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West Berkshire Council Highway Defect (Pothole) Management Review

Committee considering report:	Individual Executive Member Decisions
Date of Committee:	19 July 2024
Portfolio Member:	Councillor Stuart Gourley
Report Author:	Jon Winstanley
Forward Plan Ref:	ID4571

1 Purpose of the Report

1.1 To report on the findings of an external review into how the Council prioritises and manages highway defects.

2 Recommendation

2.1 That the portfolio holder for Environment and Highways approves an update to the Highway Inspection Procedure so that the Investigatory Levels for highway defects are reclassified from a depth of 50mm to 40mm.

3 Implications and Impact Assessment

Implication	Commentary
Financial:	It is anticipated that reducing the investigatory level for highway defects from 50mm to 40mm would cost an additional £400k in the first year (due to the need to repair additional potholes to transition) and additional £200k per annum thereafter. This would be subject to a successful capital bid or would have to be found from existing surfacing budgets reducing the coverage of the Highway Improvement Programme.
Human Resource:	None

Legal:	As set out in the body of this paper the Council has a legal obligation to maintain the highway, which it already complies with.			
Risk Management:	N/A			
Property:	N/A			
Policy:	These proposals detailed in the report result from an independent expert review and designed to improve the Highway Service.			
	Positive	**Neutral**	**Negative**	**Commentary**
Equalities Impact:				
A Are there any aspects of the proposed decision, including how it is delivered or accessed, that could impact on inequality?		x		
B Will the proposed decision have an impact upon the lives of people with protected characteristics, including employees and service users?		x		
Environmental Impact:		x		None as a result of this report.
Health Impact:				N/A
ICT Impact:				N/A

Digital Services Impact:				N/A
Council Strategy Priorities:				Improving the Highway Asset directly contributes to the Council priority of promoting a prosperous and resilient West Berkshire.
Core Business:				Service improvement.
Data Impact:				N/A
Consultation and Engagement:	Officers Consulted: Legal Services, Andrew Reynolds, Leah Rinaldi, Peter Walker, Nick Dale, Nick Coulson, Robin Mann, Clare Lawrence. Full public consultation will be undertaken as part of the review of the Highways Asset Management Plan later this year.			

4 Executive Summary

4.1 Following an increase in defect reports during 2023 the Council's Executive requested review of how the Council Manages defects to ensure that best practice and value for money is being achieved for the District's residents.

4.2 Consultants WSP had already been engaged by the Highways Service to assist with the update of the Council's Highways Asset Management Strategy and Plan. Matthew Lugg OBE, Director of Local Transport for WSP UK is a pre-eminent expert in the field of potholes having led on the government's 2012 Pot-Hole Review (Prevention and a Better Cure) whilst seconded to the Department of Transport for Transport Minister Norman Baker. Matthew also led the development of much of the national Local Roads Highways Asset Management Guidance and oversaw the review into West Berkshire's Highway defect management process.

4.3 WSP's review can be seen in Appendix A. In general, it recognises that the road condition in West Berkshire is consistently better than the national averages in England, concluding that the road network in West Berkshire is generally in good condition. Also, that the Council's Highways Service follows national best practice when identifying and prioritising highway defects. However, there are 7 clear recommendations identified that will, in the main, be taken forward as part of the Highways Asset Management Plan refresh. These recommendations are summarised below and are detailed in full in section 5.10.

No.	Recommendation
1.	Continue to develop the use of AI technology to gather data and inform decisions.
2.	Review the network hierarchy to ensure correct inspection regimes and prioritisation is in place.
3.	Update the Highway Inspection Procedure - including a review of the Investigatory Levels.
4.	Review the current defect response times.
5.	Develop the asset management system to link the follow-up permanent repairs with initial temporary repairs.
6.	Review current repair methods and material with a view to trialling alternatives.
7.	Adopt and implement a Highways Communication Plan.

4.4 These recommendations will be considered as part of the refresh of the HAMP. This individual decision is proposed to implement a reduction in the investigatory level from 50mm to 40mm with immediate effect.

