DCC cannot balance its books every year, we will be subject to 'Special Measures' by HM Government which means they have powers to asset strip, without negotiation, to pay off our debts. **There is nothing more that DCC can cut**. Now we have to work together to rebuild our roads.

There is a light at the end of the tunnel. It will take team work and real partnership to address the pothole pandemic. Salcombe Division - is in the first Division, with a battle plan to Save our Roads. Readers are urged to keep an open mind and decide to put their weight behind the Enhanced Road Warden Scheme.

Communities that partner with Devon County Council will turn the tide.

Cllr Louise Wainwright Devon County Councillor Salcombe Division February 2026

Our parishes: Aveton Gifford, Bigbury, Buckland-Tout-Saints, Churchstow, Halwell and Moreleigh, Kingston, Loddiswell, Malborough, Modbury, Ringmore, Salcombe, South Huish, South Milton, Thurlestone, West Alvington and Woodleigh



## NEWS

On 24th February 2026, DCC agreed that on top of the standard budget for the Highways Department, an additional **£15 million** was earmarked for capital projects and **£4 million** for Revenue funding (for defect repairs)

# Handbook

This handbook describes a strategic partnership between Devon County Council and our parish councils and town councils, capable of delivering a more cost-effective maintenance and repair programme.

The purpose of this handbook is to:

- Build an **understanding** of the financial, logistical, legal and technical challenges facing our Highways department.
- Call for a **partnership approach** to solving the problems faced.
- **Recognise the grievances** of road users and taxpayers in the deterioration of the road network.
- **Involve parish and town councils** in the re-design of our strategic plan for the repair and maintenance of rural roads.
- Create **inter-parish networks** within the electoral Salcombe Division to share good practice and resources and strengthen local resilience.
- Profile **existing DCC parish partnership** programmes - volunteer Road Wardens, Snow Wardens and Footpath Wardens (P3 initiative).

## Pilot - Enhanced Road Warden Scheme

With the support of our **Neighbourhood Highways Officer**, we are continuing to develop **Parish Priority Lists, Joint Site Visits** and **Parish Report Forms**.

Many parishes in the Salcombe Division have a volunteer Road Warden (usually a parish councillor) capable of coordinating local communication about works needed.

Several parishes have already committed **precept funding** to pay for a **Parish Lengthsman** to overcome the problem of recruiting volunteers to undertake road repairs.

For larger projects, parishes can now access the **Community Protocol** which enables the

prioritisation of local schemes through joint funding.

**Inter-parish collaboration** between Road Wardens in our Division further strengthens this approach and promises to become a flagship for Devon.

Salcombe Division has been chosen to **test the Enhanced Road Warden Scheme** which channels new funding from DCC into a **co-funded local repair and maintenance** programme for C and Unclassified roads, as well as B roads (using the pilot Co-funded Local Asset Management Plan Scheme).

It also allows parish councils to jointly fund repairs to important B roads which are vital to their communities, but are not currently allocated priority funding by DCC.

This has been made possible because our parish and town councils have completed the first tranche of series initiatives which create a local team capable of meaningful partnership with Devon County Council.



### My Mission

Improve the state of the roads which serve the Salcombe Division of Devon.

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## Birth of a pothole

Water erodes road surfaces whether they are protected by tarmac or not.

The constant cycles of wet/freeze/thaw expand small cracks in the tarmac surface of roads.

Water penetrates the cracks and fills any spaces within the road structure.

As traffic passes over these water-filled cracks, the water pressure builds, expanding the damaged zone into a circular cavern that eventually collapses - forming a pothole.

**Keeping our buddle-holes, gullies and grips flowing freely keeps water off the road and prevents new potholes forming or small potholes getting larger.**

## A stitch in time

The formation of a pothole is indication that a road is failing. There are a number of contributory factors including:

- The road is at the end of its life leading to the binder becoming brittle and cracking from high loads.
- Water has penetrated through cracks into the base and sub base, softening the granular foundation layers (a lot of our rural roads won't even have a foundation).
- Freeze/thaw action during colder months has accelerated the rate that cracks grow.

As such, too much water on our roads creates potholes. More potholes are reported during the winter because we are not able to keep the vast winter storm waters off our roads. More water on the roads - more potholes.

During mild, dry conditions, cold-lay materials will permanently fix potholes because the **road surface is dry enough** to also use the specialist emulsion that fixes and seals the cold lay material into the pothole. Whereas repairing potholes during the **wet and cold** winters it is often a **struggle** to achieve full **compaction** and a **good bond**.

Devon County Council is nonetheless legally obliged to fill these potholes irrespective of the likelihood of longevity of the repair.

Road Wardens (p ) can use the same cold-lay tarmac with the emulsion during weather windows conducive to permanent repairs, because they live locally and can react quickly. DCC provides the cold-lay materials and the Chapter 8 training and 3rd party insurance to facilitate this.

Road Wardens and Parish Lengthsmen (the latter paid for by parish councils) play a vital role in keeping water off the road and repairing non-defect potholes during good weather thus preventing the formation of 'defect' potholes.

### Legal Obligations

DCC has a 'statutory duty to fix 'defect' potholes according to its Highways Policy.

The public reports 'defect' potholes and, following a confirmatory DCC inspection, the pothole is allocated a timetabled repair slot based on a risk matrix which estimates its risk to life and damage to vehicles.

Whilst Road Wardens are permitted to repair 'non-defect' potholes, they should not repair defect potholes that have been reported as defect potholes. The Enhanced Road Warden Scheme aims to improve communication about the timetable and progress of road repairs.

### The backdrop

Financial pressures have forced DCC to adopt a reactive approach to repairs with limited ability to carry out preventative treatments such as surface dressing. This scenario is failing to improve the quality of our road network simply because the volume of reported potholes increases exponentially during the winter months when repairs are only temporary.

Potholes might have to be fixed more than once over the winter. They need intensive care - we must keep the water off the roads.

The seemingly illogical failure to also fix non-defect potholes near to a 'defect' pothole is being addressed by the pilot '**Common Sense Strategy**'. This allows repair gangs to also fix non-defect potholes near by. The first pilots (in 2 Divisions in autumn 2025) fixed non-defect potholes within 500 meters either side of the defect potholes. This has proved challenging because the length of road in the pilot was too long. A **second set of pilots** (a number of Divisions in 2026) will assess a programme which will **repair potholes** within a **shorter distance** from the defect pothole.

Heavy traffic causes small cracks in tarmac which develop into potholes. Tens of millions of visitors use our roads every year to enjoy the rural idyll. **More traffic - more potholes.**



## COUNTY-WIDE and NEIGHBOURHOOD TEAMS

The county-wide team is the **DCC Highway and Traffic Management Service** that focusses on both the operation and the maintenance of the local road network. (p 11 and 12). It has the main budget allocation and operates the 'Highways Service' through a **Term Maintenance Contractor**, currently **MGroup** (formerly known as Milestone Infrastructure) and a network of smaller, framework contractors. MGroup typically deliver approximately 50% of budgets (£50 millions/yr) with the other 50% shared across framework contractors.

Note - **National Highways** is responsible for the **M5, A38, A30 and A35**

The **Neighbourhood Highway Teams** are based on electoral Divisions (60) and are served by **Neighbourhood Highways Officers** – typically **each NHO supports two Divisions**. Their role is to be the link with both Devon's Elected Members and the network of local councils. They also support the identification and prioritization of works.

## Highways and Traffic Management Team

The Network Operations Team maintains, operates the highway network to enable the flow of traffic. The 24-hour service deals with incidents and emergencies affecting the network, monitors traffic and congestion on major routes, and plans responses to forecast weather emergencies.

They work with local communities to keep the highways operating as they should be. They manage and supervise licences including **skips and scaffolds, street cafés and special events**. They also look after highway activities and enforce **parking restrictions**.

To keep the most important roads open when there is ice and snow; the team organise precautionary salting (**gritting**), and work with local communities to enable self-help through the Snow Warden scheme.



With the help of the **Parish Paths Partnership** scheme, the team also keeps public rights of way clear.

The **Asset Management Team** are responsible for the long term condition and maintenance of all of the assets associated with Devon's road network, including **bridges and structures, footways, drainage systems, trees** etc. The approach to the long term planning is laid out in the **Highway Infrastructure Asset Management Plan** which can be viewed here:



## Speed Compliance Action Review Forum (SCARF)

SCARF is a partnership between Devon County Council and Devon & Cornwall Police that assesses, prioritizes, and addresses community concerns regarding speeding traffic on Devon's highways. It uses evidence-based data to determine interventions ranging from speed enforcement and Vehicle Activated Signs (VAS) to engineering improvements.

## South Hams Highways and Traffic Orders Committee (SH HaTOC)

SH HaTOC - is a joint decision making body comprising members from Devon County Council and South Hams District Council, responsible for overseeing local highway management, traffic regulation orders, and related transportation strategies. The committee addresses issues such as parking restrictions, safety schemes, and public transport within the South Hams area. Highways and Transport Planning officers prepare the Committee reports.

# NEIGHBOURHOOD TEAMS

## Neighbourhood Highways Officer NHO

An NHO acts as the primary local contact for highway issues, responsible for managing, inspecting, and improving the local road network within assigned electoral Divisions. The NHO works closely with the Devon County Councillor to confirm and prioritise local interventions.

### Roles & Responsibility

- Investigate public reports (potholes, drainage),
- Approve licences (skips, road closures), and coordinate with community leaders to maintain safety and address traffic issues.
- Identify, inspect, and coordinate repairs for road defects, drainage, and street signs.
- Act as the main point of contact for parish and town councils and local residents regarding highway issues.
- Approve or reject licences for activities on the highway, including road closures, skips, scaffolding and street cafés.
- Investigate traffic issues, assessing speed limit requests, and assisting with local safety schemes and minor improvements.
- Support the coordination of salt spreading and assisting community Snow Wardens.

The DCC Councillor who engage directly with Officers at Devon County Council on Highways matters is:  
**Cllr Dan Thomas**  
Cabinet Member for Highways

### Cllr Louise Wainwright Salcombe Division

As your County Councillor, I meet once a month with our NHO to discuss local highways matters that have been referred to us by several means:

- Personal inspections
- DCC Report It platform
- DCC Highways Surveys
- Parish Clerks & Councils
- Members of the public

We are developing a more robust partnership with parish and town councils through the **Parish Highways Priority Lists** which we have begun piloting in the Salcombe Division.

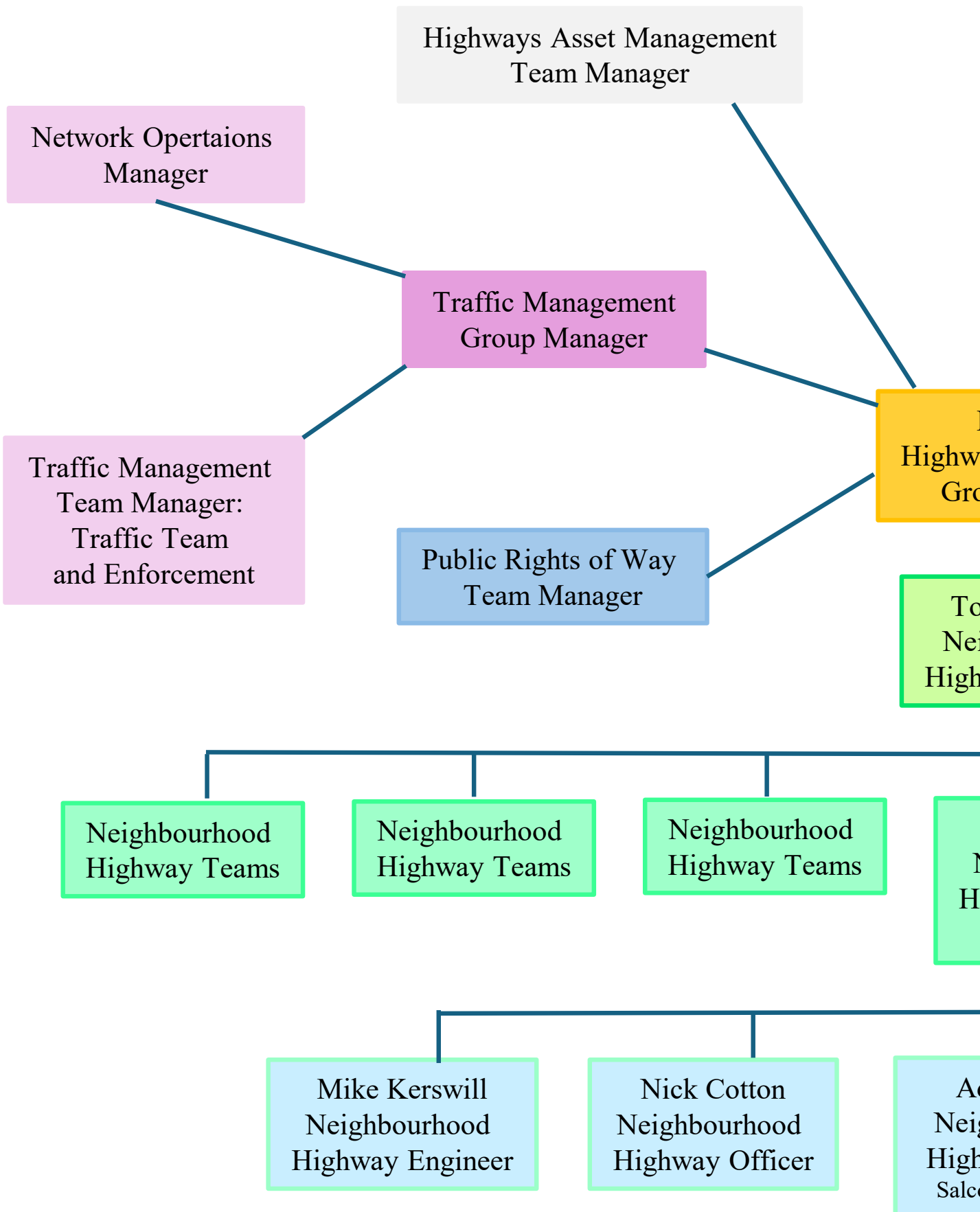
I am Vice Chair of the **South Hams Highways and Traffic Orders Committee** which meets three to four times per year.

The Neighbourhood Highways Officer and the DCC County Councillor, Louise Wainwright, are the main points of contact for parish and town councils on Highways matters in the Salcombe Division.

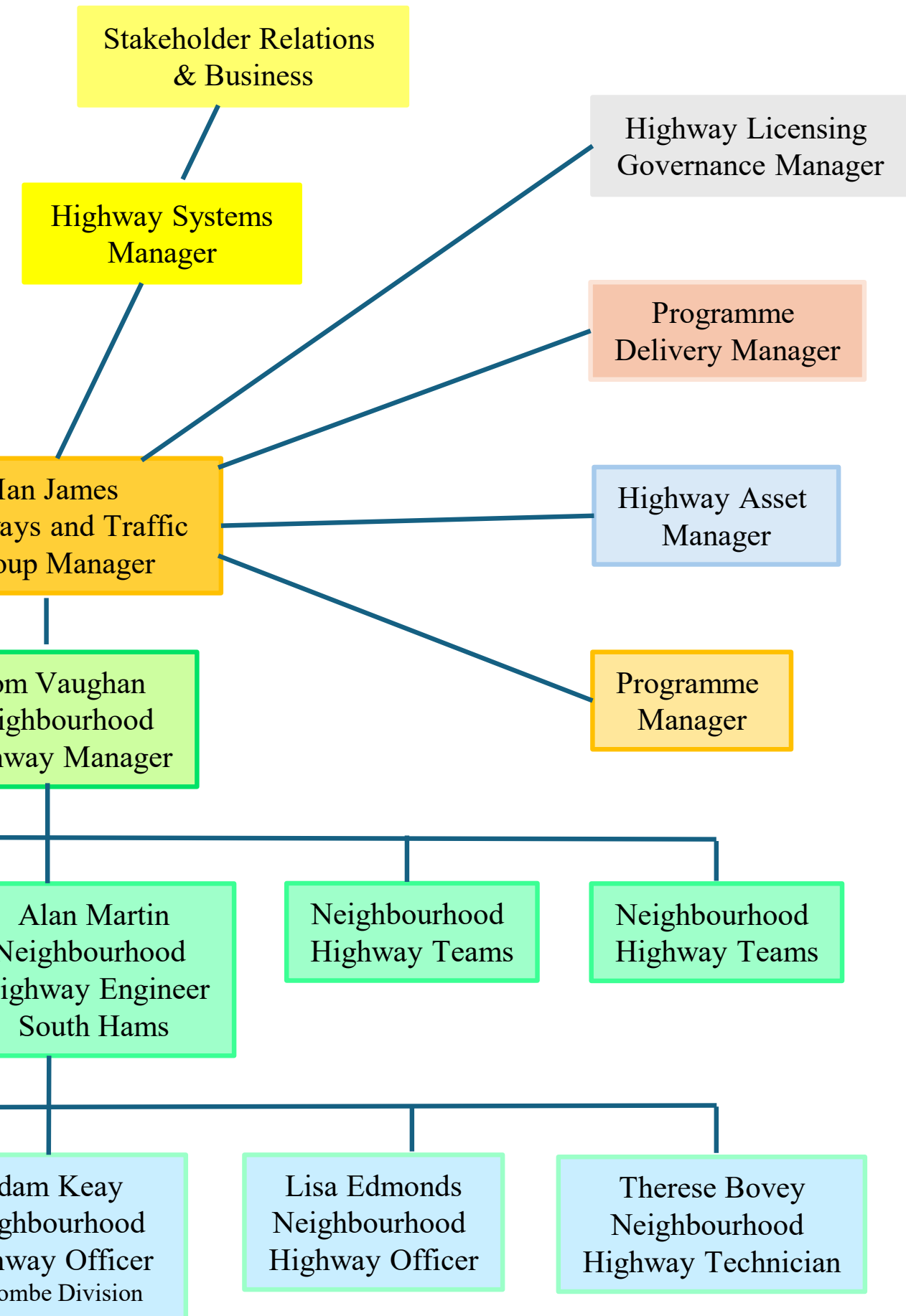
A Neighbourhood Highways Officer must implement DCC Policy on Highways

An elected Member (County Councillor) can lobby for improvements in DCC Policy which can only be implemented after debate at Full Council and agreement of elected Cabinet Members, following financial and legal scrutiny.

