

Highways and Environment newsletter



Wiltshire Council



Welcome.

Welcome to the November 2019 Highways and Environment newsletter.

This publication is distributed monthly to members, town and parish councillors and other key decision makers.

Please take a few minutes to read it through. This month's newsletter looks at a number of services and events over the next few months.

Headline News

- **Additional Highway Funding**

See pictures of the work completed so far: www.wiltshire.gov.uk/highways-asset-management

- **Additional Street Cleaning Funding**

See the work undertaken so far: www.wiltshire.gov.uk/highways-streetscene-enhanced-services

- **Street Sparkle Days**

Schedule of visits: www.wiltshire.gov.uk/highways-streetscene-enhanced-services

- **Weed Treatment Areas**

See maps of areas treated: www.wiltshire.gov.uk/highways-streetscene-enhanced-services

Parish Stewards making a difference throughout Wiltshire

The Parish Steward scheme aims to provide solutions to the many minor needs of the roads and footways. Parishes and towns are allocated a monthly visit, with the time spent in each area dependant on its size.

Parish Stewards drive a truck that equipped with a full range of hand tools and materials to address a wide variety of minor highway defects and other tasks. The tasks are usually identified by the town or parish council in advance of the visit, based on its top five priorities, which have been identified on the official form and passed to Wiltshire Council.

Here are some of the tasks that Parish Stewards can undertake in your communities:

- Hand clearing and cutting of growth from drainage grips and drain gully covers.
- Hand clearing of blocked drainage gullies, culverts, pipes and pits.
- Clearing storm debris from the roads and footways.
- Clearing collision debris, clinical waste etc.
- Cleaning, re-installation and straightening of small road signs, street nameplates and bollards.
- Installation of small road signs, verge marker posts and supplied street name plates.
- Removal of limited graffiti from road signs, bollards and street nameplates.
- Hand cutting of grass and vegetation in visibility areas.
- Hand treatment of weeds in rural areas.
- Removal of Ragwort and other noxious weeds.
- Clearance of encroaching growth and soils from footways.
- Repair of minor surface defects in roads and on footways.

The only limitations to a Parish Steward's work are the capabilities of one person working alone with hand tools and a small vehicle.

The programme is suspended during adverse weather, as Parish Stewards provide the safety service across the county. There are also planned breaks at times during the year, such as during the main grass growing season, when Parish Steward address safety issues such as long grass causing visibility issues or weed growth. Towns and parishes should have a nominated highways representative, who will be point of contact with highways officers.



Celebrating stewards

Has a parish steward been doing great work in your community? Take a photo, post it on Twitter and tag [@wiltscouncil](https://twitter.com/wiltscouncil) in the tweet, and we'll retweet the best pictures!

Community Area Transport Groups

Community Area Transport Groups (CATGs) are sub groups of the Area Boards that deal with highway issues. They are normally made up of not more than 10 members from the Area Board, town and parish council representatives and community representatives.

Meetings are attended by officers from Wiltshire Council, including a Senior Transport Planner, a Senior Traffic Engineer and a Local Highway Maintenance Engineer, as necessary. They offer advice and support to the group but they do not vote on the issues raised. The CATG may also invite representatives from local organisations to its meetings to give technical advice or to share pertinent local knowledge.

CATGs are funded by a discretionary highways budget which has been allocated to each Area Board by the Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport. The amount allocated is dependent on the geographical size and population for each community area. The funding allocation is for capital funding and can only be used to provide new and improved highways infrastructure. It is suitable for small-scale schemes that improve safety, increase accessibility and sustainability by promoting walking, cycling and public transport, and improve traffic management. It cannot be used to fund revenue functions such as maintenance schemes or the provision of passenger transport services.

The CATG has no formal decision making authority on operational matters or budget expenditure, but it acts as an informal discussion forum, making recommendations to the Area Board. Recommendations must be agreed at a full CATG meeting before being brought to the next Area Board for approval.



Parish Emergency Assistance Scheme (PEAS)

Wiltshire Council once again ran the Parish Emergency Assistance Scheme (PEAS), which gives town and parish councils the opportunity to get hold of vital kit that can be used during adverse weather events. The allocation is completed for 2019/20, but we remind parishes and towns to review their plans as we progress through the autumn, winter and spring periods in readiness for next year.

Sparkle Days return

Sparkle Days, part of our Clean Up Wiltshire initiative, are held four times every quarter every quarter in all Wiltshire towns. Their purpose is to add that extra bit of sparkle to an area; for instance, roads and paths will be swept, signs will be cleaned, shrubs tidied, etc. Towns and parishes can advise of any work to the Streetscene team at streetscene@wiltshire.gov.uk.



Working Groups help prevent flooding

Wiltshire Council has set up two Operational Flood Working Groups, one in the north and one in the south of county. The groups operate under strict terms of reference and are chaired by Councillor Jonathon Seed, Portfolio Holder for Flooding.

The groups mirror the river catchment areas operated by the Environment Agency and are a forum for stakeholders with interests in:

- Highways surface water
- Surface water run off
- Drainage and flooding to consider the issues relating to flooding and drainage within their respective catchment areas
- Stakeholders include:
 - Wessex Water
 - Thames Water
 - Highways Agency
 - Network Rail
 - Environment Agency



These issues cover such items as:

- Identifying lead authorities for each issue to enable better more focused, efficient and coordinated response, enabling resources and funding to be targeted effectively.
- To make recommendations for bids to fund major projects.
- To consider proposals for prioritising funding and programming of schemes.
- To implement government legislation on drainage and flood management.
- To comply with legal requirements to map our surface water and establish collaborative information with our partners.
- To respond to community area boards in respect of flooding and drainage issues.
- To communicate with members of the public regarding the work we are doing via parish newsletters, social media and other channels.