5 Introduction/Background

Introduction

5.1 Consultants WSP have undertaken a review of the way West Berkshire Council undertakes carriageway defect management across the highway network. This followed growing concern of West Berkshire residents regarding the condition of the Council's roads.

Background

5.2 The review considered several aspects of highway defect management and focussed on the following topics:

- Current best practice across the highway industry.
- Existing practices in West Berkshire Council.
- Comparison and benchmarking with neighbouring Berkshire Authorities.
- Existing West Berkshire Council Inspection Procedure.
- Explore the definition of 'right first time'.
- Information from claims made against West Berkshire Council.
- Establish how defects are considered as part of the wider highway infrastructure asset management system.

Proposals

5.3 In developing the review, it became clear that the road condition in West Berkshire is in generally good condition when compared locally and nationally, however the number of defects, both identified as enquiries to the service and being recorded as part of routine safety inspections, has significantly increased in the last 12 months reflecting national trends. Alongside this there was a significant increase in the volume of claims related to highway defects being received by the service.

5.4 To understand a possible reason for this increase, the Highway Safety Inspection Procedure was reviewed, and it was noted that West Berkshire has a less onerous investigatory level than their geographical neighbours. In West Berkshire, a pothole would have to be a minimum of 50mm deep to be fixed, whereas most other authorities would have a threshold of 40mm. This may be contributing to a negative customer perception as road users believe that defects are severe enough to be repaired but would not be progressed as the investigatory level is not reached. It should be noted that changing from 50mm to 40mm would have financial implications, however this will result in more potholes being fixed earlier and give a much more satisfactory outcome for the road user.

5.5 The review established that the highway service, and their contractor Volker Highways, operates a consistently high standard of repair, with a process to revisit the repairs that have been temporarily repaired with permanent repairs. However, the repair techniques should be regularly reviewed to ensure the latest innovative techniques are adopted. The Council's Highways Team and contractor Volker Highways currently keep an innovation log which can be seen in Appendix B. It is proposed that this is reviewed and updated monthly and included in the communications plan (referred to later in this report).

5.6 The Council aspires to maximise the use of 'right first-time repairs'. The review identified the Highways Service has a culture of promoting and ensuring first-time solutions where possible. But it is also acknowledged there are often factors that make doing a right first-time repair difficult. For example, severe weather events can often to lead to a significant number of rapidly appearing road defects which can mean that permanent repairs are simply not achievable in every location.

5.7 As a highway authority West Berkshire has a duty to keep the network safe and to maintain safety it is often necessary and generally appropriate to carry out temporary repairs and then follow these up with a permanent repair. Keeping the network safe with temporary repairs as a short stop solution reduces the authority's liability and risk for claims.

5.8 As the highway service in West Berkshire cannot always deliver a first-time permanent fix, after temporary repairs, it will always follow on with a permanent solution. There is not currently a link that can be tracked in the defect management system but formalising these links should be explored to allow the conversion of temporary repairs to permanent solutions to be tracked. A digital solution withing the highways asset management system is currently being explored.

5.9 Communications were also highlighted as an area for improvement. The highway defect reporting system has clearly made reporting defects more accessible. Building

on this improvement the development of the communication principles across the service was identified as being an important part of engagement with both councillors and road users. It is therefore proposed that a Highway Service Communications Strategy be included in the Highway Asset Management Plan refresh and that it encompasses the following points:

- Develop better information for Councillors related to highway service activities in their wards.
- Develop better ways of communicating to residents and road users about highway activity in the district.
- Develop the wider use of video and blogs to communicate the details and reasons behind highway works.
- Develop increased engagement with councillors.
- Improve the way that the service listens and provides feedback to those who make contact.

5.10 The following is a full list of recommendations that will be taken forward and included in the Highway Asset Management plan refresh.