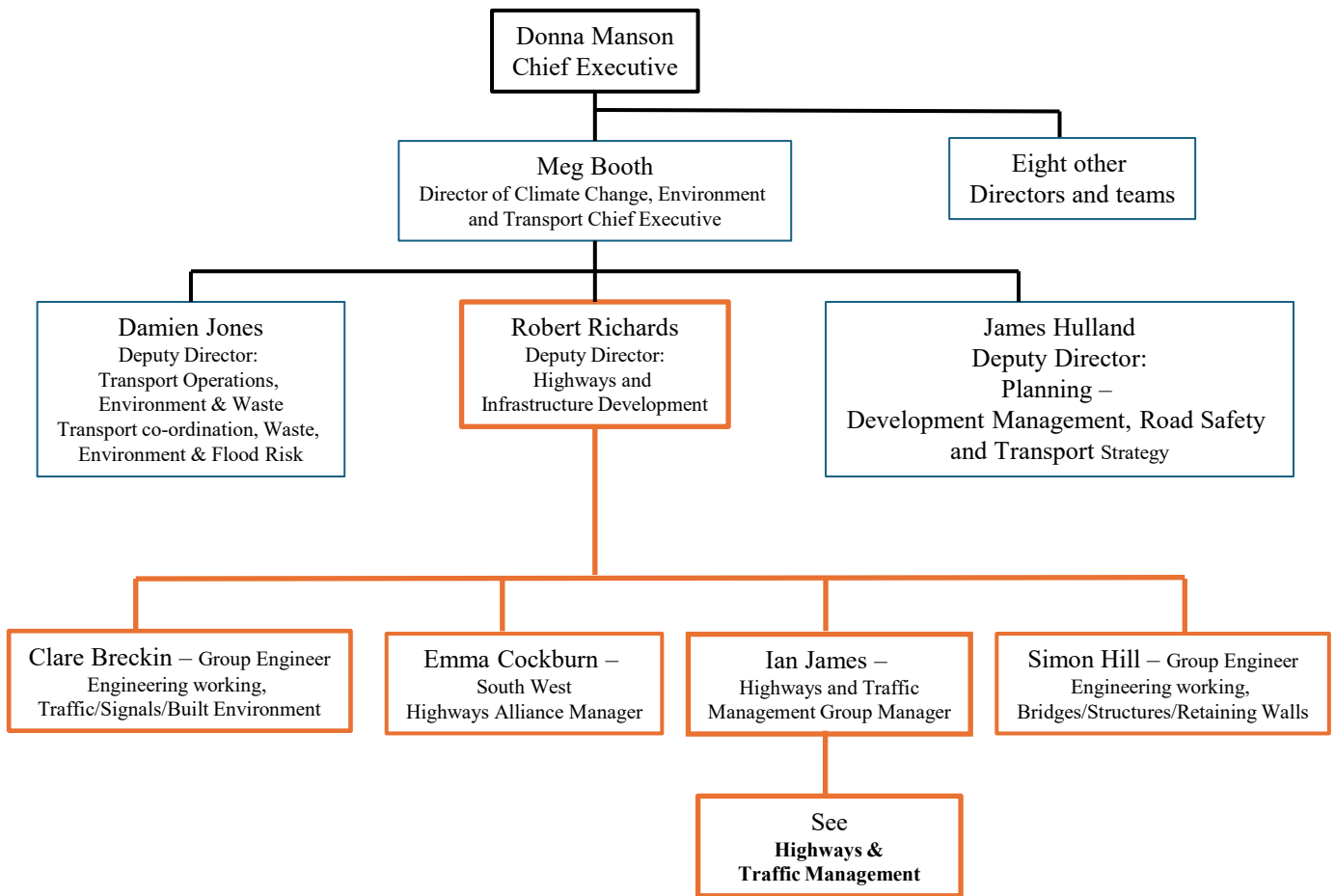
# HIGHWAYS & TRAFFIC



# C MANAGEMENT TEAMS



# SENIOR MANAGEMENT TEAMS



See previous page to find out how the senior management hierarchy engages, through the Neighbourhood Highways Officer into parishes and with Road Wardens

# ROADWORK TEAMS

**DCC Inspectors**  
 Confirm defect status, quality control contractors

**TERM MAINTENANCE CONTRACTOR 2017 to 2029**




**Highways Rapid Response Teams**  
 Emergency defect pothole repairs

**Highways Dragon Patcher Teams**  
 Defect potholes (+ non-Defect pilot)

**Highways Gully Sucking Teams**  
 Clearing drainage network

**Highways Lengthsmen**  
 1.5 days/parish/yr

DCC NEIGHBOURHOOD HIGHWAYS OFFICER

DEVON COUNTY COUNCILLOR

**PARISH COUNCILS**

**VOLUNTEER ROAD WARDENS (Coordinator)**

**PAID PARISH LENGTHSMANS**

**PUBLIC**

**VOLUNTEERS in ROAD WARDEN TEAM**



**Pothole**

Large 40 mm vertical-edge hole that is also greater than 300 mm wide



## COMMUNICATION

Good communication between all stakeholders is essential if we are to optimise the contributions from all sectors in a cost effective manner. It is essential that we more effectively include parish councils, their Road Wardens and paid Parish Lengthsmen in the communication network.

Local parish teams are able to provide immediate and comprehensive reports on maintenance and repairs in their locality as well as feedback on local quality issues arising from poor repairs.

Parish teams are investing in their local roads and therefore should be more effectively informed about planned DCC maintenance work timetables. They can assist by ensuring cars are not parked in the areas where the roadworks are to be carried out.

## UTILITIES ROADWORKS

To enable utility companies to ensure the continuous supply of services or supplies, they are granted the status of **'Statutory Undertakers'**. This means DCC must coordinate activity, so the utilities are **required to cooperate** with us when planning their work and then seek **permits** to access the road network.

As such, utility providers are ultimately responsible for the delivery of their own work and for ensuring effective traffic management. For this reason, **public feedback** is actively encouraged to be **directed to the promoter** responsible for the work, if any local problems occur. Every utility site is required to permanently display a permit board on the site with the **specific works reference number** and **contact** information.

- **Pre-planned work** must be notified and will be subject of an assessment before being permitted or licenced.
- **Unplanned or reactive 'immediate'** works occur due to potential danger or damage (emergency) or a service or supply has failed or been compromised (urgent).

A utility operating under an 'immediate' reactive permit can set traffic management, enter the road and work while only being required to notify us within two hours of starting. Outwardly, this may give the appearance of uncoordinated activity. While every effort is made to limit disruption, these works will inevitably lead to this at some level. The utility companies have legal rights to access, repair, install, remove and maintain their apparatus



Causeway One Network map of live road works.

## What has changed?

Devon County Council manages the majority of the network, whilst major routes (motorways and trunk roads) are managed by National Highways, with Plymouth and Torbay acting as separate highway authorities.

### In the beginning

Prior to the centralization of highway services in 2011, rural road repairs and maintenance in Devon were delivered through a more locality-based model that relied on area-based, multi-functional teams. Salcombe Division was served by a team that was based at Torr Quarry and Ivybridge.

Maintenance was managed through local offices rather than a single central hub, allowing for faster response times for local issues on rural roads.

Maintenance strategies were tailored to local needs, combining community knowledge with technical expertise.

### Centralisation

Nationwide austerity measures have been an economic imperative for as long as the Service can remember. DCC outsourced Highways with the intention of reducing overheads and benefiting from economies of scale.

### Scrutiny & Defects

The precipitous decline in funding necessitated undesired changes to the funding strategy for road repairs. To enable scrutiny about which jobs are undertaken by DCC and which are agreed but put on the back burner, DCC developed a hierarchy of definitions for 'defects' to provide transparency about how they prioritise work. There are now very long waiting lists for many Highways jobs - 20mph zones, road resurfacing etc. There is a £180 million backlog of road repairs which increases by £15 million per year.

### Devon Highways Maintenance

**MGroup** operates the 'Devon Highways' partnership, performing safety inspections,

repairs, drainage, and emergency response. There have been two other contractors for DCC since 2011. The contract with MGroup is one of the largest commissioned by DCC, with a value exceeding £400 million over its 10-year term. It is managed in accordance with **New Engineering Construction Contract principles**, aiming for collaboration and efficiency in managing the highway network. This contract, which began in April 2017 and runs until March 2029, covers routine, reactive, emergency maintenance, winter service and planned works for the county's road network. Any substantial changes to this contract, before expiry, would be a 'breach of contract'.

### Contract Outline

- Performing road repairs, patching of footways and carriageways, gully cleaning, and grass cutting.
- Carrying out safety inspections, repairing defects identified by these inspections, and providing 24/7 out-of-hours emergency responses (e.g., clearing debris, responding to flooding).
- Delivering the winter service, including gritting and snow clearing, to ensure roads remain safe during winter months. Collaborating with the council to trial new, sustainable materials like 'Elastomac' (made from recycled materials) to reduce carbon emissions and costs.



This Handbook: **Identifies existing posts** (Neighbourhood Highways Officer, Road Wardens, parish councils and public) **which already interact over Highways issues**. It invites participation in the pilot **Enhanced Road Warden Scheme** which takes advantage of **ALL existing funding options and opportunities** for collaboration on co-funding - to improve the state of roads in the Salcombe Division.

The major part of the highways budget is allocated in accordance with **Highways Infrastructure Asset Management Plan**.

This includes the **Local Asset Capital Programme** managed by a Neighbourhood Highways Engineer in consultation with the County Councillor within each electoral Division.

## Our Road Network

The road network (8,000 miles) in Devon consists of:

- A roads (8%)
- B roads (5%)
- C roads (35%)**
- Unclassified roads (52%)**

**Road Wardens** can work on C roads and Unclassified roads. This is the majority (**87%**) of the road network

## HIGHWAY INFRASTRUCTURE ASSET MANAGEMENT PLAN

Devon County Council is making best use of the limited funding available by ensuring that **priority** is given to road repairs that present the most risk to road users. This ensures the decisions made can be subject to scrutiny when challenged. Follow QR code below to view the Plan.

There are significant planning risks that influence the timetable and scale of planned works including: changes to funding and investment, extreme weather events, on-going impacts of the COVID -19 pandemic, and effects of inflation on budgets.



*“ Why are other roads being resurfaced completely but not the important road serving my community?”*



Asset management and prioritisation of funding across Devon, and within Divisions, is determined by a defined, risk-assessment protocol.

This is a transparent, objective, risk-assessed system which is subject to cross-party scrutiny by elected Members (Councillors).



Highway  
Infrastructure  
Management Plan

## Condition of all roads

It is a requirement for local authorities in England to report road condition assessments on their local classified road networks (A, B and **C class**).

Due to the large proportion of Devon's network being **unclassified (52%)**, the Council has always taken the approach that it is important to collect and report **conditions on all classes** of its network. To do this, the Council employs an external organisation to use **Surface Condition Assessment for the National Network of Roads (SCANNER) laser-based technology**.

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

- **Green** – no further investigation or treatment required.
- **Amber** – maintenance may be required soon.
- **Red** – should be considered for maintenance.

## Condition of unclassified roads

Maintenance budgets provide insufficient funding to meet the annual cost of deterioration and consequently the condition of certain elements of the highway asset will get worse. Appropriate funding levels are allocated to the more strategic network to try to maintain their current conditions levels, while managing a decline in the more minor network. This is illustrated in the **gradual decline in the Council's U road network over the last five years**.

## Summary of proposed maintenance within the financial year of 2025/26

Maintenance type	Treatment type	Length in km	Number
Preventative	Surface dressing	325	158
Preventative	Micro asphalt	10	25
Preventative	Footway slurry seal	39	77
Preventative	Footway reconstruction	2.5	15
Preventative	Joint fill		32
Preventative	A class resurfacing	23	27
Preventative	B, C and U class resurfacing	14	28
Preventative	Recycling	6.5	4
Reactive	Potholes (estimated)		59,000

\* Note – a number of additional schemes are identified throughout the year, and programmes are subject to change, due to factors such as financial pressures and climate change. Pothole figures are an estimate based on 2024/25 figures.

\* Condition data for C class is collected by lane length over a four-year period (half one direction each year)

Year	Percentage of U roads in the Red category
2020	18%
2021	16%
2022	20%
2023	23%
2024	25%

\* Condition data for U Class is collected by lane length over a four-year period (50% one direction per year)

Table 1.0 RISK MATRIX						
		PROBABILITY / LIKELIHOOD OF INTERACTION WITH HIGHWAY USER				
		Rare (1)	Unlikely (2)	Possible (3)	Likely (4)	Almost Certain (5)
LIKELY IMPACT	None (1)	1	2	3	4	5
	Negligible (2)	2	4	6	8	10
	Minor (3)	3	6	9	12	15
	Moderate (4)	4	8	12	16	20
	Serious (5)	5	10	15	20	25

Category 4 (Low Risk) Consider an appropriate response including no further action/monitor	Category 3 (Medium Risk) Repair within 28 days	Category 2 (High Risk) Make safe or repair within 7 days	Category 1 Make safe or repair by end of the next working day
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Note:

**Defects identified that pose a threat to life are considered an emergency and must be responded to, normally within 2 hours and made safe or repaired urgently.**

## HIGHWAY SAFETY POLICY

Defects that may create a danger or serious inconvenience to highway users are defined in **Appendix 1**, using the criteria for each type of defect and are referred to as **investigatory criteria**. These defects are identified and managed through a system of inspection.

Using a risk assessment matrix, defects that meet a defined investigation criteria are assessed to determine the degree of risk they may pose to a highway user and what is an appropriate and reasonable response.

See **Appendix 1** of the Highways Policy to view '**defect criteria**' for all criteria (opposite) in full via QR code (below).



Highway Safety Policy  
vers 6.1 (1st Jan 2021)

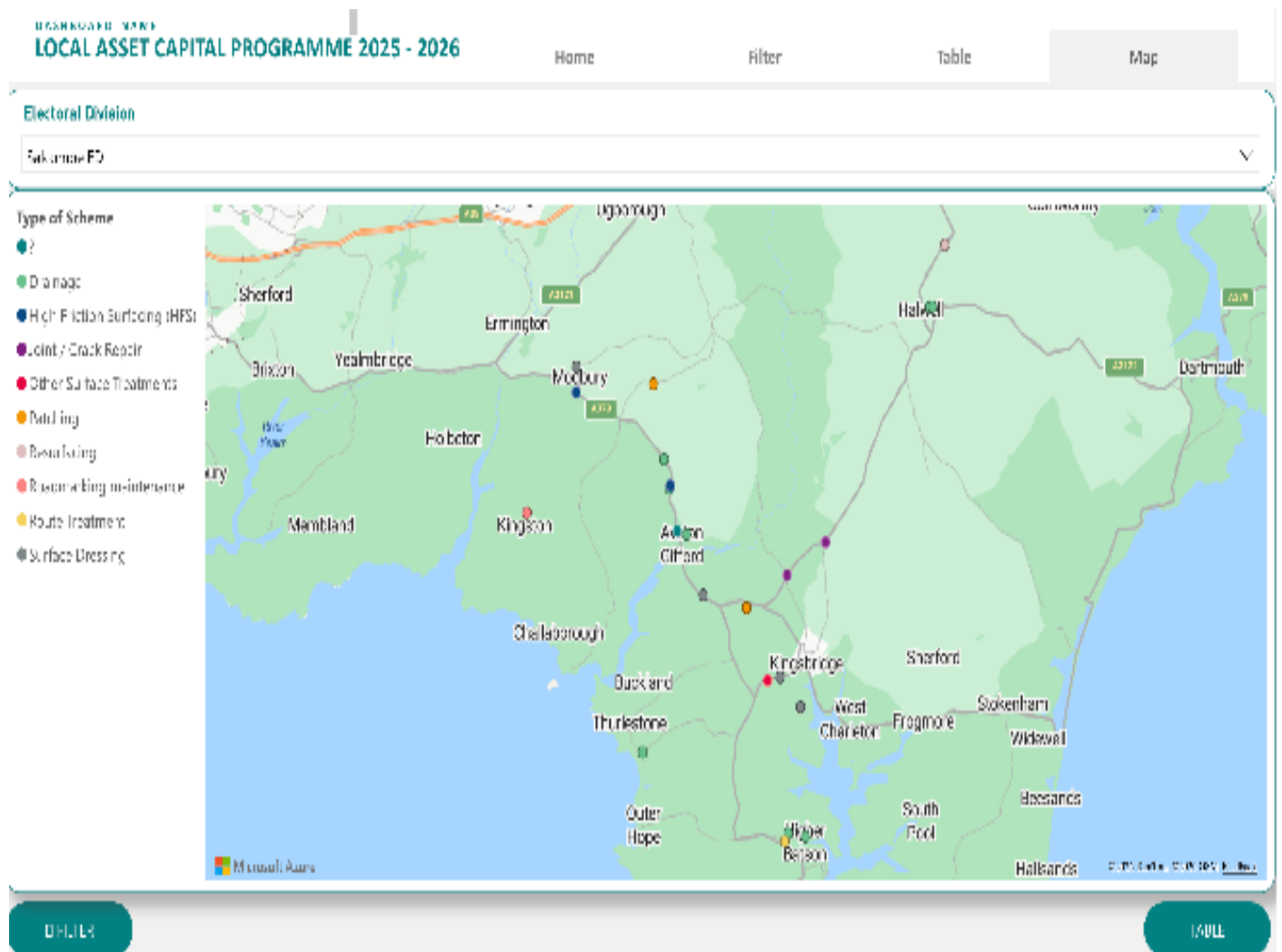
## Appendix 1: Defects Criteria

- 1.1 Pothole
- 1.2 Standing/running water
- 1.3 Obstructions
- 1.4 Overriding
- 1.5 Defective high friction surface
- 1.6 Spillages
- 1.7 Defective road markings
- 1.8 Defective ironwork
- 1.9 Defective cattle grids
- 1.10 Defective traffic calming features
- 1.11 Cracks and gaps
- 1.12 Abrupt level differences/trip
- 1.13 Damaged road restraint systems
- 1.14 Defective road traffic signs and posts
- 1.15 Street lights, illuminated or variable message traffic signs & illuminated bollards
- 1.16 Defective traffic signals
- 1.17 Damaged kerb
- 1.18 Damaged handrails
- 1.19 Depressions and humps
- 1.20 Defective boundary fences
- 1.21 Dangerous or obstructing trees
- 1.22 Obscured visibility and overgrown hedges & bushes
- 1.23 Defective roadworks signing

# LOCAL ASSET CAPITAL PROGRAMME

The Local Asset Capital Programme (LACP) uses an integrated approach based on road condition data and local member, parish, and town council knowledge. It is developed jointly by the local Neighbourhood Team and Asset Management Team and the budget available for the South Hams this year is £1.785m.

