**Activity Information Footway & Verge**

All bituminous road and footway surfaces deteriorate over time due to use and weathering and severe weather conditions can accelerate this process.

The County Council will continue to inspect its network of footways and undertake repairs in line with the Highway Infrastructure Asset Management Plan. Footways identified as being at the end of their serviceable life are programmed for renewal against available or forecasted funding. Footways that are still serviceable will be protected wherever possible by the application of a thin bituminous material that seals the surface of the footway to prevent the ingress of water and slow down its aging process.

Where isolated footway defects are encountered, such as potholes or kerb damage, these will be repaired on a risk management basis in line with our reactive maintenance procedure. This is aimed at keeping the roads and footways safe by repairing any identified defects using a risk management approach. Inspections carried out either routinely or in response to publicly generated reports will look for defects and categorise these based on the risk they present to the travelling public. The scheduling of identified repairs is then coordinated centrally to obtain the maximum efficiency from the limited financial resources available.

Grass verges can often become damaged because of parked vehicles, delivery vehicles or other similar reasons. We will where possible seek to put right damaged verges but generally remedial works are prioritised in accordance with the risk the problem poses to the public.

Whilst we appreciate that such damage can be unsightly, it is very rarely the case that damaged verges pose any risk to pedestrians and therefore any restorative works are usually given a much lower category of priority.

**Siding-Off Footways**

Over time verge areas adjacent to footways can encroach onto the footway, narrowing the available width for pedestrians, wheelchairs and pushchairs. Simple removal of this turf can restore the full footway width.

Before you start:

Check with your Community Highway Liaison Officer which organisation is responsible for maintenance of the footway in question. Private or un-adopted roads/estates are not Highway Maintainable at Public Expense and usually a private contractor is used to keep private footways clear.

Consider the specific location and its physical conditions. This might require a site visit in advance of any works and you could consider taking photographs of the location to assist with planning works.

Establish where the edge of the surfaced footway ends with some trial excavations.

Give careful consideration to the volumes of pedestrian and vehicular traffic moving around the location and whether the area you will be working on is likely to be affected by this.

Consider whether there are any local facilities nearby such as schools or post offices etc. that may generate traffic or pedestrians at certain times.

Where sites have shared use by pedestrian/cyclists such as near designated cycle ways, consideration should be given to the variable speeds which cyclists may be travelling at as they approach a work area. Operatives should be made aware before commencing work of the possibility of cyclists using the area and appropriate signage may therefore be required to give advance warning to these types of highway users.

Consider your own/operative’s safety and the likely impact of the activity on the safety of pedestrians and any passing traffic.

Consider whether there are any nearby roadworks or other planned activities such as community events that may affect access to the site or the times that works can be carried out.

Consider how the operatives will arrive at the site including what vehicle/s they will be using and where these will be parked.

Consider how materials will be removed from the site such as soil/verge remnants and how these will be disposed of.

Consider how long the surfaced area has been covered and what the condition of the footway will be like once it is exposed. Do not introduce hazards.

Choosing the right equipment

Once you have considered the location, determine the finish/appearance that is required and what type of equipment would be appropriate to achieve this, e.g. shovel, hand tools etc, bearing in mind your earlier observations about the site and passing traffic/pedestrians. Turf can be cut through with a spade

Ensure all users are familiar with the equipment they are going to be using and that it is regularly inspected and maintained in accordance with the manufacturer’s instructions.

Ensure all operatives have the necessary Personal Protective Equipment required for the tools being used and the location, e.g. appropriate footwear, gloves etc. Hi-visibility and reflective clothing should be comfortable to the wearer but secure enough that it does not become loose and interfere with any machine or hand tools.

Undertaking works

All tools must be in a safe and good working order and checks made before use. Any safety features and any screws/bolts or other fitments should be securely fixed in line with the manufacturer’s instructions.

Before commencing works, remove any obvious obstructions such as large rocks/debris or other litter.

When cutting through turf, care should be taken to ensure the footway does not become damaged.

If the footway is damaged underneath areas where the verge has been cut back, examine the extent of the affected area and if necessary cease works so as to prevent further localised damage. Any defective areas of footway which have become exposed should be reported to the Council in order that they can be inspected.