No.	Recommendation
1	Utilise Vaisala Road AI to establish not only condition bands but inform on potential future issues on the network and establish if it is feasible to deliver preventative interventions.
2	A review of the network hierarchy in order to ensure that the current inspection regime and wider asset management decisions are applied appropriately to the network and changes are captured.
3	Update the Highway Inspection Procedure to more reflect the guidance in Well Managed Highway Infrastructure: A Code of Practice. This is to include a review of the Investigatory Levels set out in the documents.
4	Review the current defect response times across all defect types to ensure that the balance of keeping the network safe and that the delivery of repairs and interventions occur in an efficient and effect manner.
5	Explore the development of a method to link the follow up permanent repairs with initial temporary repairs.
6	Review the current repair methods and materials delivered on the network with a view to trialling and adopting a wider, more flexible suite of repair options.
7	Adopt the updated Highways Communication Plan and ensure its implementation to keep stakeholders informed of highways operations. This will include improved information and engagement for Councillors, the wider use of video and other direct communication channels and greater listening and feedback from the service.

6 Options for consideration

6.1 Consideration was given to not altering the investigatory level; however this would not result in an improvement in the highway condition.

7 Proposals

7.1 It is proposed that the recommendations detailed in 5.10 be included in the refresh of the Councils Highways Asset Management Plan. Also proposed that the definition of a highway defect depth, or 'investigatory level', be changed from 50mm to 40mm and that this will be implemented with immediate effect. A communications strategy will be developed and implemented ahead of the Councils Highways Asset Management Plan (HAMP) refresh but will also be included within the HAMP.

8 Conclusion

8.1 WSP are a leading national consultancy in highway asset and defect management. Several clear recommendations have been proposed following a thorough review.

8.2 Implementing these recommendations will bring the Council's Highways operations in line with neighbouring Local Authorities and provide an improved service for the Council's residents.

9 Appendices

9.1 Appendix A – WSP Defect Management Report

9.2 Appendix B – West Berkshire Council Highways Term Contract Innovation Log

Subject to Call-In:

Yes: ☒ No: ☐

Wards affected: All Wards

Officer details:

Name: Jon Winstanley
Job Title: Service Director Environment
Tel No: 01635 519087
E-mail: jon.winstanley@westberks.gov.uk

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West Berkshire Council

Defect Management Review

West Berkshire Council

Defect Management Review

Type of document (version) Confidential

Project no. 70081824

Date: November 2023

WSP

Level 2
100 Wharfside Street
Birmingham
B1 1RT

Phone: +44 121 352 4700

WSP.com

Quality control

Issue/revision	First issue	Revision 1
Remarks		
Date	16th Nov 2023	
Prepared by	M Lewis	
Signature		
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Signature		
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Contents

Executive Summary

WSP have been commissioned to undertake a review of the way that West Berkshire Council undertakes carriageway defect management across the highway network. This followed the formation of a new administration who made commitments around the management of highway defects as part of their election manifesto.

The review considered a number of aspects of highway defect management and focussed on the following topics:

- Current best practice across the highway industry.
- Existing practices in West Berkshire Council.
- Existing West Berkshire Council Inspection Procedure.
- Explore the definition of ‘right first time’.
- Information from claims made against West Berkshire Council.
- Establish how defects are considered as part of the wider highway infrastructure asset management system.

In developing the review, it became clear that the road condition in West Berkshire is in generally good condition, however an escalation in defects, both identified as enquiries to the service and being recorded as defects by inspectors had escalated. Alongside this there was a significant increase in the volume of claims being received by the service.

To understand a possible reason for this increase, the Highway Safety Inspection Procedure was reviewed, and it was noted that West Berkshire has a less onerous investigatory level than their neighbours. This may be contributing to a negative customer perception as road users believe that defects are severe enough to be repaired, but as the investigatory level is not reached. This is also partially evidenced by the fact that around half of the enquiries received were resulted in ‘no further action’. The general review of the Highway Safety Inspection Procedure found it to be out of date and would benefit from a complete review.

The review established that the highway service operates a consistently high standard of repair, with a process to revisit the repairs that have been temporarily repaired with permanent repairs. However, this process is not particularly well defined and would benefit from being more clearly linked to the defect management system. As a result, these details could be communicated to assist in describing the service's performance.

As mentioned above, a point that could be improved is the general communication of current operating practices.