Road Warden Scheme Town and parish councils are empowered to deliver minor works on the highway, supported by community enhancement funding.



Local Highways  
Maintenance  
Transparency  
Report

# ROADWORKS

## POTHoles

### Reactive Pothole repairs

These are potholes that meet the DCC 'defect' criteria and are repaired by the Highways Service through the current Term Maintenance Contractor, MGroup. This uses **hot and cold-lay materials** which can produce a **permanent fix** if undertaken under the **right weather conditions**. This is a manual job requiring training and Chapter 8 qualifications.

### Non-defect pothole repairs

These are the majority of potholes which do not meet the DCC 'defect' criteria but can be repaired under the Road Warden Scheme on C and Unclassified roads. This uses cold-lay materials. **Proactive repair of non-defect potholes reduces the number developing into 'defect' potholes.**

### Dragon Patching

A Dragon Patcher is a specialized road maintenance machine used by Devon County Council to repair potholes and surface defects **five times faster** than traditional methods above.

These machines use a flame to dry and heat the road surface, allowing hot bitumen and stone to bond effectively, typically repairing defects in just two minutes.

Devon has four Dragon Patchers that have repaired tens of thousands of square metres of road. They are particularly useful for making rapid, durable, and sustainable repairs on rural roads.

Repairs are often done from the cab, making the process safer for workers, and the road can be driven on immediately after the repair is completed.

Each of the four Dragon Patchers has a **dedicated full-time team**, and they are in full time use outside the deep winter months. They undertake planned

programmes of work, managed by the **Network Response Team** in the spring, summer, early autumn. In the winter, they are used for temporary pothole repairs to help manage peak winter demand.

Our Dragon Patching resource is directed to roads following robust interpretation of defect data and through discussion with local Neighbourhood Highway Officers to understand levels of need. We would encourage continued discussions with your local NHO to support this.

The cost is approximately £1,700 per shift, plus materials. During the summer months, each machine can typically complete two shifts per day.

Criteria for Dragon Patcher deployment:

- It must be on the minor network (Category 7–11 roads - B, C, U roads).
- A minimum road width of 3 metres is required.
- It cannot be deployed where over-spray of bitumen would pose a risk—e.g. near properties, parked vehicles, or watercourses.
- Dragon Patching is not suitable for junctions, turning circles, or the major road network because newly laid patches are susceptible to turning and braking forces.

The method is designed for cracks, crazing, and surface defects. It is **not a replacement for structural repairs**. Defects requiring reconstruction, base material, or improved drainage must be addressed using traditional methods.

Dragon Patching is not suitable for A roads, but it can be very effective on the minor network as a low cost method for improving overall ride quality.

### Budget & Programme Access:

- NHOs are the primary promoters of sites for Dragon Patching.
- Due to its popularity, delivery can take around 18 months from identification to completion

## Capital Cost

A Dragon Patcher machine, used for repairing potholes, typically costs about **£250,000** per unit.

The Dragon Patcher can repair potholes for about £10 per square meter, significantly cheaper than the cost of traditional methods (around £70).

They operate five times faster than traditional repair gangs, often completing repairs in under three minutes. They are particularly effective on rural roads and can treat, dry, and seal potholes in one process.

## MATERIALS

**Hot and Cold-lay asphalt** is used for permanent pothole repairs.

**Surface Dressing** is a cost-effective way of restoring the road surface and sealing it in one process. A well-designed surface dressing can prolong the life of a road by up to 10 years. Surface dressing also:

- Improves skidding resistance which makes the roads safer
- Helps to make a road waterproof
- Protects the road against frost and water damage

Roads are surface-dressed between **April and September** because the process needs **warm, dry weather** to allow the dressing to be established.

**Micro-asphalt** is a quick, efficient and economic method of preventative maintenance. It is a mixture of polymer modified bitumen emulsion, small aggregate and cement laid using specialist machinery and which will improve the road surface and extend the life of the road.

**Elastomac** is a rubberised mastic that must be heated in a boiler and then hand-applied into defects in the road surface. It requires specialist heating equipment capable of reaching very high temperatures, and it must be applied manually, needing specialist training and equipment. It has been utilised to undertake in excess of 30,000sqm of

serviceability patching this financial year (25/26) versus 33,000sqm of traditional patching.

**Footway Slurry Seal** is a thin layer of surfacing treatment used to waterproof the surface, repair minor imperfections, and extend the life of the footway.



A Dragon Patcher Team costs approximately £1,700 per half day plus materials

Could a **parish council fund** this from their **Reserves?**



DCC Road Traffic Accidents in last 5 yrs



## CURRENT PARISH TEAMS - Parish & Town Councils

There are 16 parish or town councils within the electoral Salcombe Division.

**Aveton Gifford, Bigbury, Buckland-Tout-Saints, Churchstow, Kingston, Loddiswell, Malborough, Modbury, Halwell & Moreleigh, Ringmore Salcombe, South Huish South Milton, Thurlestone, West Alvington and Woodleigh.**

**Parish Councils** are essential partners with DCC in the Battle to Save our Roads

**Parish Councillors** are volunteers who live in the parish and offer their local knowledge, skills, local relationships and time to their communities.

Each parish council requires a specific number of councillors depending on the local population of the parish. There is a

set number of councillors who must be present for voting and for the Agenda to be discussed. This is the number of Councillors that must be present for the parish council to be **quorate**. Meetings are held once a month in a local hall or church. Meetings usually last about two hours.

**Members of the public** can attend the meeting and are able to bring local concerns to the attention of the parish councillors in the public session at the beginning of the meeting. They can speak for up to 3 minutes only. This is the opportunity for members of the local community to bring road repair issues to the attention of the parish council.

My NHO and I are advising members of the public to use the **Report It Portal** (for potholes that meet the County Safety Criteria

## Parish Priority Lists

Parish Councillors and the Road Warden will review all highways concerns received from parishioners for inclusion in the **Parish Priorities List** and follow up with the Neighbourhood Highways Officer.

## Enhanced Road Warden Scheme

The existing Road Warden Scheme was initiated in 2017. Increasing deterioration of our roads gave rise to this Handbook and the consequential '**Enhanced Road Warden Scheme**' described herein and approved as a pilot by DCC Highways and Traffic Management Team.

Road Wardens in the Salcombe Division are invited to contribute evidence on **Non-Defect Potholes** on a new **pilot Non-Defect Report It portal** which will contribute to the Red/Amber/Green risk assessments that inform prioritisation of investments by DCC.

## Become a Parish Councillor:

It is important to note, that if the parish council is not quorate and cannot fill its vacancies - the District Council will take over the function of the parish council and charge for this service. Decisions could be made remotely and there may not be a local meeting. When we are a Unitary Authority the same thing could happen.

It is important that the local community supports its parish council by attending meetings and also offering their services as a parish councillor. Parish councils need 'doers' not just people who want to complain and have nothing more constructive to offer the community.



## Road Warden - Parish Councillor

The Road Warden post is primarily a **coordinator's role** and can sometimes be a parish councillor. This makes it easy to contribute to the development of the **Parish Priorities List** and guide any decisions on whether the parish council wants to take part in the **Community Protocol** or Co-funded Community Protocol

## FUTURE NEIGHBOURHOOD TEAMS

### Neighbourhood Area Committees (NAC)

Our Local Government is being Reorganised from May 2027 onwards.

DCC and SHDC will be abolished and replaced with a large **Unitary Authority**. It is possible that a 'Shadow' Unitary Authority will be in place by May 2027. The 16 parish and town councils in the Salcombe Division are already meeting to deliberate how they want to be **represented on NACs**.

It is yet to be decided whether 'Highways' is a topic for which the NACs will be responsible.

### Getting 'Unitary-ready'

Some of the 16 parishes in the Salcombe Division have already begun meeting together face-to-face to consider future collaboration.



# PARISH TEAMS - Road Wardens

The Road Warden Scheme in Devon County Council began with pilot areas in April 2017 to enable local councils to address minor highway maintenance, weed clearing, cleaning road signs, clearing drainage features, and grass cutting. **Repairing minor potholes** was included as an option a few years later at the **request of some parishes**.

The scheme was initiated in response to a £21 million funding shortfall, allowing community volunteers to perform work that DCC could no longer afford to prioritise.

The scheme was created to empower town and parish councils to maintain their local areas, specifically addressing 'non-intervention' potholes, vegetation, and cleaning signs, due to the reduced Highways budgets.

DCC provides training (such as Chapter 8 traffic management), 3rd party insurance, and materials, while volunteers from local communities carry out the work. Chapter 8 training provides essential instruction on temporary traffic management, safety, and signing, lighting, and guarding on UK highways. Based on the Traffic Signs Manual Chapter 8, it ensures operatives, supervisors, and planners can safely set up road works to protect both workers and the public.

DCC introduced the **Highway Maintenance Community Enhancement Fund (HMCEF)** to provide grants to assist parishes with these costs.

## How the Road Warden Scheme works

The Road Warden does not necessarily physically carry out the works in their community, although they can do so if they wish to and have undertaken the necessary training.

## Road Warden (coordinator role)

The Road Warden is responsible for coordinating the works that take place. This includes agreeing works with their

Neighbourhood Highway Officer, ensuring that a risk assessment of any works is carried out and ensuring that DCC's **method statements** are followed.

One Road Warden can manage a **team of (2) volunteers** who carry out the works. The training and qualification requirements depend on the work that is planned. For example, if potholes are being repaired on the live carriageway at least one volunteer must hold City & Guilds **Chapter 8** training. This makes them safety savvy - it does not teach them how to fix potholes.

Chapter 8 training teaches how to **place signs** to create a safe environment for workers and highway users. The course is run over **two days** and the resulting qualification is Q1 Signing, Lighting and Guarding of the Street Works Qualification Register (SWQR). DCC will provide free Chapter 8 training for up to 3 members of an organisation.



DCC has produced a video **Masterclass on Pothole Repairs** for Road Wardens with the assistance of Road Wardens in the

## Communities with a Road Warden can:

- **Organise** minor works either on or off the live carriageway (see types of work below)
- **Carry out** minor works either on the live carriageway or away from the live carriageway.

## Benefits of the Road Warden Scheme

- Communities are able to carry out **minor works** which DCC are no longer able to resource and do not have a legal responsibility to carry out.
- DCC provide **third party insurance** for the works.

## PARISH TEAMS (cont)

- Free training on DCC arranged courses (see training below).
- Priority status for Highway Maintenance Community Enhancement Fund (HMCE) Fund applications.
- Priority status for the Enhanced Road Warden Scheme.

### What can Road Warden volunteers do?

- Pothole repairs (when they do not meet DCC intervention criteria).
- Clearing weeds.
- Cleaning signs.
- Cleaning drainage (gully grating).
- Cutting grass
- Repairing finger posts.
- Managing verges for wildlife

All works must be discussed, in the first instance, with the local Neighbourhood Highways Officer. Road Wardens would not be responsible for carrying out safety repairs for Defect potholes, as this remains the responsibility of the council.

### A Road Warden should:

- Be nominated as suitable by the town or parish council
- Be the communication link between DCC and the parish council
- Agree to work within the arrangements set forward by the Road Warden agreement
- Co-ordinate any minor works which are

## Parish Lengthsman

There are two categories of Parish Lengthsmen. One is employed by DCC through the Term Maintenance Contractor (MGroup) and the other is a paid contractor funded by parish council precept.

Before 'centralisation' South Hams District Council had 6 full time Lengthsmen. The current DCC Term Maintenance Contract does not include the provision of a Lengthsman as such. But all grips, easements and buddleholes are cleaned on annual basis

..

However, a Parish Lengthsman who is a locally contracted worker employed by town or parish councils - does have their work programme directed to known local priorities by the parish council. They perform minor highway maintenance and environmental tasks, supplementing the work of Devon County Council. The enhanced maintenance programme can help to prevent flooding and improve village appearance.

Devon County Council's Highway Maintenance Community Enhancement Fund (HMCEF) can be used to contribute towards the cost of a Lengthsman.

### Key tasks of a Parish Lengthsman

- Clearing gullies and grips,
- Cleaning road signs,
- Strimming verges,
- Clearing overhanging vegetation,
- Maintaining public rights of way
- Minor gritting/snow clearance.

These parish-based roles are highly valued for their ability to react quickly to local needs and maintain the 'public realm' of Devon's villages.



QR code for all the Road Warden 'Method Statements' - with full instructions on how to fix potholes, clear gulleys etc

# COMMUNICATION

## Salcombe Division WhatsApp Group

All Road Warden, key parish councillors and clerks in the Salcombe Division have been invited to join the Salcombe Division Road Wardens WhatsApp group. This enables practitioners to share information, and good practice across parish boundaries in the same way as roads connect our parishes. WhatsApp is free and easy to use and allows photographs and videos to be shared.

## Splitting pallets of cold-lay material

Whole pallets of material are ordered from the Neighbourhood Highways Officer to manage distribution costs. Parish Councils would be charged for delivery of less than one pallet. However, the shelflife is often too short for one parish to make use of a full pallet before the expiry date. By communicating better, Road Wardens can share pallets with less wastage.

## Share Good Practice

MGroup and DCC video crews created an instructional video on 'How to fix a pothole' with the assistance of Salcombe Division Road Wardens. This can be viewed on YouTube "**Devon Pothole Ninjas**"



Road Wardens in the pilot **Enhanced Road Warden Scheme** will contribute the **location of non-defect potholes in a dedicated area of the Report It portal.**

This is not available to the public at this stage.

Information on the distribution of non-defect potholes will be used to create a **Red/Amber/Green risk matrix for non-defect potholes.** The matrix will be used by the NHO to decide if the risk justifies the use of the **pilot 'Common Sense Approach', Dragon Patcher Teams, Community Protocol** or the pilot **Co-funded Asset Management Scheme.**

# ROAD WARDENS TOOLKIT

## Personal Protective Equipment

- Face mask/respirator
- Gloves
- Eye protection – goggles/visor
- Ear Defenders
- Hi-visibility clothing
- Hard hat
- Protective boots

## TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT (TM)

Ensure the sufficient TM signs, bollards, and equipment are carried which are appropriate for the task / site. These must be set out in accordance with Chapter 8 of the Traffic Signs Manual and the Safety at Streetworks and Road Works Red Book

## TOOLS & EQUIPMENT

- Hand tamping bars - to compact cold-lay.
- Drain rods – for clearing blockages in gullies and pipes.

- Gulley grabbers – long-handled tools for removing debris from gullies.
- Shovels and spades: digging out silt mud.
- Rakes: clearing leaves and surface debris.
- Buckets or debris tubs.
- Wheelbarrows
- Hand brushes and brooms
- Litter pickers – removing rubbish safely

## MATERIALS NEEDED

- Hand sanitiser or wipes
- Water for cleaning/flushing drains
- Waste bags for litter
- Plastic sheeting to temporarily cover drains

See **Highways Maintenance Community Fund** for DCC grant support

## How to fix a pothole and make it last

### Prevention is better than cure.

Keep the water off the road by making sure the gullies and buddle-holes are clear.

Choose to fix the pothole when there is a dry, warm weather to optimise the curing of the cold lay material.

Wear appropriate PPE.

Set up traffic management signs (Temporary delay - 15 minutes, Road Works, bollards).

Brush out the debris inside the pothole and remove any crumbling edge to the pothole.

Sparay emulsion into the dry pothole including vertical edges.

Use fresh cold-lay material which **flows freely** from the tub.

Over-fill the pothole to **1.5 x the depth of pothole**. If pothole deeper than 40 mm, fix the pothole in **two layers**, repeating the bitumin spray coat on the surface of the first finished layer (as per instructions below)

For each layer, use the tip of the shovel to jab down into the pile of cold-lay as you **spread it evenly** across the pothole and **into the edges** of the pothole.

