

THE HIGHLAND COUNCIL
Transport, Environmental and Community Services

WINTER MAINTENANCE
POLICY

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Winter Maintenance Policy

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1.0 BACKGROUND

- 1.1 Under Section 34 of the Roads (Scotland) Act 1984, a Roads Authority shall take such steps as they consider reasonable to prevent snow and ice endangering the safe passage of pedestrians and vehicles over public roads.
- 1.2 This Winter Maintenance Policy relates to the Council's responsibilities as Roads Authority for adopted roads, cycle ways, footways and footpaths.
- 1.3 Cross Service Working arrangements exist between Services to ensure that Council properties receive an appropriate winter maintenance service. The appropriate Service Director will determine the appropriate level of winter maintenance service for footpaths, car parks and other areas that are the responsibility of the Council but are not on the list of public Roads.

2.0 GENERAL

- 2.1 With the operational management devolved to the Areas it is essential that a common Winter Maintenance Policy is in place to ensure a reasonable consistency of service for drivers passing between local Areas.
- 2.2 It is the aim of Highland Council in respect of its winter maintenance service to:-
 - 2.2.1 Provide a standard of service on adopted public roads which permits reasonably safe movement of vehicular and pedestrian traffic appropriate to the prevailing weather conditions and within the resources available.
 - 2.2.2 Establish a pattern of working which will keep delays, diversions or road closures to a minimum during adverse weather conditions.
 - 2.2.3 Conduct operations having regard to the requirements of the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974.
- 2.3 The Council as Roads Authority is not responsible for Winter Maintenance on unadopted roads and will not provide a Winter Maintenance service for unadopted roads. It will however make every effort to provide assistance for emergency and medical services during severe weather conditions where there is an urgent need for safe access.
- 2.4 The responsibility for Winter Maintenance on Trunk Roads lies with the Scottish Executive.
- 2.5 The Council will source Winter Weather Forecasting Services from recognised Meteorological Service Providers during the period 1 October to 30 April.

3.0 TREATMENT OF ROADS

Salting and gritting operations for ice and light snow conditions on adopted roads will be carried out as detailed below. Each gritting route will take a significant length of time to complete. The length of time taken will vary from day to day depending on actual weather conditions.

3.1 NETWORK HIERARCHY

It is not possible to provide a winter maintenance service on every road at the same time. In general higher priority routes will be treated before those of a lower priority. The following prioritised hierarchy has been adopted.

PRIORITY 1 - Main Routes

PRIORITY 2 - Other Strategic Routes including Bus Routes*.

PRIORITY 3 - Main Urban Streets and School Bus Routes †*.

PRIORITY 4 - All other routes as resources permit.

* Note route gritting will not necessarily be completed before buses start their journeys.

† Contracted school buses or mini buses.

The treatment routes, based on the priorities set out above, will be agreed by Area Committees and leaflets with maps showing the Priority 1 and 2 routes together with target treatment times will be distributed to the public at the start of each winter period.

3.2 TREATMENT TIMES - MONDAY TO SATURDAY

The service will be provided between 6 am and 9 pm, although Priority 4 routes are unlikely to start before 8 am and will not be treated after 6 pm.

3.3 TREATMENT TIMES - SUNDAYS AND PUBLIC HOLIDAYS (including Christmas Day and New Years Day)

A service will be provided between 7 am and 9 pm on Priority 1 Routes, Service Bus Routes (if applicable) and Main Urban Streets only.

3.4 PRECAUTIONARY TREATMENT

Precautionary treatment, carried out the previous evening, normally before 9 p.m., in advance of adverse weather, will in general be restricted to Priority 1 routes.

3.5 TREATMENT DURING SNOW CONDITIONS

Working hours may be extended during snow.

On Sundays and Public Holidays the routes covered may be extended during snow conditions.

3.6 TARGET TIMES FOR COMPLETION OF GRITTING ROUTES.

The following are the target times for completion of routes during conditions of ice and light snow.

PRIORITY 1 - 8.30 am

PRIORITY 2 - 9.00 am

PRIORITY 3 - 9.00 am

PRIORITY 4 - High areas and known trouble spots 9.30 am.

During conditions of moderate to heavy snowfall or drifting snow the times to complete routes will be significantly longer.

3.7 TREATMENT OF DIVERSION ROUTES.

Where a road, including a trunk road, is closed to traffic due to either planned works or an emergency situation then the agreed diversion route will be treated as follows.

Trunk Road Closure.

The agreed diversion route will be treated to Priority 1 standard and signs erected at each end of the diversion and any other junctions with trunk roads, stating that there will be no overnight salting.

In an emergency situation and after the Scottish Executive or its trunk road management and maintenance agents have notified the Council of the closure, every endeavour will be made to both treat the agreed diversion route appropriately and erect signs before the first overnight period.

Council Road Closure.

Any part of the agreed diversion route that is of a lower priority than the closed road will be treated to the same priority as the closed road.

4.0 TREATMENT OF FOOTWAYS, FOOTPATHS AND CYCLE WAYS.

Salting and gritting operations for ice and light snow conditions on adopted footways, footpaths and cycle ways will be carried out as set out below. Each gritting route will take a significant length of time to complete. The length of time taken will vary from day to day depending on actual weather conditions.

4.1 NETWORK HIERARCHY

It is not possible to treat every footway, footpath or cycle way at the same time. In the following the term "footway" includes footpaths and cycle ways. The following prioritised hierarchy has been adopted.

PRIORITY 1 - Main Urban Shopping Centres.

PRIORITY 2 - Footways serving Main Urban Areas, Schools, Hospitals and Minor Shopping Areas.

PRIORITY 3 - Other Footways as resources permit.

4.2 TREATMENT TIMES - MONDAY TO SATURDAY

The winter maintenance service will be provided between 6am and 6pm and routes will be treated on a priority basis.

4.3 TREATMENT TIMES - SUNDAYS AND PUBLIC HOLIDAYS

A service will be provided between 7am and Noon on Priority 1 routes only.

There will be no service for footways on Christmas Day or New Years Day.

4.4 TREATMENT DURING SNOW CONDITIONS

Working hours may be extended during snow conditions.

On Sundays and Public Holidays the routes covered may be extended as necessary during snow conditions.

5.0 GRITTING ROUTES.

Winter Maintenance Plans showing details of routes will be prepared by Area Roads & Community Works Managers and will be submitted to Area Committees for approval.

-- End of Policy Statement --