Recommendations

During the development of this review a number of recommendations were identified, these are set out as follows:

No.	Recommendation
1	Utilise Vaisala Road AI to establish not only condition bands but inform on potential future issues on the network and establish if it is feasible to deliver preventative interventions.
2	A review of the network hierarchy in order to ensure that the current inspection regime and wider asset management decisions are applied appropriately to the network and changes are captured.
3	Update the Highway Inspection Procedure to more reflect the guidance in Well Managed Highway Infrastructure: A Code of Practice. This will include a review of the Investigatory Levels set out in the documents.
4	Review the current defect response times across all defect types to ensure that the balance of keeping the network safe and that the delivery of repairs and interventions occur in an efficient and effect manner.
5	Explore the development of a method to link the follow up permanent repairs with initial temporary repairs.
6	Review the current repair methods and materials delivered on the network with a view to trialling and adopting a wider, more flexible suite of repair options.
7	Adopt the updated Highways Communication Plan and ensure its implementation to keep stakeholders informed of highways operations. This will include improved information and engagement for Councillors, the wider use of video and other direct communication channels and greater listening and feedback from the service.

Table 1: Table of Recommendations

1 Overview

West Berkshire Council as highway authority are responsible for the identification and repair of defects on the Council's highway network to ensure that it remains safe for highway users and meet their duties to maintain the highway under the Highways Act (1980).

Following the local elections in May 2023 there was a change in leadership at the Council and a new administration formed. The pre-election manifesto, "A Fresh Start for West Berkshire" set out a number of commitments specifically relating to the condition of West Berkshires highway network. These were

- Maintaining the road network in good condition.
- Fixing potholes first time and dangerous ones within 72 hours. Enabling the reporting of potholes via a West Berkshire mobile app.
- Supporting building a bridge over the railway line in Thatcham.
- Establishing an out-of-hours traffic management response service.

To assist West Berkshire Council in the development of their approach to the management of these kinds of defects WSP have been requested to provide advice regarding the identification of highway defects and their repair. The development of this advice focusses on highway defect management processes to assist West Berkshire Council address the manifesto pledges relating to improving the way in which carriageway related defects are responded to.

This report summarises the activities undertaken to develop the recommendations which are designed to assist West Berkshire Council in delivering the service in a way which delivers the commitments of the new administration.

2 Context

In order to develop appropriate recommendations to improve the defect management process WSP have identified activities which have informed the development of the review's recommendations. These are:

2.1 Industry Best Practice Guidance

The current best practice is set out in Well Managed Highway Infrastructure, a Code of Practice (WMHI). This includes comparisons with surrounding and similar local authorities to understand how the delivery of this part of the service.

2.2 West Berkshire Approach

Existing Practices Within West Berkshire Council

An important part of the review will be based on understanding the current process for defect identification and reporting and the setting and delivery of response times and prioritisation. The delivery of repairs will also ned to be understood, for example the material selection or specification, programming considerations and operational delivery. Finally, an important component is how quality is controlled.

The Highway Safety Inspection Procedure

The review of the document takes into account the requirements of the Well Managed Highway Infrastructure: A Code of Practice (WMHI) and will consider information obtained from other activities to inform the review.

Defect and Enquiry Demand

Review defects and enquiries over the last 3 years to understand trends and demands.

Right First Time

Explore the definition of "Right-first time" in the context of defect repairs. This will consider the residual service life of pavements and current repair methods.

Delivering Repairs

Establishing how defects inform the programme for planned maintenance is also part of the methodology. WMHI sets out a number of recommendations relating to how highway authorities should approach safety defect identification and repair, and how this approach is intertwined with the Council's approach to highway infrastructure asset management.

Claims Data

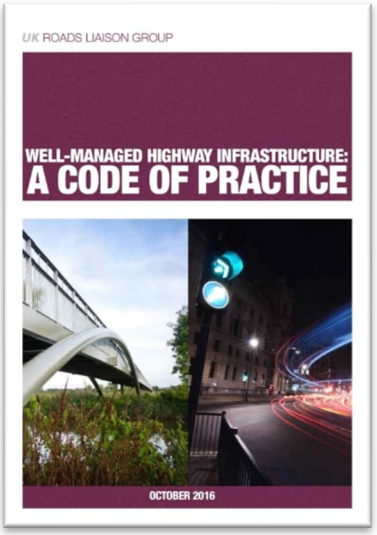
Review the submitted claims over the last 5 years. This will inform understanding about the performance of the highway safety inspection process and the demand being experienced by this part of the service.