### Good compaction in dry conditions is the key to success.

Use a hand tamping bar to firm down the **circular edge of the pothole first** and then work your way into the centre of the pothole.

Continue to vigorously bang down with the tamping rod until the sound changes to a firm 'thud'.

If the tamping bar starts to stick to the coldlay, preventing a smooth finish, **lightly** wet the surface of the coldlay with a watering can.

If a second layer of coldlay is needed for a deep pothole - sparay the surface of first layer of the filled pothole with emulsion, paying particular attention to the perimeter of the pothole.

Finally, spray the edge of the pothole where it joins the road surface to seal in the repair and prevent water ingress.

Collect up all equipment, signs, empty buckets and debris.

**JOB DONE**

# COLD-LAY CAN BE A PERMANENT FIX

Devon County Council and utility companies (gas, telecoms etc.) use high quality, HAPAS-approved cold-lay products to fill potholes as well as hot lay materials. This product does not need to be heated up, is quick and easy to use and can be PERMANENT

- It allows roads to be re-opened instantly after compaction.
- Provides permanent rather than temporary repairs.
- Suitable for high-traffic areas.
- Can be applied in all weather conditions, including wet or cold conditions.

## LIMITATIONS of COLD-LAY TARMAC

However, for cold-lay material to provide a 'permanent' repair, it should be used in conjunction with a cationic bitumen emulsion as a tack coat to line potholes, before the cold-lay material is embedded in the pothole.

This emulsion provides a waterproof seal and **improves adhesion** between the existing road and the repair material.



DCC will provide Road Wardens a bitumen spray (the tack coat) to use in conjunction with the cold-lay material.

The spray is recommended by the manufacturers of the cold-lay material because sprays will penetrate smaller crevices better than the other 'brushed on' product.

Aerosols are also easier to transport and will not spill. Sprays are easier to use by Road Wardens to ensure they can more quickly fix non-defect the potholes better **during dry weather.**



*“They come and fix it - but it washes out in a couple of weeks” ”*



Permanent repairs to potholes during the wet winter months can sometimes be challenging. Occasionally, if a heavy rain persists after the repair, there could be some water penetration and the pothole may need to be **Reported again** on the DCC portal.

**Road Wardens** are requested to make their **Neighbourhood Highways Officer aware** of any subsequent repair failures. The NHO will assess whether it is a quality issue by the contractor or a reasonable weather-related failure - and escalate the issue as appropriate. The cooperation of the Road Wardens is very helpful.

Highways (MGroup) are forced to undertake thousands of **reactive pothole repairs** during the winter months because high winter rain causes more potholes to develop if water is not kept off the roads. Devon is the second wettest county in the country and the winter is the wettest period of the year.

If Road Wardens and their volunteer helpers, are able to fix more 'non-defect' potholes during the summer - there will be less pressure on the DCC to undertake reactive repairs of 'defect potholes' during the winter.

# GULLEY MAINTENANCE

A road gully serves as more than just a surface water diverter. It functions as a silt and debris trap, preventing these contaminants from causing disruptive blockages in downstream drain pipes and soakaways.

Most surface waste drains combine with the **South West Water sewage system**. Debris traps in gullies reduce blockages in the sewage system.

Gully sucking is a critical **proactive** and **reactive maintenance** process for Road Wardens to remove debris, silt, leaf mulch, and waste from roadside gullies, preventing flooding, water ponding, erosion of hedgerows and damage to road infrastructure.

**Reactive vs. Proactive:** while often done reactively to fix floods, regular scheduled clearing of gullies is more effective.

## Step by step

**Identify Signs:** Look for standing water, debris buildup on gratings, or visible silt.

**Site Management:** Ensure the area is safe for work. If a gully cannot be accessed due to parked cars, report it to the Road Warden.

**Two-Man Crew:** Operations typically require a two-man crew equipped with a suction tanker and high-pressure jetting machine.

**Clear Surface Debris:** Remove accumulated twigs, leaves, and trash from the top of the grate.

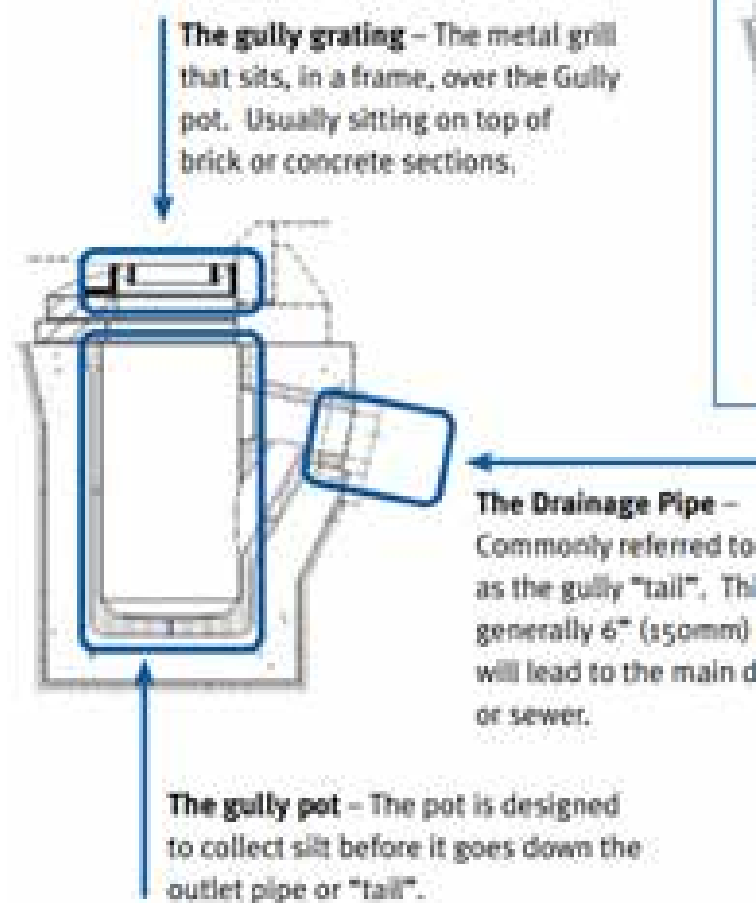
**Vacuum Extraction:** Use the suction tanker's boom arm to remove debris and silt from the gully pot.

**Jetting** (If blocked): If the gully is heavily blocked, use high-pressure water jets to break up material.

**Clean Surrounds:** Clear all obstructions within 1 meter of the trap.

## 1. Drainage Systems Explained:

The typical features of a road drain:



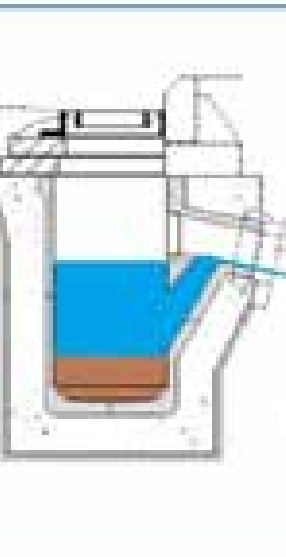
## After clearing the Gully

**Recharge:** Once the silt is removed, refill the gully pot with clean water to restore the water seal (trap), which prevents sewer gases from escaping.

**Verify Flow:** Ensure the water drains away freely.

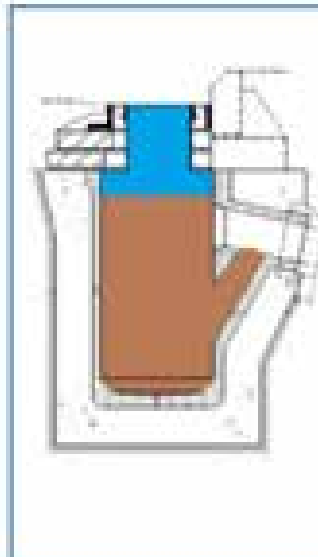
**Final Inspection:** Grease and replace the drain cover, ensuring it is properly seated and not causing a hazard to pedestrians or cyclists.

**Marking:** If necessary, mark the gully with paint to confirm it has been cleaned.



**Properly Functioning Gully:**

Some silt at the bottom  
Water sitting in the gully up to the outlet level.  
During dry periods this will evaporate away but following wet weather it is normal to have an amount of water sitting in the gully pot.

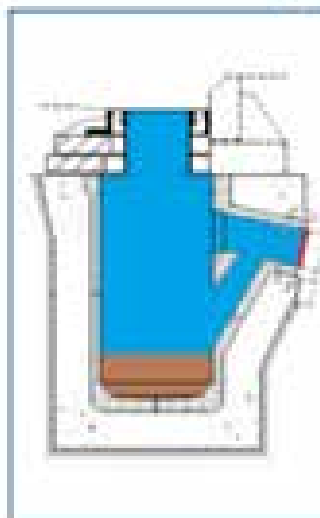


**Blocked Gully:**

Here the level of silt has risen significantly and has blocked the outlet pipe (bottom hole) and the rodding eye outlet (the top hole).

The rainwater cannot reach the drainage pipe and so in wet weather fills up the pot causing the gully to flood.

is  
pipe  
rain



**Damaged or Blocked Gully Tail:**

Here the level of silt is not significant enough to block the gully pot but there is a collapse in the drainage pipe leading to the sewer and so in wet weather the rainfall cannot reach the sewer and so the pot fills with water causing the gully to flood.

Where the tail is partially blocked this may result in the water taking longer to clear – often referred to as a “Slow Runner”.

## BEST PRACTICE

**Inspect Adjacent Assets:** When dealing with a blocked gully, inspect all other gullies within 200 meters.

**Environmental Handling:** Collected material should be transported in the tank for proper, safe processing.

PARISH	ROAD WARDEN	SNOW WARDEN	PALLETS of COLD LAY
Aveton Gifford	2018	2016	
Bigbury	2021	2019	Oct 2022 (1) Oct 2024 (1) = 104 tubs
Buckland tout Saints	2018	2020	
Churchstow	2024	Yes date not recorded	
Halwell & Moreleigh	No	2016	
Kingston	No	No	
Loddiswell	No	2020	
Malborough	2024	2024	Aug/Sept 2025 = 52 tubs
Modbury	2017	2020	2021/2022 (6) 2022/2023 (5) 2024/2025 (1) 2025/2026 (4) = 832 tubs
Ringmore	2024	2016	Oct 2024 (1) = 52 tubs
Salcombe	2026	2020	
South Huish	2024	2019	
South Milton	2017	2026	Feb 2025 (1) = 52 tubs
Thurlestone	No	2020	
West Alvington	2024	2019	
Woodleigh	No	2018	

It's estimated that a tub fills two minor defects,.

Modbury are likely to have filled in excess of 1600 minor defects.

There are 135 parishes in Devon currently signed up to the Road Warden Scheme which is 32% of the total parishes and parish meetings.

There are 330 parishes who have provided details of their Snow Warden for our register which is 77% of the total parishes and parish meetings.

The agreement is with the parish and not the Road Warden.

Should a parish not have a Road Warden (for example, one steps down) they remain in the scheme which means the number of active Road Wardens may be lower than 135.

# PARISH TEAMS



## Snow Warden

A Snow Warden is a trained community volunteer, appointed by a parish or town council, who helps **manage local winter road conditions**.

They coordinate volunteers to clear snow from footpaths, spread grit on local priority routes, and monitor grit bins, acting as a key link between the community and Devon County Council.

Responsibilities and Actions:

- Organising local teams to clear snow and spread grit in their community.
- Spreading grit on secondary routes not covered by Devon County Council's main gritters.
- Ordering new supplies of grit and monitoring the levels of grit bins (reporting if they need filling).
- Receiving weather alerts and acting as a contact point for the community during severe weather.
- Attending free, Devon County Council provided training to operate safely on the highway.

Snow Wardens often use tractors or specialized equipment to keep local roads moving and help vulnerable residents during, or following, heavy snow.

DCC grit should not be used on private driveways and paths.

They operate within the Devon County Council Snow Warden Scheme, which provides insurance for the work.



### Grit bin

Empty bin, damaged bin or a bin with contents that are unuseable

# PARISH TEAMS



## Tree Warden

Highway Trees: DCC inspects trees on its land annually, particularly along main roads. Private landowners are responsible for trees on their land that may affect public highways. Ash Dieback: Tree Wardens help highlight issues of local importance, such as the threat of Ash Dieback.

### Tree Warden role

Reporting and Emergencies: Unsafe or fallen trees on public roads can be reported directly to DCC via their website or by calling **0345 155 1004**.

Devon County Council (DCC) manages trees adjacent to public highways and footpaths, handling maintenance for council-owned trees and responding to reports of dangerous trees.

While DCC manages roadside trees, local volunteer-driven initiatives, such as **South Hams Tree Warden Network**, operate at the parish level to monitor, protect, and plant trees.

Tree Wardens often work in conjunction with District Councils to review planning applications, monitor protected trees, and run community projects like "**Free Trees Hubs**".

For tree issues on Devon roads, contact **[csc.roads@devon.gov.uk](mailto:csc.roads@devon.gov.uk)** or **0345 155 1004**.

For specific local, non-highway, or conservation area tree enquiries, residents are advised to contact SHDC or local parish council.



### Hazardous or fallen tree or branch

Fallen tree or branch, or trees that are leaning, unstable, diseased or dying

# PARISH TEAMS

## Footpath Warden

### Public Rights of Way (PROW)

Devon County Council (DCC) operates a Public Rights of Way (PROW) Warden Team responsible for inspecting and maintaining public paths, with inspections typically occurring **every three years**.

The team supports local volunteers through the **Parish Paths Partnership (P3)** scheme for minor maintenance, such as vegetation clearance and signposting.

The PROW team inspects the South West Coast Path annually. Every three years, the PROW team inspects public rights of way and maintenance category 12 roads.

Parish Paths Partnership (P3): This scheme encourages local communities to help maintain, improve, and promote public rights of way in their area.

Volunteers (often coordinated by town/parish councils) assist with tasks like clearing vegetation, cutting back overhanging branches, and ensuring paths are accessible.

Reporting Problems: Issues with footpaths, such as broken stiles or obstructed paths, can be reported directly to the Public Rights of Way team.

Small grants: DCC offers **small grants** to parish councils to support the work of the Footpath Warden and volunteers. Invoices must include a **Purchase Order** number for the new dashboard to accept the invoice. Seek advice about this to avoid delays.

Contact: For PROW matters, email [prow@devon.gov.uk](mailto:prow@devon.gov.uk) or call 0345 155 1004.



**Public rights of way**



### Public rights of way

For example, blocked access  
or broken stiles

# ENHANCED ROAD WARDEN SCHEME

## Parish Priority Lists

Parking, speeding down narrow lanes, blocked gullies, buddle-holes and grips, floods ... and potholes are problems common to all parishes and towns. These are all the responsibility of DCC Highways.

### Report It - first

It is vital that parish councils publicise the **DCC Report It portal** on their noticeboards, websites, social media and reports in their parish magazines. This is the primary communication channel for all Highways defect repairs needed.

The number of reports of defects can be very high. The County Councillor and NHO are often emailed directly. Repeated direct messages about the same defect could distort the local relevance of an individual defect. In order to ensure decisions stand up to scrutiny we have invited parish and town councils to be involved.

Salcombe Division is piloting a new approach to prioritising these problems. We are encouraging local residents to bring their concerns to their monthly **parish council** meetings: councillors review all concerns and debate their **relative importance** to the local residents and businesses; this **Parish Priority List** is made available to the **DCC Councillor** and the **Neighbourhood Highways Officer** and a **site meeting** is organised to visit the defects **with parish councillors and clerks**.

This is the foundation of the a partnership between DCC and parish councils. It ensures the NHO is clear about local priorities. It builds understanding within parish councils of the financial constraints that DCC face and alerts them to the defect criteria. It signposts interactive maps of assets, signposts the Report It portal and promotes the **Road Warden** and **Parish Lengthsman** schemes.





**Salcombe Division** consists of 16 parish and town councils with a population of 10,397.

**Salcombe, Thurlestone, South Milton, South Huish, Malborough, West Alvington, Modbury, Ringmore, Kingston, Bigbury, Aveton Gifford, Churchstow, Loddiswell, Buckland-tout-Saints, Halwell & Moreleigh and Woodleigh**

## Parish Priority Map

Once the parish council has agreed the **Parish Priority List**, a **hard copy map** of the Parish Priorities is useful for internal parish council use and to **inform** the subsequent **site meeting** between the NHO, DCC Councillor and parish councillors.

The Road Warden **marks on a map**, the issues agreed by the parish council to be on the Parish Priority List.

The **grid references** are easily obtained by hovering the cursor over **Google Maps** on the location of concern. **What3Words** can also be used and grid references inferred from these if needed.

A parish council **reference code** is allocated to each issue so that the concern, actions and options available can be minuted by the Clerk.

### Site Meeting

The NHO and County Councillor then invite parish councillors to a site meeting to review the Parish Priorities.

The site meeting may happen once per year, following any update of the Parish Priority List.

It is important that the Clerk attends the site meeting to draft the actions agreed on the Parish Priority Report form (overleaf)

### Parish Priority Report Form

The report form (see overleaf) provides a simple system to enable all parties to understand what actions have been agreed by whom and to record follow up actions.

This information needs to be succinct and only in **bullet point** format.

The **RED/AMBER/YELLOW** categories can be updated (with a date) for each priority to record deterioration/improvement.



This is a **dynamic process** of evidence gathering and communication which tracks important information and actions taken to resolve local highways issues.

It could become the foundation of **inter-parish collaboration** between parish Road Wardens and it will enable our **Neighbourhood Highways Officer** to be better **informed** of the local issues.

