



City of
Doncaster
Council

**CITY OF
DONCASTER
COUNCIL
HIGHWAYS
POTHOLE POLICY**

Directorate of Place
Highway Asset Maintenance

V.01.05 (Jan 2024)

| Version | Date | Purpose | Name | Designation |
|----------------|-------------|------------------------------|--------------|--|
| 01.01 | Sept 2016 | New Policy | D. Snell | Senior Engineer Highways Routine Maintenance |
| 01.01 | 29/03/17 | Approval of new policy | J. Blackham | Portfolio Holder for Regeneration and Environment |
| 01.02 | Sept 2018 | 2 year policy review | D. Snell | Senior Engineer Highways Routine Maintenance |
| 01.02 | 11/03/19 | Approval of reviewed policy | J. Blackham | Portfolio Holder for Regeneration and Environment |
| 01.03 | Oct 2020 | Review deferred due to COVID | D.Snell | Senior Engineer Highways Routine Maintenance |
| 01.04 | Jan 2022 | 2 year policy review | A.Allen | Senior Engineer Highways Routine Maintenance |
| 01.04 | 21/04/22 | Approval of reviewed policy | J. Blackham | Portfolio Holder for Highways Infrastructure and Enforcement |
| 01.05 | Jan 2024 | 2 year policy review | S.Whitehurst | Senior Engineer Highways Routine Maintenance |
| 01.05 | 20/02/24 | Approval of reviewed policy | J.Blackham | Portfolio Holder for Highway Infrastructure and Enforcement |

Reference Documents:

Highways Maintenance Efficiency Programme (HMEP)
Well-Managed Highway Infrastructure - A Code of Practice (CoP) 2016 (WMHI)
City of Doncaster Councils Highway Safety Inspection Policy (HSIP)
Associate of Directors, Environment, Economy, Planning and Transport Potholes and Repair Techniques for Local Highways (ADEPT)
Doncaster Councils Highway Maintenance Term Contract

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Introduction

Doncaster Council has a statutory duty under Section 41 (1) of the Highways Act 1980 to maintain highways maintainable at public expense (carriageways, footways and cycleway's) within the authorities boundary.

This document only applies to Doncaster Councils adopted highways and will be reviewed within a two yearly cycle reflective of Highway Code of Practice revisions, legislative changes and advice, reviews and changes to the Council's position on its highway maintenance practices and policies and is aimed specifically at pothole-type defects.

The policy has been developed with the guidance of

- Well-Managed Highway Infrastructure - A Code of Practice (CoP) 2016 (WMHI)
- The Department for Transport - Highways Management Efficiency Programme (DfT- HMEP).

The WMHI is a non-statutory document and Doncaster Council work within the guidance of these and the HMEP and develops its Highway policies around them.

Courts of law will often use the guidance of the CoP's as a benchmark for good practice when considering their decisions on third party liability claims against the Council.

Doncaster Councils adopted highway network for maintenance comprises around 1750km roads, 1800km footways and 55km Cycleways and, valued at around £2bn, is the Councils most valuable asset.

The highway network is assigned a 'Hierarchy' reflective of usage, traffic volumes, environment and associated risks. Details can be found within Doncaster Councils '**Highway Safety Inspections Policy**'.

Definition

Potholes are usually isolated failures in a bituminous surfaced road, footway or cycleway that have an abrupt difference in level and may impact the safety of the highway user.

HMEP 'Prevention and a Better Cure' Pothole Review Document identifies failure mechanisms that result in a pothole as either 'top down' or 'bottom up':

- A top down failure is essentially a localised fault that develops into fretting and becomes progressive.
- A bottom up failure results from a fault at depth, usually involving the presence of water, which causes cracking and leads to a block of material breaking away.

Potholes are generally defined as a defect within the highway surface which is surrounded by surfacing material on all sides. This differs from edge damage which usually occurs on un-kerbed or un-channelled rural roads caused by vehicles overrunning the edge of the carriageway.

Potholes can develop over short periods of time, particularly during periods of inclement weather such as prolonged wet conditions or winter freezing and thawing. Depending on the size, depth and location there may be a greater or lesser risk to the general public.

There is no nationally agreed measurement for a pothole.



The CoP does not include a definition of potholes either in terms of depth or lateral measurements but does state 'the degree of risk from a pothole depends not merely upon its depth but also its surface area and location.

Doncaster Council uses a Risk Based Approach (RBA) as guided by the WMHI when assessing defects, (**Highway Safety Inspection Policy**), and its pothole definition is in line with the approach taken by other comparable authorities.

Doncaster Council's definition of a pothole is set out below and should be used in conjunction with a RBA.

Carriageway - usually at least 40mm in depth and between 250mm and 600mm in any one direction with an abrupt difference in level.

- **Footway / Cycleways Type A and B and defined crossover points** – usually at least 20mm in depth and between 100mm and 300mm in any one direction with an abrupt difference in level.

| | |
|---|---|
|  | <p>Example of typical pothole in carriageway approximately 250mm diameter, abrupt difference in level , 40mm deep.</p> |
|  | <p>Areas of carriageway exhibiting fretting/surface erosion are NOT defined as potholes. Exceeds 600mm in length</p> |

Prioritisation

Doncaster Council carries out regular Highway Safety Inspections in accordance with its Highway Safety Inspection Policy. In addition, potholes may also be reported from other sources e.g. public, police etc.

All reports are considered, to determine the appropriate level of response.

With reference to the Highway Safety Inspection Policy (HSIP) there are 5 with cat 2 non category response times (ref Table below) for maintenance repairs depending on the RBA.

Defect Category and Response Table

HSIP Table 6 (abridged)

| Defect Category | Works Order/ Priority Code | Response | Repair type |
|----------------------------------|-------------------------------|--|------------------------|
| Cat 1 Safety Critical | 1 | 2 hour response from time of identification | Temporary or Permanent |
| Cat 2 High | 2 | Within 5 working days from the date of identification (Mon-Fri excluding bank holidays) | Temporary or Permanent |
| Cat 2 Medium | 3 | Within 25 working days from the date of identification (Mon-Fri excluding bank holidays) | Temporary or Permanent |
| Cat 2 Low | 4 | Planned programmed works | Permanent |
| Cat 2 Non | 5 | Review condition of defect at next inspection | None |

It is anticipated that the majority of potholes as defined in this policy will fall into the Cat 2 High or Cat 2 Medium defect category subject to RBA.

Glossary of Terms

| | |
|-------|--|
| ADEPT | Associate of Directors, Environment, Economy, Planning and Transport |
| WMHI | Well-Managed Highway Infrastructure - A Code of Practice (CoP) 2016 (WMHI) |
| DfT | Department for Transport |
| HMEP | Highways Maintenance Efficiency Programme |
| HSIP | Highway Safety Inspection Policy |
| RBA | Risk Based Approach |

Acknowledgements

This policy has been developed with the support of the following consultees:

Kennedys Solicitors Public Liability Department – Sheffield

Doncaster Councils Highway Asset Maintenance Department

Doncaster Councils Insurance Team

END OF POLICY