Initial requests for assistance from the public will be assessed by staff from the divisional highways offices. If they cannot be dealt with locally, they will be referred to the drainage engineers. The weather and drainage manager will prioritise schemes in accordance with the following criteria.

- Thames Water
- Highways Agency
- Network Rail
- Environment Agency

Flooding affecting	Objective	Response
People	Protect life	Evacuation
Houses	Protect life and dwellings	Flood alleviation equipment
Commercial property	Protect property	Protect critical utilities infrastructure
Roads	Protect life, dwellings and essential access to main roads	Road closures, diversions and flood alleviation equipment
Gardens/Agricultural Land	None	No action taken

Service delegation and asset transfers

We have several licensing and transfer options that allow communities to provide services direct on council responsible land or accept the transfer of assets. But there are also several projects that do not fit into the standard processes. For these, the council has several specialised options, such as the transfer of play areas for these standalone projects.

Due to the need for individualised legal agreements, for which the council does not have the resources, informal processes have been developed to fill the gap and stop vital community assets being lost or being closed for safety reasons. This means the informal agreements have sat outside of any agreed process and are undertaken on an ad-hoc basis.

There are three types of scheme included in this new process and they are listed below:

1. One Off Community Self Help Schemes on land occupied by the council. This is where the community wishes to undertake a 'one off' project for a limited time on land occupied by Wiltshire Council (whether the land is registered to the WC or not).
2. Ongoing Community Self Help on land not registered to Wiltshire Council - The community wishes to undertake a service on land occupied by Wiltshire Council, but the land is not registered to the Council.
3. Ongoing Community Self Help on land registered to Wiltshire Council - The community wishes to undertake a service on land registered to Wiltshire Council.

To find out more about service delegation, please see

www.wiltshire.gov.uk/corporate-procurement-service-delegation.

Do I need a road closure for my Christmas event?

We support communities to carry out organised litter picks, and any groups that wish to carry out litter picking events should do so in line with the Great British Spring Clean guidance. See www.keepbritaintidy.org/get-involved/support-our-campaigns/great-british-spring-clean for more information.

If a community group has an event arranged, they are encouraged to contact their local Community Engagement Manager at areboards@wiltshire.gov.uk with details so that they can provide specialist loan litter picking equipment and advice to support the event. All litter picks will need a nominated person who will take responsibility for the event.

Wildflower sites

Thank you to all councils that participated in the review of areas for the wildflower trials. The link (www.wiltshire.gov.uk/highways-streetscene-enhanced-services) details the areas chosen following the consideration of the sites. This will allow us to measure the benefits for future options for developing the scheme.



£75 million funding boost for key transport scheme in Chippenham

Wiltshire Council has been allocated £75 million from the Government's Housing Infrastructure Fund (HIF) to support the potential longer-term growth of Chippenham.

This major investment boost will support the creation of a new relief road to the east and south of Chippenham, linking the A350 at the northern and southern ends of the town, as well as specific improvement works at J17 on the M4.

These infrastructure improvements will help ease the severe congestion currently experienced by people who live or travel through Chippenham and provide additional road capacity for the future.

It will also unlock development land that could support up to 7,500 new homes in Chippenham and 1 million sq ft of commercial space over the next 25 years without causing additional infrastructure problems. This additional housing for Chippenham is at a build rate similar to the last 25 years and is being considered as part of the Local Plan review.

This funding will enable Wiltshire Council and Chippenham Town Council to deliver benefits to the local community in advance of any new housing developments taking place.

Additional benefits will include investment in Chippenham town centre and new facilities such as schools, health, open space, improved connectivity, including cycling and walking routes, and additional road capacity to meet the increasing levels of traffic using them both now and in the future.

Cllr Philip Whitehead, Leader of Wiltshire Council, said: "We're delighted to be awarded £75 million through the Housing Infrastructure Fund. The bidding process is highly competitive so to secure this funding demonstrates confidence in our ability to deliver these important transport improvements and our economic and housing aspirations.

"The funding provides us with a welcome opportunity to get things right from the start and have the right infrastructure in place before any additional development takes place in and around the town centre, which is exactly what residents have told us they want.

"We know some of Chippenham's infrastructure is already at capacity which causes problems for the residents every day of the week. This essential investment will help provide a sustainable network fit for the 21st century and enable growth both in employment and housing in Chippenham. Added improvements will also include enhancement of the town centre and access to it, new community facilities and new public green space all of which will have a positive impact on people's lives across Chippenham and the surrounding areas."



CAB

Bradford on Avon & Melksham CAB Andy Cadwallader
Chippenham and Corsham CAB David Arnup
Devizes and Pewsey CAB Richard Dobson
Malmesbury and Calne CAB Matt Perrot
Royal Wootton Bassett, Cricklade and Marlborough CAB Martin Cook
Salisbury and Southern CAB Graham Axtell
Tidworth and Amesbury CAB Andy Cole
South West CAB David Button
Warminster and Countywide Technical Denise Nott
Westbury and Trowbridge CAB Pat Whyte



Streetscene

Northern and Eastern Fiona Waind
Western and Southern Craig Campbell



Highways contact details

Bradford on Avon, Chippenham, Corsham, Melksham,
Trowbridge, Warminster and Westbury community areas:
centralhighways@wiltshire.gov.uk

Calne, Devizes, Marlborough, Malmesbury, Pewsey, Royal
Wootton Bassett & Cricklade community areas:
NorthernHighways@wiltshire.gov.uk

Amesbury, Salisbury, Southern, South West community areas:
southernhighways@wiltshire.gov.uk



Street cleaning and amenity

Streetscene@wiltshire.gov.uk



Parking

ParkingServices@wiltshire.gov.uk



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