Information gathered by the Parish Priorities List and Road Wardens will allow the NHO and DCC Cllr to consider supporting an application to any of the pilot projects in the **Enhanced Road Warden Scheme** (p )

## Road Warden Remit

The road network (8,000 miles) in Devon consists of:

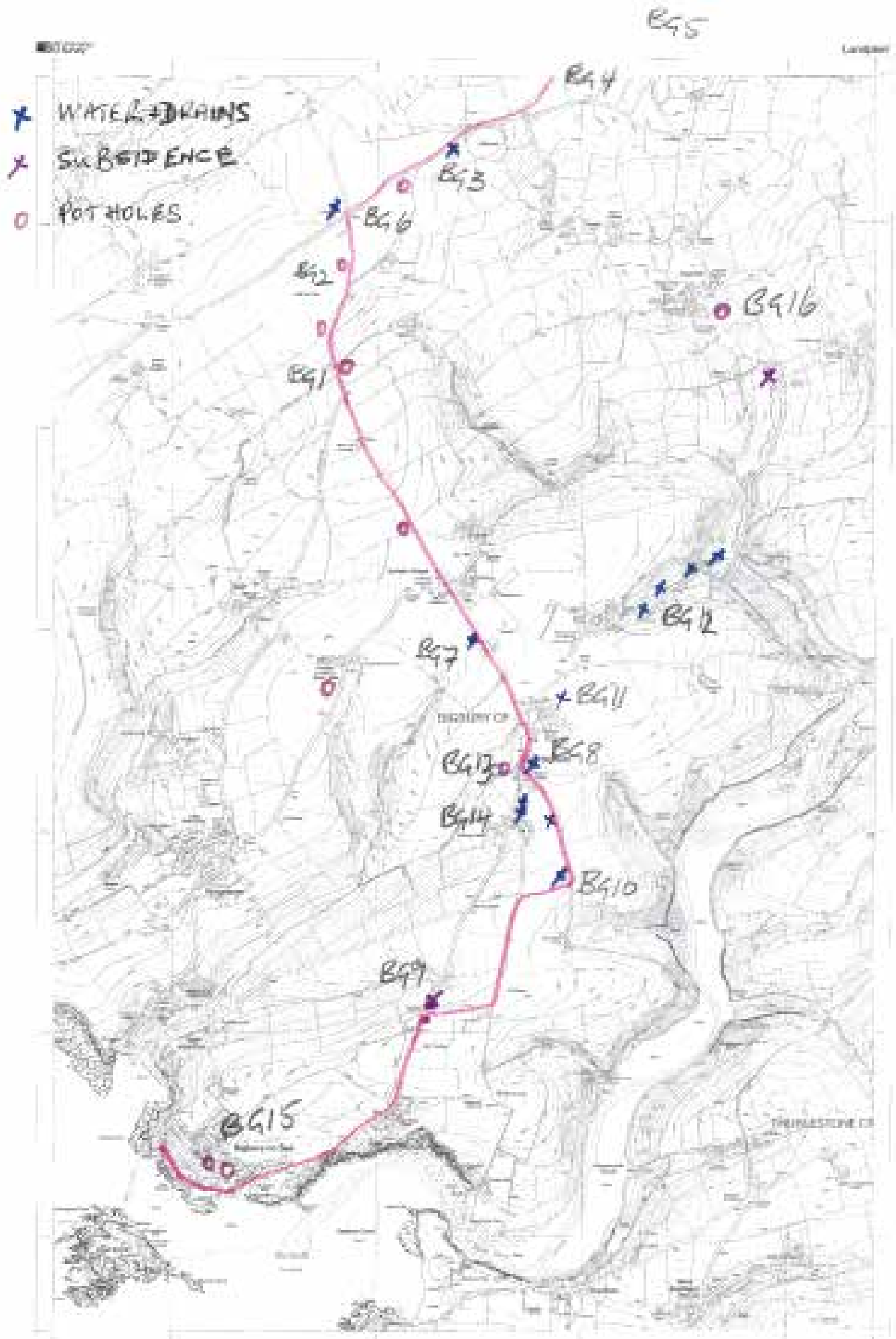
A roads (8%)

B roads (5%)

**C roads** (35%)

**Unclassified** roads (52%)

Road Wardens can work on C roads and Unclassified roads. This is the majority (**87%**) of the road network



- x WATER DRAINS
- x SUBSIDENCE
- o POT HOLES

## BIGBURY PARISH PRIORITY LIST

Neighbourhood Highways Officer (Adam Keay), DCC Cllr Louise Wainwright), Chair BPC Henry Wainwright, Clerk (Ian Bramble)

Priority List Agenda Items : Nov 2025, Dec 2025, Jan 2026

Site Visits: Feb 2026



### PRIORITY B3392

Red.

Amber

Yellow

**Response Time.** This is dependent on the importance of the road and a risk based assessment.

Action Agreed (date) - Follow up action and further issues added in chronological order by Parish Clerk and reported to parish council as a full agenda item as needed.

	Ref	Grid Ref	Description	
	BG1	50.319328, -3.886751	Entrance to Tuffland farm,	
Feb 26: RED	BG2	50.320451, -3.887030	Pot holes in passing places approaching Tufflands Farm from Seven Stones	<b>Feb 26:</b> Report it and add Ref No: The whole basis of getting things done. Anyone can report it and not just parish councillors. <b>Defect.</b> Once a highway problem has been classed as a "defect" DCC contractors will act. e.g. size and shape of pot hole, road flooded for more than 24 hrs, etc. The classification of a defect is given on the DCC website under potholes, flooding, road signs, etc etc. A defect is fixed by DCC's contractor Milestone and this is part of the network response. If a defect is corrected (e.g. pot hole) and the <b>problem reoccurs due to standard work</b> this should be raised under the <b>complaints procedure</b> . All "report it" cases get given a <b>reference number</b> which is the basis of traceability.
Feb 26: AMBER	BG3	50.328243, -3.881183	Road flooding between Cumery and Seven Stones	<b>Feb 26:</b> All drains on the B3392 have an annual inspection. Minor roads every three years. The inspection reports are apparently in the public domain (location to be confirmed).
Feb 26: AMBER	BG4	50.334489, -3.869370	Road flooding approaching Whymstone Cross	
Feb 26: RED	BG5	50.336868, -3.868196	Passing place pot holes between Whymstone and Harraton Cross	<b>Feb 26: Passing places.</b> These are not part of the public highway but this was considered a grey area. The deterioration of the road edge in a lot of passing places is part of this problem. Even though not thought to be a Highways responsibility the HO said keep reporting any issues. Data will accumulate to justify funding allocation. Lists are long. Need to get on the list. Feb 26: Report it and add Ref No:
Feb 26: YELLOW	BG6	50.325928, -3.886022	Seven Stones Cross. Drain regularly blocks. Currently OK, recurring	<b>Feb 26:</b> Report it when it exceeds the 'defect' criteria. Report it and add Ref No:
Feb 26: AMBER	BG7	50.307406, -3.876178	Drain blocks, property liable to flood. Additional easement for water needed.	<b>Feb 26:</b> BG7. Water drainage. Drainage off the highway must be facilitated and is a legal requirement of the neighbouring land owner. Site visited and liaison with landowner initiated on further action. Possible action to widen gap in hedge
Feb 26: AMBER	BG8	50.301469, -3.873029	Road flooding at Bigbury Green, blocked drain, Currently OK, recurring.	<b>Feb 26:</b> BG8. Bigbury Green. <b>NHO</b> to organise a suction and camera inspection of drain.
Feb 26: AMBER	BG9	50.290863, -3.878978	Road flooding approaching Tapfield cross and subsidence on road adjacent to junction	<b>Feb 26: NHO</b> agreed needs rebuilding and reinstall missing bollard and therefore will be added to list.
Feb 26: AMBER	BG10	50.296657, -3.869649	Road flooding on corner, reported.	

		<b>OTHER ROADS</b>		<b>Lengthmen.</b> Each parish gets approximately 1.5 days per year of the DCC funded lengthsmen.
Feb 26: RED	BG11	50.304532, -3.870964	Drain out side church gate. Limited drain capacity, Flooding of church	<b>Feb 26:</b> BG11. Road outside church gate. <b>NHO</b> to request drain to be sucked out as an initial step before determining a plan for a longer term solution.
Feb 26: RED	BG12	50.308352, -3.865315	Blocked culvert in Easton, continuous water on road surface	<b>Feb 26:</b> BG12. <b>NHO</b> to follow up maintenance.
Feb 26: YELLOW	BG13	50.301498, -3.873555	Potholes in lane	<b>Feb 26:</b> Some recently fixed. Continue to monitor.
Feb 26: TEELLOW	BG14	50.299236, -3.873920	Many block drains above on Town Hill above Cott lane junction.	<b>Feb 26:</b> BG14. Blocked drains on Town Hill. Though a defect this would have low priority as not causing much risk. Low priority.
Feb 26: RED	BG15	50.283584, -3.893416	Ringmore drive potholes	<b>Feb 26:</b> Responsibility of buidling contractors but only if photographic evidence before and after their contract. For discussion with SHDC as a possible condition for planning applocation approvals going forward.
Feb 26: RED	BG16	50.322595, -3.861393	Between Challons Combe and Combe. Major potholes and flooding	<b>Feb 26:</b> BG16. Feb 26: Report it and add Ref No:
Feb 26: RED			Challons Combe. Roadside collapse near entrance to Challons Combe farm following recent storms.	<b>Feb 26:</b> NHO to raise this matter with Highways
				<b>Feb 26:</b> Signs. All mandatory signs are the responsibility of DCC highways. These are red or blue signs and they should be reported and fixed as part of the network response. The finger arms signs are not mandatory signs and their repair by Highways is discretionary. Feb 26: Report it and add Ref No:
Feb 26: YELLOW	BGS 1	50.303058, -3.872503	Pond Green sign Damaged	<b>Feb 26:</b> Report it and add Ref No:
Feb 26: YELLOW	BGS 2	50.282907, -3.890785	Sedgewell slipway - overgrown	<b>Feb 26:</b> Report it and add Ref No:
Feb 26: YELLOW	BGS 3	50.309321, -3.876258	Playchildren sign coming into St Ann's Chapel from Oyster Shack damaged.	<b>Feb 26:</b> All mandatory signs that are damaged will be fixed by Highways. Use the Report it page. Highways do not always replace 'finger post signs' but can sometimes do this at their discretion.
Feb 26: YELLOW	BGS 4	50.306526, -3.870207	Sign to Easton from Stakes Hill road missing	<b>Feb 26:</b> Parish Council to decide.
Feb 26: YELLOW	BGS 5	50.309616, -3.878189	New sign to play park at St-Ann's Chapel.	<b>Feb 26:</b> Highways do not promote a plethora of signs that are not mandatory signs.
Feb 26: YELLOW	BGS 6	50.312035, -3.880882	New sign at Holywell Farm entrance asking approaching vehicles to wait	<b>Feb 26:</b> Highways do not promote a plethora of signs that are not mandatory signs.
Feb 26: YELLOW			Numerous faded white and yellow road signs	<b>Feb 26:</b> Refer to defect definition (e.g. level of fading) on the report it website and report if meets criteria. Parish lingings are renewed on a 10-year rota. Feb 26: Report it and add Ref No:



### Pothole

Large 40 mm vertical-edge hole that is also greater than 300 mm wide



### Parking

Request enforcement in residents' parking and on-street parking zones



### Overgrown vegetation

Pedestrians forced into road, cars over central line, reduced visibility



### Public rights of way

For example, blocked access or broken stiles



### Hazardous or fallen tree or branch

Fallen tree or branch, or trees that are leaning, unstable, diseased or dying



### Debris or obstruction

Thick mud, soil, stones, embankment slips



### Defective road markings or signs

White and yellow, stop or give way lines or warning signs



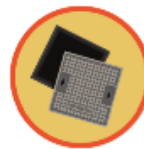
### Trip hazard

Hole or significant difference in level on pavement or cycleway



### Traffic lights

Damage or fault to traffic lights or signals or school crossing patrol light



### Broken inspection cover

Broken, missing or rocking inspection cover



### Grit bin

Empty bin, damaged bin or a bin with contents that are unuseable



### Bridges and retaining walls

Structural damage or significant obstructions restricting water flow



### Fences and barriers

Damaged or missing roadside fences or barriers



### Street lights, lit signs, lit bollards

Faulty street light, zebra crossing, bollard, lit sign



### Flooding and blocked drains

Standing water, blocked drain, flooded property, impassable road



### Ice

Ice or snow on the road



**DCC  
Highways  
Report it**



Use the **Report it Portal** correctly  
It is **ONLY for Defect potholes** to avoid  
wasting time and money.

**Report Non-Defect potholes** to your  
Parish **Road Warden** in the **public  
forum** of the monthly parish council  
meeting. The Road Wardens in Salcombe  
Division are part of a pilot scheme able  
to report Non-Defect potholes on a  
dedicated online portal.

Continue to use the DCC Report It portal  
for 'defect' potholes because it is the first  
line of communication with the Highways  
Response Team (to fix defect potholes)  
Drop a **location pin at the correct site**  
to identify where the pothole is.

Add your name to the referenced pothole  
if it has already been reported. You will  
be kept informed. Don't report it again if  
it has already been reported because this  
will create a new reference number and  
confuse the process.

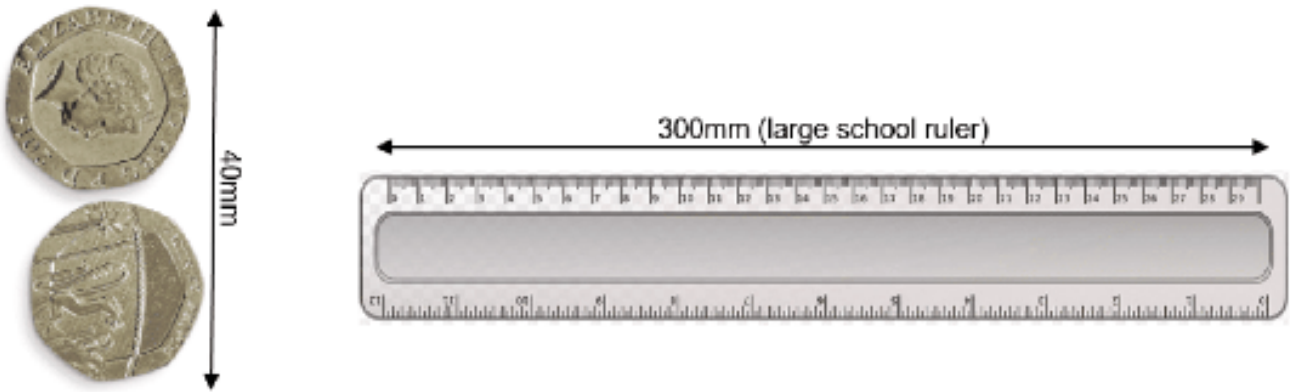
If a pothole repair washes out after heavy  
rain - please inform your Road Warden  
who will mobilise action to get water off  
the road. Act quickly to  
Report it again (refer to previous ref no).



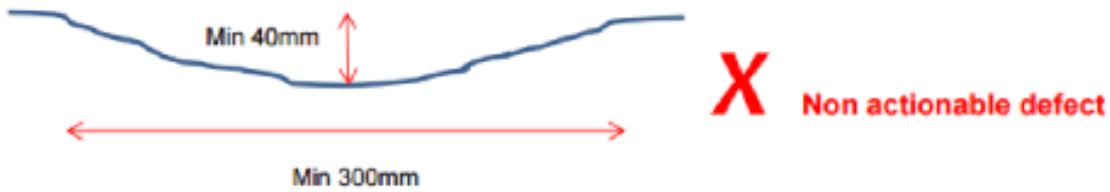
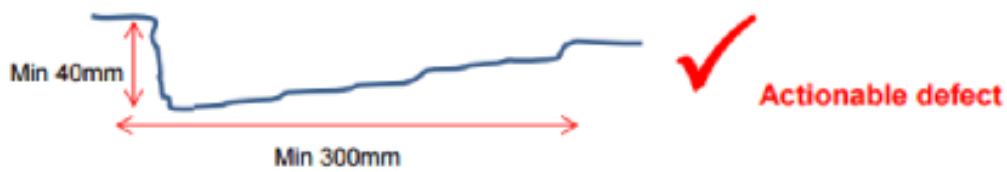
*“ I keep reporting it but  
nothing has been done”*

*“I Report it, and  
someone from highways  
comes and fixes the  
wrong pothole”*

# Definition of a DEFECT Pothole



Please see the images below which illustrate a pothole with a vertical edge:



## Pothole

Large 40 mm vertical-edge hole that is also greater than 300 mm wide



Definition of a Defect pothole

# Report It

Clerks, councillors and members of the public can report a wide range of defects in the Highways which need repair. Instructions explain what criteria the problem has to meet to be classified as a **'Defect'** which will allow DCC to prioritise the repair.

All reports are **triaged** online and a **DCC Inspector** will make a site visit to confirm that it is a 'Defect' so that a **job card** can be issued to the correct team and the timetable agreed based on a risk assessment.

**Inspection costs money** and takes time. Please do not report a pothole that does not meet the strict Defect criteria, Instead, bring Non-Defect potholes to the attention of your Road Warden at your Parish Council meeting. If they are part of the Enhanced Road Warden Scheme, they will be able to use a dedicated **Road Warden Portal to report Non-Defect potholes** and also take some local action if appropriate.



*"I Report a lot of very bad potholes and they tell me they are not a defect so they will not fix it - yet my car is being damaged"*

*"The pothole may not be a 'defect' now, but it soon will be - so it makes sense to report it and fix it now to save money"*

If defects present an **imminent danger** to people or property, they should be reported immediately **0345 155 1015**.