Loose materials should be removed from the site and the footway should be swept when the works are complete so as to remove trip/slip hazards.

Hazards to consider

At all times operators should consider their proximity to public highway users as it may be necessary to periodically cease works to allow passing vehicles/pedestrians, depending on the area being treated.

Consider the likelihood of flying debris and hidden or unexpected objects such as glass, rocks, etc.

Consider the possibility of injury from hand tools.

Operators should consider their proximity to private property and vehicles and take extra care around street furniture or third party apparatus.

Ensure that, where removed deposits need to be manually lifted, they are appropriately contained and of a manageable weight, so as to avoid personal or public injury.

**Repairs to Verge Rutting**

Damage caused to soft verge areas by the over-running of vehicles can often be repaired by simply digging over the affected area and reshaping the surface.

**Method Statement**

Before you start:

Check with your Community Highway Liaison Officer which organisation is responsible for maintenance of the verge in question. Private or un-adopted roads/estates are not Highway Maintainable at Public Expense and usually a private contractor is used to keep private verges maintained.

Consider the specific location and its physical conditions. This might require a site visit in advance of any works and you could consider taking photographs of the location to assist with planning works.

Be aware that utility apparatus is likely to be present in the verge and understand that excavations to the verge can cause damage or serious injury if tools come into contact with apparatus.

Consider alternative solutions such as re-seeding or planting to discourage further over-running of the verge. This may require a Licence to Plant; discuss the site with your CHLO if necessary.

Give careful consideration to the volumes of pedestrian and vehicular traffic moving around the location and whether the area you will be working on is likely to be affected by this.

Where sites have shared use by pedestrian/cyclists such as near designated cycle ways, consideration should be given to the variable speeds which cyclists may be travelling at as they approach a work area. Operatives should be made aware before commencing work of the possibility of cyclists using the area and appropriate signage may therefore be required to give advance warning to these types of highway users.

Consider whether there are any local facilities nearby such as schools or post offices etc. that may generate traffic or pedestrians at certain times.

Consider your own/operative’s safety and the likely impact of the activity on the safety of pedestrians and any passing traffic.

Consider whether there are any nearby roadworks or other planned activities such as community events that may affect access to the site or the times that works can be carried out.

Consider how the operatives will arrive at the site including what vehicle/s they will be using and where these will be parked.

Consider how materials will be removed from the site such as soil/verge remnants and how these will be disposed of.

Choosing the right equipment

Once you have considered the location, determine the finish/appearance that is required and what type of equipment would be appropriate to achieve this, e.g. shovel, hand tools etc, bearing in mind your earlier observations about the site and passing traffic/pedestrians.

Ensure all users are familiar with the equipment they are going to be using and that it is regularly inspected and maintained in accordance with the manufacturer’s instructions.

Ensure all operatives have the necessary Personal Protective Equipment required for the tools being used and the location, e.g. appropriate footwear, gloves etc. Hi-visibility and reflective clothing should be comfortable to the wearer but secure enough that it does not become loose and interfere with any machine or hand tools.

Undertaking works

All tools must be in a safe and good working order and checks made before use. Any safety features and any screws/bolts or other fitments should be securely fixed in line with the manufacturer’s instructions.

Before commencing works, remove any obvious obstructions such as large rocks/debris or other litter.

Do not make alterations to surface levels that might affect surface water drainage.

Do not install any solid objects within the verge such as posts or stones as these are viewed as an obstruction to the highway and are considered a hazard.

Loose materials should be removed from the site and if necessary the footway should be swept when the works are complete so as to remove trip/slip hazards such as mud or stones.

Hazards to consider

At all times operators should consider their proximity to public highway users as it may be necessary to periodically cease works to allow passing vehicles/pedestrians, depending on the area being treated.

Consider the likelihood of flying debris and hidden or unexpected objects such as glass, rocks, etc.

Consider the possibility of injury from hand tools.

Operators should consider their proximity to private property and vehicles and take extra care around street furniture or third party apparatus.

Ensure that, where removed materials need to be manually lifted, they are appropriately contained and of a manageable weight, so as to avoid personal or public injury.