All Reports will receive an automated reply with a **reference number**, which should be used in all correspondence about the same incidence.

## POTHOLE REPORTS

If the report is about a pothole, there is an **interactive map** to show whether this pothole has already been reported. You are asked not to report it again if it has already been reported - but you can **add your name** to the same Report It submission.

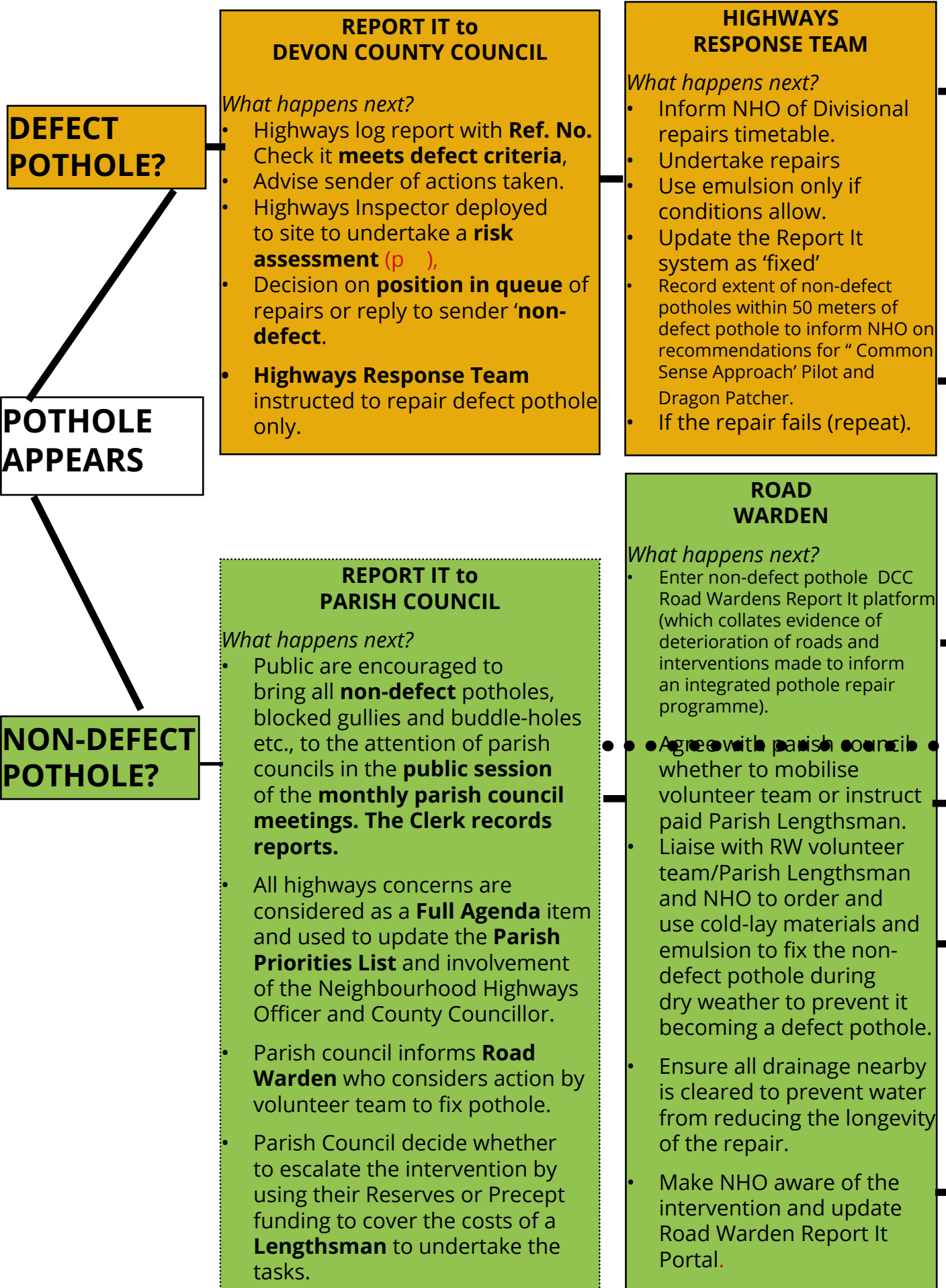
A claim for damages to vehicles after hitting a pothole can only be accepted IF the pothole has already been 'Reported', is assessed as a safety defect and has not been repaired in accordance with the Highway Safety Policy.

If the Pothole is fixed and then becomes a defect again - **report it again**. This will allow the DCC Officers to identify any Highways Teams which may not be providing a quality service. When it is reported again, as a poor repair, the Report is escalated to a senior officer who will investigate the issue.



DCC is piloting a parallel Report - It portal dedicated to Road Wardens in the Enhanced Road Warden Scheme. It allows RWs to add locations of 'non-defect' potholes. DCC Response Teams will also add observations of non-defect potholes within 50 meters of the Defect Pothole which they were sent to repair.

This information will be used to **identify priority locations** for the **'Common Sense Approach'** pilots - where the Dragon Patcher Teams will also repair 'non-defect' potholes within 50 meters of the defect pothole.



# HIGHWAYS TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT TEAM

## COMMON SENSE APPROACH (Pilot)

HTMT review evidence of defect pothole + non-defects from Enhanced Road Warden Reporting and Report It Portal + NHO, Highways Response Team, Scanner, to identify priority roads for Common Sense Approach strategy.

Priority given to Parish Councils with a Road Warden and a Policy supporting Parish Highway Priority Lists, Site Meetings with NHO and DCC Cllr and Report Forms.

## NEIGHBOURHOOD HIGHWAYS OFFICER

Liaise with DCC Cllr, Parish Council local priorities, Parish Road Warden to consider **Enhanced Road Warden Scheme** options and review **Local Asset Capital Programme**  
Negotiate with Highways Traffic Management Team on deployment of Enhanced Road Warden Scheme

# ENHANCED ROAD WARDEN SCHEME

## CO-FUNDED ASSET MANAGEMENT (Pilot)

Parish Councils can decide to use financial options available to them to co-fund agreed road repairs

## PARISH COUNCIL FINANCIAL OPTIONS

DCC Highways Maintenance Community Enhancement Fund

Parish Precept

Inter-Parish Cooperation

Public Works Loan Board

## DRAGON PATCHER TEAM

Deployed based on RAG Assessment by NHO, Divisional Priorities and knowledge of on-going parish council works programmes.

## DCC COUNCILLOR

Liaise with NHO, parish council and DCC.

## POTHOLE NINJAS

Volunteer assistants to Parish Road Warden, undertake agreed works under supervision of Road warden or Paid Parish Lengthsman

## PAID

## PARISH LENGTHSMAN

*What happens next?*

- Contract to undertake agreed works
- Liaise with Road Warden on timetable and any cooperation needed from Road Warden Volunteers.

## COMMUNITY PROTOCOL

Parish Councils can queue jump to have road markings etc done, if they agree to pay for this themselves - with approval of NHO.

# EXCEPTIONAL LEVELS of POTHOLE REPORTS

During exceptionally wet winters, when named storms impact Devon, DCC teams are under immense pressure. In December/January 25/26, Devon received 200% the average annual rainfall for that period.

To keep the network safe, during unprecedented weather DCC significantly increases resources, including:

- Additional repair crews deployed across the county
- Extra inspectors carrying out assessments
- Out of hours working, wherever possible, to keep up with demand

Despite these measures the volume of Defects is unprecedented. This is placing extreme pressure on our teams.

## How you can help

Public reporting plays a vital role in helping us identify issues between our scheduled inspections. However, we want to be transparent:

Only around **one third of reports we receive turn out to be actionable safety defects** under our Highway Safety Policy. A significant number of reports are **duplicates** of issues already logged, which **slows down** our ability to respond efficiently.

What to do before submitting a new report

To help us prioritise and reach the most urgent issues sooner, please:

**Search for the pothole first** to see if it's already been reported.

If it has, **add your name** to the existing report, do not create a duplicate. You'll still receive updates, and it helps us manage resources more effectively.

**Each report** we receive is **assessed on site** by a trained highway safety inspector. DCC

**does not ignore any reports** receive. However, DCC does have to prioritise its funding as we cannot afford to fix all of the problems that are reported to us.

We prioritise repairing potholes, on roads, that have a 40 mm (4 cm) vertical edge and are 300 mm (30 cm) wide as these are the biggest risk to highway users.

All reports should be **assessed on site** within **seven calendar days**. Following the assessment, repairs will be carried out by the end of the **next working day, seven or 28 calendar days** (depending on the outcome of the assessment) if confirmed as a priority pothole.

## EMERGENCY REPORTS

If you are reporting an emergency that is very likely to present an imminent threat to life or serious injury or serious property damage please instead call us on 0345 155 1004



### **Water on the road - makes new potholes and expands existing potholes.**

Road Wardens can help by **liaising with local landowners** and **volunteers** to ensure the gullies, buddle-holes and grips are flowing freely and taking water off the road.

When the Highways Response Team for emergency pothole repairs arrive and there is **no water on the road** - they can use the emulsion to make a **longer lasting pothole repair**.

# QUALITY CONTROL

## How does DCC make sure potholes are repaired adequately?

Every operative has been provided with extensive training to ensure they are skilled and equipped to deliver effective repairs. In addition, the operatives are formally briefed about DCC's specification for pothole repairs.

Repair quality is maintained through **regular audits**, where officers will **randomly inspect** completed potholes **throughout the year**. If repairs don't meet agreed standards, they are re-done by the DCC contractor at no extra cost.

DCC also carefully monitors trends and inform our contractors when further investigation is required. **Performance Improvement Teams (PITs)** bring DCC and MGroup together to address any concerns formally.

Additionally, **DCC follows up** on reports of **poor-quality repairs** from Road Wardens, the public, Councillors and other officers.

### Premature Failure of Repairs

When pothole repairs are carried out during poor weather conditions (e.g. winter), the durability of the fix usually suffers.

Such repairs are designed to keep the road safe by **removing an immediate hazard** rather than fixing the underlying root cause.

Here is what can lead to the temporary failure of a pothole repair:

**Wet/Cold Conditions:** Repairs carried out during cold or wet weather struggle to adhere, leading to poor-quality fixes that often need to be repeated.

## Why Forced Repairs Fail Faster

**Underlying Structural Issues:** If the surrounding road structure is already failing, merely patching the hole without structural repairs will not last, resulting in rapid deterioration. However, the repair needs to be carried out to keep the road safe to the travelling public.



### ROAD WARDENS QUALITY CONTROL

If the **Road Warden** considers there are quality issues with any repairs, they should discuss this with their **Neighbourhood Highways Officer**, with details of the location and photographs.

# FINANCE

A legacy of at least 15 years of underfunding of the Highways budget has left Devon County Council no option other than to focus on keeping our main roads flowing and our minor roads as safe as possible (see Highways Infrastructure Asset Management Plan (p 11) and Highways Policy (p 12)).

The reduced funding available for Highways is having a significant impact on the maintenance and condition of minor roads. The asset management approach will therefore focus the funding decisions towards main roads to hold these critically important community connections in a steady condition.

The inevitable decline of the minor network will continue to see safety critical intervention to meet the statutory duty. In order to reduce the growth of safety-related defects, some funding will be directed to non-critical service defects, where early action can be justified to protect the asset and assist in managing our safety-critical resource.

This includes year-round operation of four Dragon Patch teams and a county-wide resource to address minor patching defects.

Where funding allows, DCC may also look to undertake preventive work on roads that are in reasonable condition and serve a strategic function to communities. This will extend the life of these roads for a lower cost, allowing DCC to maximize the amount of work that can be undertaken.

A **new framework contract** has been developed to provide **road recycling repair options** and the service will be undertaking some testing of value and quality of this innovative approach.

In addition, the more conventional current patching approach is being reviewed to establish whether a more cost-effective, fit for purpose, specification can help stretch the limited funding further on minor roads (see New Approaches (p39))

DCC will continue to engage with Parish and Town Councils and communities to identify funding or volunteer resources to address local needs that are not a priority to be delivered in the Highways annual programme.

## ENHANCED ROAD WARDEN SCHEME

This will be piloted in Salcombe Division to evaluate the commitment of parish councils to leverage all available funding options to enable them to partner with DCC to improve the state of our roads.



*“There is no evidence that Highways are using the recent £80 million extra funding for ‘potholes’ - roads are getting worse”*



The additional £80 million from HM Government will contribute to the £380 million backlog of the road repair programme.

Devon County Council agreed (24 Feb 2026) to allocate and additional **£14 million** to the Highways budget.

**Salcombe Division** will be well-placed to benefit from this funding because it is the first Division in Devon to pilot several initiatives:

- **Parish Priority List**
- **Parish Priority Mapping**
- **Parish Priority Report Forms**
- **Enhanced Road Warden Scheme**
- **Precept-funded Lengthsmen**

### How the Odds Stack Up

- Devon has the largest road network with 8,000 miles of roads.
- 77% of the network are minor roads serving rural communities, which are more expensive to inspect, maintain and repair from a centralised maintenance team.
- In 2025, HM Government withdrew the annual £10 million top up which took the enhanced cost of ‘rurality’ into account.
- Backlog road repairs of £400 million
- Spend £102 million per year just to slow down deterioration.
- Maintenance backlog is reported to be increasing by at least £15 million per year.
- Significant seasonal traffic, contributes to faster deterioration of minor roads
- Climate change and increased winter rainfall hastens deterioration.

# ESTIMATED COST of TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT SCHEMES



*“ We had a road scheme approved by our Neighbourhood Highways Officer but nothing has been done”*

## Zebra Crossings

Based on recent Devon County Council committee reports, the estimated cost of installing a new zebra crossing typically ranges from approximately £50,000 to over £140,000, depending on site-specific requirements like utility works, lighting, and traffic management.

Specific proposals have been estimated at £129,170 (Appledore), £140,000 (Sidmouth), and £89,727 (Exminster).

**Factors affecting price:** Night working to minimize disruption, utility connections, drainage improvements, and site-specific safety requirements.

These figures generally include design, construction, and safety audits, often funded through the Local Transport Plan or specific safety scheme budgets.



The **Community Protocol** provides an opportunity for parish councils to use their precept to move up the waiting list for Traffic Management Schemes - if this a real priority for local communities.

If this is not an option, communities can consider funding the **“Twenty is Plenty”** option (p ) although this is **not enforceable by law.**

## Speed Limit changes

Implementing a new 20mph speed limit in Devon typically costs around £150,000 for a set of several communities, as evidenced by a 2023/2024 funding tranche.

Specific project costs vary based on scope; for example, a 2021 traffic calming scheme in Kingskerswell was estimated at £102,978, while a 2008 Alphington project was estimated at £36,000.

**Funding & Scale:** Recent funding tranches have allowed roughly 6 communities to benefit from a £150,000 allocation.

**High Demand:** Over 150 submissions were once put forward, requiring an estimated £3.75 million, showing high demand for new limits.

**Costs Drivers:** Costs include Traffic Regulation Orders (TROs), new signage, and potentially Vehicle Actuated Signs (VASs).

**Context:** Wide-area 20mph limits are noted to generally cost about £5-£10 per head, with larger areas often being more cost-effective.

# FINANCE

## Parish precepts

Funds raised by parish precept can be used to pay for a **Parish Lengthsman**.

A parish precept is a local tax levied by parish or town councils in England to fund their operations, which is collected from residents as a specific component of the Council Tax bill.

It represents the only direct source of tax revenue for parish councils, allowing them to maintain local amenities like parks, village halls, play areas, and street lighting.

### How Parish Precepts Are Set

Parish councils follow a structured process to determine their precept, usually concluded by January for the upcoming financial year (starting 1st April):

**Budget Assessment:** The parish council prepares a budget detailing expected income (grants, fees) and anticipated expenditure for the next financial year.

**Calculating the Shortfall:** The precept amount is the difference between the planned expenditure and the estimated income (e.g. if a council plans to spend £20,000 but expects to earn £5,000 from hall rentals, the precept is £15,000).

**Tax Base Calculation:** The council uses the 'tax base'—the number of properties in the parish liable to pay Council Tax, calculated as '**Band D equivalents**' by the principal authority (SHDC).

**Setting the Rate:** The total precept required is divided by the tax base to determine the amount each Band D property will contribute. Approval: The final budget and precept amount must be approved by the full parish council.

**Notification:** The approved precept is formally submitted to **South Hams District Council**, which is the billing authority responsible for collecting the tax.

The precept is not paid directly to the parish council. It is added to the overall Council Tax bill collected by SHDC.

SHDC collect this tax and pay the total agreed precept to the parish council in two six-monthly installments (usually April and September).

Unlike district and county councils, there is currently **no legal cap on the amount by which parish councils can increase their precept**.

Even if a parish council keeps its precept request the same as the previous year, the amount on a resident's bill might change due to a change in the number of houses (tax base) in the parish, such as new builds increasing the base or, conversely, a rise in council tax discounts reducing it.

Parish councils do not receive direct funding from central government, making the precept their primary source of income.

# Highways Maintenance Community Enhancement Fund

Parish and town councils can apply for additional funding from the DCC Highways Maintenance Community Enhancement Fund. Projects delivered through the **Road Warden** scheme will be particularly supported, especially those that will demonstrate ongoing sustainability and the sharing of equipment.

Projects and works:

- Pothole repairs (when they do not meet DCC intervention criteria)
- Clearing weeds
- Cleaning signs
- **Cleaning drainage** (gully grating)
- Repairing finger posts and other public realm works
- Cutting hedges

Materials and activities:

- Personal protection equipment (PPE)
- Materials
- Tools
- **Road closures**
- **Repeat funding** for revisiting a project to **continue maintenance**
- Training (requests that are not covered through our standard training offer)

The above lists are not exhaustive, and all initial applications will be reviewed on an individual basis. The board considers the type of work that will be undertaken, how the money will be spent, and the overall benefit to the community.



Highways Maintenance Community  
Enhancement Fund

## General Powers of Competence (GPA)

Amongst other things, GPA allows a parish or town council to invest in a locally relevant project, which could include in relation to road maintenance. To be eligible, two thirds of its councillors must be 'elected' and the Clerk must be 'qualified'.



General Powers of Competence

## The General Power of Competence

Empowering councils to make a difference



## The Public Works Loan Board (PWLB)

PWLB funds capital projects for UK local authorities, including infrastructure, housing, regeneration, and service improvements. Common examples include building schools, **maintaining roads**, developing parks, purchasing derelict buildings for conversion, and supporting community-led projects like local shops or pubs.

PWLB loans are intended for projects that provide service delivery or regeneration, rather than investing solely for financial yield. They are commonly used by town, parish and county councils.



Public Loans Board

## PILOT SCHEMES



### New Approaches

Devon County Council cabinet member for Highways, **Cllr Dan Thomas**, says,

“I welcome the opportunity this Handbook presents, to bring parish and town councils into a more productive partnership with DCC to make our meagre budgets go further to improve our minor roads serving rural communities.

The battle is on to save our road network from further deterioration. Like highways across the country, our network is in a poor state. We are now struggling to slow down the deterioration of our road network which is the largest in the country. There is a **backlog of £400 million in road repairs** and this is increasing by at least £15 million per year.

Lack of funding is creating unacceptably **long waiting lists** for approved highways schemes for 20 mph zones and zebra crossings which communities need.

#### Community Protocol

As a first step, we have developed the **Community Protocol** programme. **Salcombe Division** is well placed to explore this initiative because it has already

submitted its first **Parish Priority Lists** to their NHO and County Councillor.

Parishes with **Reserves** or the commitment to use **Precept** funding, can ‘**queue jump**’ the long waiting lists for works funded by DCC (20 mph zones etc.) and get community needs met more quickly by paying for these themselves.

#### Common Sense Approach

DCC recognises that it must urgently review our road maintenance strategy which, until recently, only allows **defect potholes** to be repaired, ignoring nearby potholes that do not meet that criteria.

DCC has four **‘Dragon Patchers’** which can work in lanes wider than 3 meters and emit a flame to help bond repair material to the road. This enables repair work to cover ‘patches’ of crumbling road surface rather than filling ‘potholes’ allowing intervention on some roads before “safety defects” can form.

I anticipate that this approach will stand up to financial scrutiny and I am hopeful that this will enable DCC Highways to adopt this approach more widely when the current term contract with MGroup expires in March 2029.

The first pilots (in 2 Divisions autumn 2025) have been completed and allowed Highways

to revise the trials protocol and undertake the second round of pilots (in 7 Divisions spring 2026).

### Enhanced Road Warden Scheme

This pilot scheme will be offered to Divisions where the Devon County Councillor and Neighbourhood Highways Officers have worked with parish councils to develop **Parish Priorities Lists** and most parishes have a certified **Road Warden**.

**Priority** will be given to Divisions with an Enhanced Road Warden Scheme to **access additional funding** from:

- **Co-Funded Asset Maintenance Scheme**
- **Dragon Patcher Team**
- **Community Protocol**
- **Common Sense Approach Team**

### Risk Assessed Priorities for Funding

Road Wardens in the Enhanced Road Warden Scheme will be invited to **report 'Non-Defect Potholes'** into a dedicated area of the Report It portal (not in the public domain). This will enable the roads to be prioritised for the Common Sense Approach scheme and the Co-Funded Asset Management Scheme.

### Innovative Materials

Repairs are now being carried out using **Elastomac**, a state-of-the-art road repair material. Elastomac is durable and can be effective in challenging weather conditions to provide a watertight, crack-resistant, and long-lasting repair. It's also more environmentally friendly as it's made from 80% recycled material and reduces waste as it doesn't require defective road surface to be cut out and disposed of.

### Listening

Ten months into this session of Devon County Council, the one thing that unites all Councillors - is the need to rethink our Highways programme.

Whilst we continue to debate the strategic issue of whether Highways should be brought back in-house and we argue with HM Government to restore our annual grant - parish partnerships are already beginning to make a difference.

Of our 426 parishes in Devon, 135 have a **Road Warden** and 330 have a **Parish Snow Warden**. Some parish councils in Salcombe Division are also funding a Parish Lengthsman from their Precepts.

When all Road Wardens in Salcombe Division have got together, I would value the opportunity to hear from these dedicated practitioners about how DCC could improve cost-effective service delivery at the local level. I recognise and value their contributions at this critical time.

**Cllr Dan Thomas**

DCC Cabinet Member for Highways



*“Highways come along and fix one pothole that is considered a ‘defect’ and ignores lots of others nearby that will soon be ‘defects’....this is a waste of taxpayers money”*



The **Common Sense Approach pilot** will produce the evidence needed to review the current Term Maintenance Contract.

## MANAGING WATER

Keeping the water off the road is key to slowing down the deterioration of the road surface. Climate change is increasing the incidence of winter storms and rainfall deluge.

Our drainage network aims to divert **normal rainfall** off our highways and into our river system via a series of **gullies** (drains in the roads), **buddles** (gaps in hedges from the road into neighbouring fields) and **grips** (trenches at an angle to the road which directs water into the verge).

### Maintenance of drainage network

All of these assets used to be cleared manually by local **DCC Parish Lengthsmen** using a **shovel**. Regular low level maintenance kept the drainage system in preparedness for winter rains.

The frequency of maintenance visits by a DCC Parish Lengthsman is now reduced to about **two days per year per parish**. This is a result of the 'centralisation' of Highways services (2011) in response to Austerity measures demanded of County Councils by HM Government. As a consequence of infrequent maintenance visits, it may also now require more expensive intervention using a '**gully sucker**' to unblock the gully.

Some parish councils are now funding their own **Parish Lengthsman** from the **parish precept** and some are sharing the cost with neighbouring parishes.

### Gullies

Devon has approximately 180,000 gullies. Our drainage features are cleaned as part of a cyclic programme.

A DCC **interactive map** shows when a drain was last inspected and how often a specific drain is cleaned as part of a cyclical programme - either **once a year or once every three years**.

If flooding of properties occurs, it may be possible for the Neighbourhood Highways Officer to apply to have the frequency of the gully clearing to be enhanced.



Gully (above )

### Buddle-holes

Gaps in the hedges along roadsides have been made, where standing water is anticipated collect. These 'buddle-holes' take water off the road and allow it to drain into the fields on the other side.

It is **DCC's responsibility** to keep the **drain clear from the road to the hedge**. It is the **landowners legal responsibility to keep the drain clear on the landward side** of the buddle-hole. DCC Highways do not enter private land to assist with this, but have powers to do so if required.

### Grips

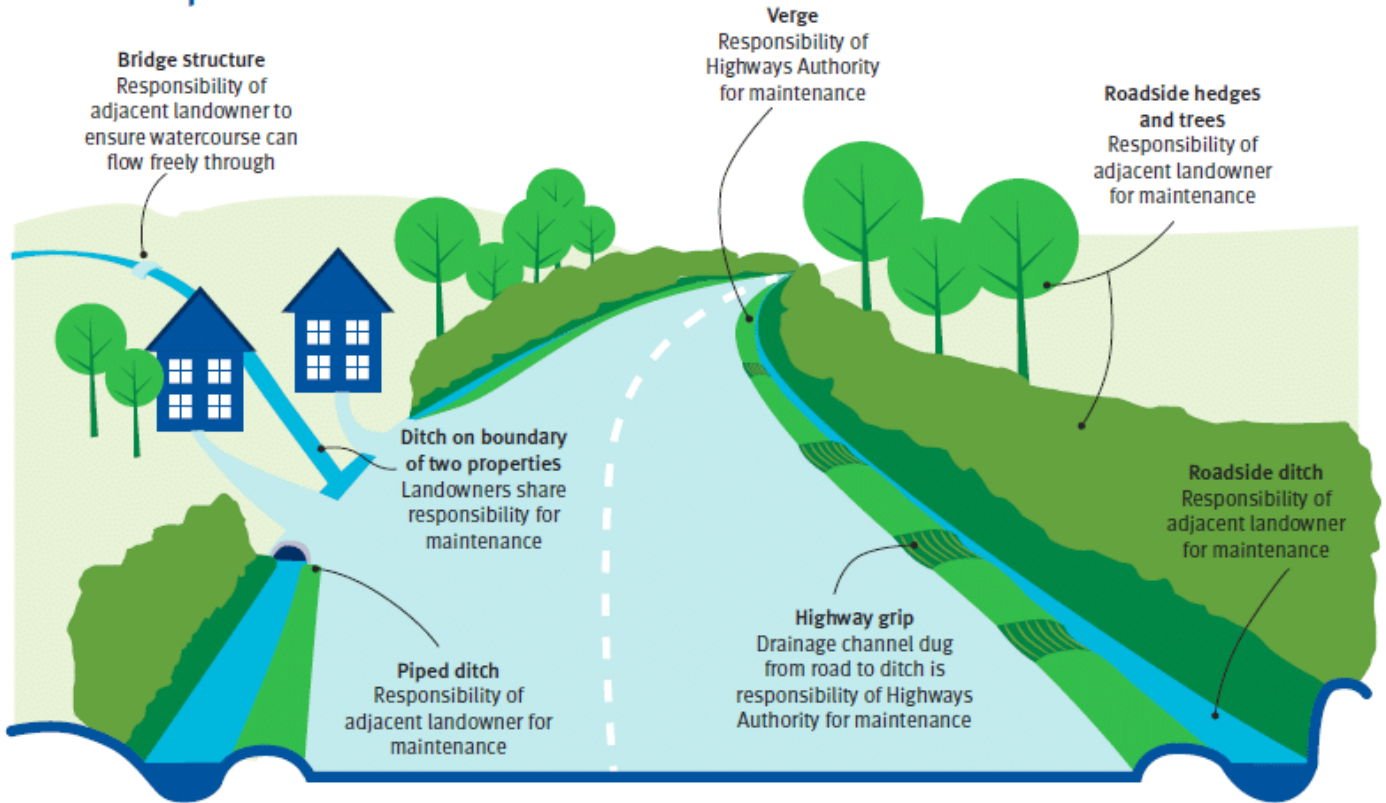
Grips usually take water from a sloping road onto a verge. They are cleared on a DCC rota system and are often cleared by Parish Lengthsmen or Road Wardens with a shovel.



DCC Gully Maintenance Records Map

# MANAGING WATER

## Who is responsible for what?



Keeping the water off the road is key to slowing down the deterioration of the road surface. Climate change is increasing the incidence of winter storms and rainfall deluge.

Our drainage network aims to divert **normal rainfall** off our highways and into our river system via a series of **gullies** (drains in the roads), **buddle-holes** (gaps in hedges from the road into neighbouring fields) and **grips** (trenches at an angle to the road which directs water into the verge).

### Action threshold

DCC will take action to clear a gulley outside the normal programme where highway users can reasonably travel at 40 mph or above, to minimise the risk of aquaplaning.

They will do this **IF: 24 hours after the rain has stopped**, there is standing water where a

If it's an emergency and there is danger to life as a result of flooding call **999**.

speed limit of **40 mph or above** is in force.

DCC will attempt to clear the water **IF**, 24 hours after the rain has stopped: the road is **impassable** and the water is forcing vehicles, cyclists or pedestrians away from the nearside of the road by **more than one meter** and vehicles have to **cross the centreline** marking.

If unable to clear the water, DCC will use a **flood sign** or **guard** the area or **close the road** to make the location safe and then investigate a permanent solution.

Consultation will be required with adjacent landowner or occupier where appropriate.

Please note that standing or running water will not be investigated during prolonged heavy rain.

If a **river is flooding** please contact the Environment Agency on **0345 988 1188**.



## Sustainable Urban Drainage

When rain falls on concrete, tarmac, and paving there is inevitable 'run-off' and a surge of surface water flows straight into drains. This can overwhelm combined sewer networks and trigger flooding.

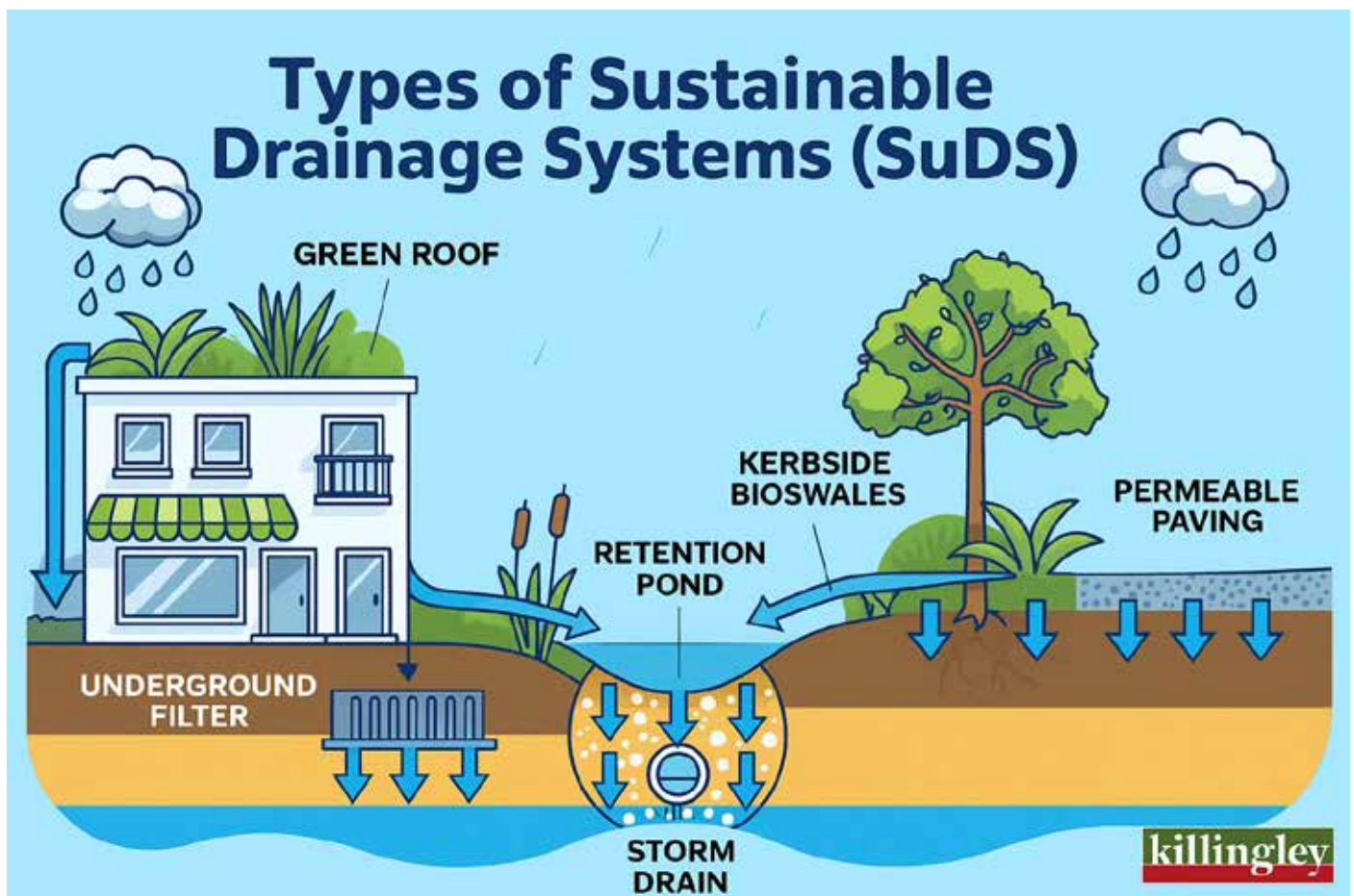
The surge of rainfall during storms, will overwhelm the drainage systems even if the gullies are clear. Flood prevention measures in flood risk zones are needed.

SuDS solve these problems by introducing natural and engineered solutions that manage water in a safer, cleaner way.

**Grass covered soil surfaces** enable more rainfall to be absorbed by the land and local **soak away zones** can capture this. **Water permeable driveway materials** and **gravel paths** will also reduce run-off. Appropriate drainage networks are needed to capture rainfall from **decked outdoor amenity areas**. **Rainfall from roofs** can be an important source of run-off in urban areas.



National Standards for SuDS



## Floods

If flooding of properties occurs, it may be possible for the Neighbourhood Highways Officer to apply to have the frequency of the gully clearing to be enhanced.

### Flooding and standing water

When rainfall is exceptional, particularly when it is a named storm, even a clear gully will be unable to accept the vast volumes of water that arise suddenly and there is a risk of flooding.

Properties in high risk areas with experience of flooding, should sign up for **Flood Risk Alerts** and take necessary precautions (**sandbags** and **flood barriers** at the door).

### Property Flood Resilience Funding Scheme

Devon County Council is supported by DEFRA to help individual property owners be better equipped with the tools and basic defence measures they need to be able to deal with flooding. Funding is limited and prioritised according to the degree of risk to properties.

Homeowners to apply for up to **£5,000** to carry out a **property survey** identifying the required **resilience measures** and to purchase the recommended measures. Any additional budget requirements will be at the expense of the property owner unless specified otherwise.

South Hams District Council does not provide **sandbags** for flood protection. Property owners will need to purchase their own sandbags if required, from **local builders merchants** and obtain supplies well in advance.

## FLOOD CONTACTS

Office hours are Monday to Friday 8.30 am to 5 pm. For emergencies outside of these hours call 01392 383329.

For any flooding on major trunk roads (the M5, A30, A38, A35 and A303) contact National Highways on 0300 123 5000 (24 hours service) or online at National Highways Report a Problem Page.

To report flooding from sewers and water pipes contact South West Water (SWW) on 0344 346 2020 (24 hours service) or at South West Water's report a problem page.

For advice and enquiries about flood warnings contact the Environment Agency's Floodline on 0345 988 1188 (24 hours service).

The Environment Agency incident hotline can be called on 0800 80 70 60.

For general queries about main river or flooding from the sea contact the Environment Agency on 03708 506506 or 0345 9881188 or visit [www.gov.uk/environment-agency](http://www.gov.uk/environment-agency).



Three consecutive Named Storms in the winter of 2025/26 have had a devastating effect on our communities and the state of our roads. Nowhere has it been more traumatically felt than at Torr Cross where the road along the seafront was destroyed in places, threatening Slapton Ley. Homes were severely damaged.



Persistent rain throughout the winter (2025/26) has created water-logged soils, no longer able to absorb the falling rain. Run-off caused widespread flooding in Devon, damaged homesteads and businesses and made some roads impassable. It has accelerated the deterioration of our roads as emergency pothole repairs have reached epidemic proportions

# A Flood Ready House

Examples of flood resistance products, flood recoverable measures and a room prepared for a flood



- |   |  |   |   |   |   |
|---|--|---|---|---|---|
| 1 Grass and plants rather than paved areas  | 8 Sump/pump below floor level inside garage to remove water  | 15 White goods on raised plinths in utility area  | 22 Permeable paving surface on pathway                            | 29 Plastic, solid wood or tiled skirting boards                   | 36 Flood barriers to better protect patio doors and back doors and allow escape route |
| 2 Rain planter for runoff from garage roof  | 9 Flood barriers can better protect garage... but try to move vehicles to higher ground as soon as possible! | 16 Non-return valves in sewer pipe  | 23 Bottom two steps made of concrete and with removable carpet    | 30 Solid wood or removable internal doors with rising butt hinges | 37 Portable pump set up ready to remove any ingress of water down to as low as 3mm    |
| 3 Closed-cell type insulation in cavity walls                                       | 10 Permeable paving surface on driveway  | 17 Separate electrical circuit for upper and lower floors   | 24 Sentimental items, important items and documents kept upstairs | 31 Items from low shelves put on high shelves in plastic boxes    | 38 Service vents covers/valves and self-closing airbricks                             |
| 4 Ensure the pointing is sound and breathable waterproofing cream on external walls | 11 Inflatable toilet bong  | 18 Recoverable kitchen units such as plastic or stainless steel, or on legs concealed by removable kickboards | 25 Flood resistant front door                                     | 32 Table legs stood in wellington boots or buckets                | 39 Water baths to collect rain from roof  |
| 5 Self-closing airbricks  | 12 Pathways of gravel over weed-suppressant fabric   | 19 Recoverable plaster OR plasterboard laid horizontally  | 26 Easily accessed storage for flood barriers and equipment       | 33 Long curtains folded up and tied using old tights              | 40 Wall mounted TV  |
|   |  | 20 Wall mounted boiler  |   |   |   |
|   |  | 21 Fridge on raised plinth  |   |   |   |
|   |  | 22 Electrical sockets raised  |   |   |   |
|   |  | 23 Tiled floors, with waterproof adhesive and waterproof grout  |   |   |   |
|   |  | 24 Recoverable plaster OR plasterboard laid horizontally  |   |   |   |
|   |  | 25 Sump/pump at lowest point inside house to remove water   |   |   |   |
|   |  | 26 Flood resistant front door   |   |   |   |
|   |  | 27 Furniture raised on trestles   |   |   |   |



Flood Mary website

# Road Markings & Traffic Management

Local requests for new road markings (double yellow lines, zebra crossings, white-lining etc.) should be brought to the attention of the **NHO** through the **Parish Priority Lists**.

The NHO will provide technical feedback on any issues involved and guide the parish council on available options and constraints during the follow up site visit.

If the County Councillor and NHO agree with the requests from the parish councils, a case can be made for this to be presented at a future **South Hams Highways and Traffic Order Committee** which meets three times per year.

If the request is agreed in principle by SH HaTOC, but it is not deemed a Devon priority, it will be placed on a **waiting list**. The parish council can now move up the waiting list if it is able to fund the work itself through the **Community Protocol**.

Note: The DCC team that refreshes road markings usually does this on a rota , parish by parish.



**Defective road markings or signs**  
White and yellow, stop or give way lines or warning signs

## Parking Enforcement

Please note that the request for enforcement action on parking is **confidential** and your identity will not be made public.

If the offence regularly happens at a specific **time or day of the week**, please provide this information so that the enforcement officer attends when the offence is likely to take place.

We have two enforcement officers covering the South Hams. Their deployment is more effective if those reporting can pinpoint the time when the offence is most likely to occur



## Parking

Request enforcement in residents' parking and on-street parking zones

## Road Sweeping

Road markings are made visible and drains kept clear by regular road sweeping

**South Hams District Council** manages road cleaning, including sweeping for litter and leaves, on a regular, rolling schedule for residential streets.

Residents can report issues like excessive debris, or request cleaning in specific areas, by contacting SHDC at **01803 861234** or via their website.

This service can also be provided by the parish **Road Warden**.

**Volunteer Litter Picker** groups help in some towns and villages to prevent litter from being washed into gullies and reduce drainage.

## South Hams Highways and Traffic Order Committee (SH HaTOC)

SH HaTOC is a joint body comprising members from Devon County Council and South Hams District Council, responsible for overseeing local highway management, traffic regulation orders, and related transportation strategies. The committee addresses issues such as parking restrictions, safety schemes, and public transport within the South Hams area.

The Neighbourhood Highways Officer prepares the casework papers after consultation with parish councils and the DCC Councillor.



Road Wardens can also assist by keeping debris off the double yellow lines in key areas where they are obscured by overhanging hedges

## Speed Limits

Changing the Speed Limit should also be on the **Parish Priority List** for discussion with the NHO.

If the NHO agrees in principle that this is appropriate, it might be necessary to install a discreet 24/7 traffic speed monitoring device to inform decision making about whether to recommend this change to a future SCARF meeting.

### Monitoring

- **Peninsula Safety Camera Partnership:** Utilizes safety cameras to identify speeders. A Notice of Intended Prosecution is issued within 14 days of an offence.
- **Community Speed Watch:** Volunteers monitor speeds in 40mph or lower zones, reporting offenders to the police, which can lead to warning letters or, for persistent offenders, further police action.
- **Police Operations:** Regular enforcement by officers using hand-held devices or marked cars.

### Enforcement

Speed limits in Devon are enforced by **Devon & Cornwall Police** using a combination of fixed and mobile speed cameras, marked police vehicles, and community-led initiatives, such as the SCARF (Speed Compliance Action Review Forum) process and Community Speed Watch.



DCC funds about 6 speed limit projects per year, if approved by SCARF.

See list here and position of your community request in the list

## Speed Compliance Action Review Forum (SCARF)

SCARF is a joint initiative between Devon County Council and Devon & Cornwall Police that assesses road safety concerns, such as speeding, to determine appropriate interventions.

It analyses collision data and traffic speeds to implement measures like enhanced signage, speed enforcement, or traffic calming.

Concerns are logged by the Neighbourhood Highways Team on a database, reviewed by a multi-agency group (police and council officers), and used to determine if intervention is needed.

Results of a SCARF assessment can include the deployment of **Vehicle Activated Signs** (VAS), increased **police enforcement**, or in some cases, **infrastructure changes**.

SCARF is used to review **speed limits** on roads with a proven **history of accidents** and to address speeding, particularly in areas with high traffic volumes, such as the A377.

The process helps ensure a consistent, data-driven approach to speed management across the county, working alongside other safety initiatives like **Vision Zero**.

The average cost of implementing a 20mph limit is estimated to be in the order of **£25,000**, but this can vary significantly depending on the scale of each scheme.



Vision Zero  
South West

## Vehicle Activated Signs (VAS)

Whilst often funded by parish councils, VAS signs require approval from Highways through their NHO. Their position should be agreed with the NHO and by the local land owner.

VAS signs alert drivers to the speed limit, often featuring LED displays that flash the limit or the driver's current speed. These signs are designed to reduce speeding in villages and residential areas by providing immediate feedback.

The signs themselves are not for direct enforcement.

An average cost for a VAS sign is about £3,000. The parish council must ensure that the correct speed limit is set in the device.



## Twenty is Plenty

Parish and town councils can subscribe to the **Community Protocol** and agree to pay the **full cost** of an approved speed limit in order to 'queue-jump' the waiting list.

Whilst awaiting implementation of the agreed speed limit, parish councils can organise an informal sign saying "**Twenty is Plenty**"

These signs are often designed by local school children. They must not look like DCC Highways signs, must not be attached to 'highways street furniture' (e.g. lamp posts or other road signs) and the land owner must have given permission for the sign to be situated on that land.

You should seek support from your NHO on this.



Twenty is Plenty organisation



## Community Speed Watch (CSW),

CSW involves setting up a team of volunteers to monitor traffic speeds with police support to improve road safety and educate drivers. This is a voluntary, non-enforcement initiative aimed at reducing speed in 20, 30, or 40 mph areas.

### Step-by-step guide

- Minimum of **3 to 6 volunteers** to operate a session.
- Assign a **lead person** to act as the single point of contact with the police.
- Contact your local **Parish or Town Council** to support the scheme.
- **Select roads** where speeding is a known issue, ensuring they are within 20, 30, or 40 mph zones.
- Volunteers must usually be over 18 and may be subject to vetting by police
- Email your local police force's **Speed Watch team** or road safety unit to register your interest.
- Register your team on the **National Community Speed Watch** website (if applicable to your area).

### The police will:

- Conduct a **site risk assessment** for safety and to approve the location.
- Usually provide or loan the **speed detection equipment** (radar/laser gun), **high-visibility jackets**, and **road sign** and provide training.
- Send **warning letters** to the registered keepers of speeding vehicles. Further action, such as police visits, is taken against persistent offenders

A minimum of 2 to 3 trained volunteers will record the speed, registration number, make, model, and colour of vehicles exceeding the limit. Volunteers must not stop vehicles or confront drivers. They submit the records to the police, often via the "CSW Online" platform, for processing.

This is not a paid activity. GDPR: Data must be handled securely according to the Data Protection Act 2018.

Effectiveness: Studies indicate that Speedwatch can reduce speeding in communities by 30-40%.



Devon & Cornwall  
Police  
Community Speed  
Watch

## ROAD CLOSURES

### Temporary Traffic Regulation Orders (TTRO)

Road closures in Devon are managed by DCC through planned Temporary Traffic Regulation Orders (TTRO) for works over 5 days (3 months' notice) or Temporary Traffic Regulation Notices (TTRN) for 5 days or less.

### Emergency Traffic Orders

Emergency closures are handled immediately, and applications for special events require 3 months' notice.

**Public Liability Insurance:** A minimum of £5 million is required for special event closures.

**Signage:** Specific signage (Chapter 8) must be used, and in some cases, hired through a third party.

**Traffic Management:** For community events, organizers should be trained in traffic management.

**Interactive Map:** DCC maintains an interactive, live, and planned roadworks map. Consultation: Permanent traffic regulation orders (TRO) involve consultation with local residents, councillors, and emergency services.

**Utility Works:** Utility companies must provide notice, but may start immediately in emergency situations.

For more information, you can visit the Devon County Council website.



DCC interactive road closure map

## UTILITIES DAMAGE to ROADS

When utility companies (gas, water, electricity, telecoms) damage roads, they are generally required by law to repair the damage and reinstate the surface to its original condition.

In the UK, this is governed by the New Roads and Street Works Act 1991 (NRSWA), which holds utilities accountable for the quality of their repairs.

**Mandatory Reinstatement:** Utility companies are responsible for fixing the road after their work, often within six months for permanent repairs.

Reinstatements are usually guaranteed for two years (extending to three years for deeper or complex excavations). If the repair fails or causes a pothole within this time, the utility company is responsible for fixing it again.

Local councils (Highway Authorities) use systems to log roadworks and inspect them. If the work is substandard, the company is alerted and must fix it within 27 days.

**Fines for Poor Work:** If a utility company fails to properly repair a road or fails to meet the standard, the Highway Authority can issue fines, though critics have argued these are sometimes insufficient.

**Overrun Charges:** If works take longer than the agreed time, authorities can impose daily charges (Section 74 NRSWA) to discourage long-term disruption.

If a company does not fix a defective repair, the local council can fix it themselves and charge the cost back to the utility company. **Permit Breaches:** Fines are applied if companies work without a permit or violate permit conditions (£120-£500 per incident).

**Section 58 Notices:** Councils can place a 'Section 58' notice on newly resurfaced roads, which prevents utility companies from digging them up for a period of 3 to 5 years (except for emergencies).

## UTILITIES DAMAGE to ROADS (cont)

Permit Schemes: Utilities must apply for permits to dig, allowing councils to coordinate work to prevent multiple companies from tearing up the same road consecutively.

### What You Can Do

**Report Directly:** If you see damaged roads or poor-quality repairs (e.g. sunken, uneven, or, “bumpy” road surfaces), report them to your local council’s highways department.

**Provide Evidence:** Taking photos or videos of the original damage and the poor-quality repair can assist the council in holding the company accountable.

While utility companies are required to repair damage, they often use contractors, and the quality of reinstatement is a significant point of conflict between councils and utility firms, leading to what is sometimes described as “street scars”.



**Live roadworks**

## GLOSSARY

This glossary covers key terminology relating to highway maintenance, repair, and drainage specifically within the context of Devon County Council (Devon Highways) and their partners, such as MGroup

### CORE MAINTENANCE and CONTRACTING

**Devon Highways:** The partnership between Devon County Council and its term maintenance contractor (currently **MGroup**) that manages the county’s road network.

**Highway Term Maintenance Contract (TMC):** A long-term agreement with a contractor to deliver a wide range of services, including safety inspections, repair of defects, and routine maintenance (e.g. grass cutting).

**Neighbourhood Highway Team (NHT):** Local teams responsible for **proactive**, and **minor maintenance** tasks within specific areas of Devon.

**Reactive Maintenance: Routine Repairs** carried out in response to reported problems or safety inspections, such as filling potholes, clearing blockages, or fixing traffic lights.

**Planned/Programmed Maintenance:** Scheduled works intended to extend the life of the road network, identified in advance and shown on the Devon interactive roadworks map.

**Asset Management Plan (HIAMP):** A strategy document outlining how Devon manages, maintains, and prioritises the repair of different road components (bridges, roads, lights).

**Safety Inspection:** Regular, risk-based inspections to identify defects that pose a danger or serious inconvenience to users (e.g. potholes, missing signage).

## ROAD SURFACE REPAIRS & TREATMENTS

**Resurfacing:** The removal and replacement of the upper layer (40mm or more thick) of a road surface.

**Surface Dressing:** A cost-effective treatment where bitumen is applied followed by stone chippings to seal the road, improve skid resistance, and prevent water ingress.

**Patching/Patchwork:** Small-scale repair of damaged tarmac, often completed in the year preceding surface dressing.

**Micro Asphalt:** A thin, cold-lay surfacing treatment, usually applied in urban areas to seal the existing road surface and improve skid resistance.

**Overbanding/Joint Repair:** Sealing narrow cracks or joints in the road surface with hot bitumen to stop water from entering and damaging the sub-structure.

**Haunching:** A type of minor repair specifically strengthening the edge (the 'haunch') of a flexible or concrete road.

**High Friction Surfacing (HFS):** A specialized, high-skid resistance surfacing used at hazardous locations like junctions or steep hills.

## DRAINAGE & EARTHWORKS

**Buddle Holes:** Holes or pipes that carry water through a hedge or bank, commonly used in rural Devon road drainage.

**Catch-pits:** A chamber located in a drainage system that catches silt to prevent it from blocking pipes.

**Easement:** Small, often grassed openings on the side of the road designed to channel water off the highway, reducing surface water flooding.

**Grip:** A shallow trench or cut across a verge, used to drain water from the carriageway into a ditch.

**Gullies:** Drains in roads with grills across them to reduce blockages.

**SuDS:** (Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems): Above-ground drainage components that manage rainfall close to where it falls to control the rate of runoff and improve quality.

## CLASSIFICATION & ASSESSMENT

**Condition Indicators** (Red/Amber/Green): A traffic-light system used by Devon to categorize road condition: Green (no action), Amber (maintenance soon), Red (maintenance required).

**Maintained Highway:** Roads, footways, and cycleways that Devon County Council is legally required to keep in a safe condition.

**Routine Cycles:** Regular, programmed maintenance tasks such as gully emptying and grass cutting, which are not listed on the main planned works map.

**SCRIM** (Sideways Force Coefficient Routine Investigation Machine): A machine used to measure road surface skid resistance.

## WINTER & EMERGENCY

**IBC (Impassable, being cleared):** Status for a road closed by snow/ice that is currently being cleared.

**INBC (Impassable, not being cleared):** Status for a closed road that is not currently being worked on.

**Out-of-hours Emergency Response:** Dedicated crews for incidents such as downed trees, flooding, or severe structural damage occurring outside of normal business hours.

## TRAINING

**Chapter 8** training for Road Wardens

**LOCAL CONTACTS**

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## Acknowledgements

This handbook has been produced by  
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Updated Versions will be posted here:  
[www.louise4devon.com](http://www.louise4devon.com)

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