Communication

Examine current channels of communication.

3 Industry Best Practice Guidance

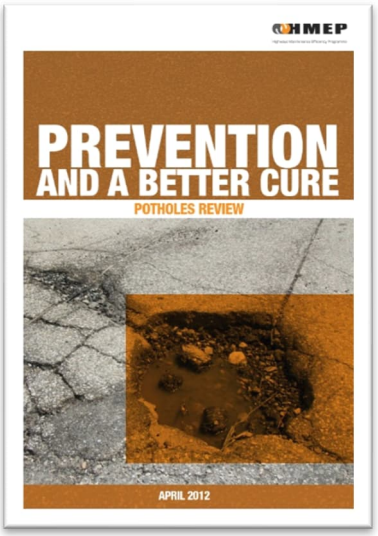
As a Highway Authority West berkshire Council has to fulfil a number of statutory duties, many of which are contained in the Highways Act, 1980. In addition, a number of other Acts impose duties and give additional powers and duties relating to the management of highways.



The publication of Well Managed Highway Infrastructure: A Code of Practice (WMHI) sets the principle that the maintenance and management of highway networks should follow an approach based on risk. Some of the principles which support the adoption of this kind of approach are addressed under other parts of this review, notably the principle of network hierarchy, however specific aspects related to the risk-based approach have been noted as part of this review.

One of the overarching philosophies in WMHI is the principle of adopting a 'right first time' approach to delivering maintenance, as set out in the 2012 Potholes Review, Prevention and a Better Cure. The adoption of this principle not only reduces future maintenance need, reduces disruption to the travelling public, contributes to better perception of the service but also ensures that future risk is, as far as practicable, reduced.

This is in response to a national recognition that it is difficult for Local Highway Authorities to align their performance with the current or historic standards for highway safety inspection and repair as established in Codes of Practice. This is largely due the escalation in the demand as a consequence of a degrading national road network, a demand that will become increasingly unaffordable unless authorities can properly adopt asset management techniques and be allowed to invest the funds that they have available for highway maintenance in preventative repair techniques wherever possible.



To achieve this, the approach to the categorisation of highway defects should be developed using a risk-based approach which takes account of the likelihood and impact of injury or damage that would result from a highway user encountering that defect. The response times to highways defects can then been developed using a risk-based approach which takes into account the changes in likelihood of a defect actually being encountered on different hierarchy roads. The impact of this change allows the consideration of longer response times on infrequently used parts of the highway network, this with the expectation that the defect would be permanently repaired. The shift of resources to a preventative maintenance strategy will also see fewer potholes develop as more roads receive a surface treatment.

WMHI is guidance which supports legislation found in The Highways Act 1980. The two sections of this Act which are most relevant when considering a risk-based approach to response times to highway defects, they are Section 41 and Section 58.

- **Section 41** places an absolute duty on highways authorities and so gives no scope for interpretation in terms of a risk-based approach.
- **Section 58** is the special defence and is important when developing a risk-based approach to response times because it introduces the concept that it is a defence *"to prove that the authority had taken such care as in all the circumstances was reasonably required to secure that the part of the highway to which the action relates was not dangerous for traffic"*.

4 West Berkshire Approach

This review evaluated the current practices of West Berkshire Council for defect identification and reporting, response times, defect prioritisation, material selection and specification, programming (access to the network and road space booking), operational delivery and quality of repair.

This section summarises the key aspects of the assessments made in the development of the recommendations.

4.1 Road Condition in West Berkshire

A central component of this review is analysis of the data which is collected by West Berkshire Council relating to the overall condition of its carriageways. Specific road condition data from both the annual Surface Condition Assessment for the National Network of Roads (SCANNER) survey and the ongoing Vaisala Road AI trial have been reviewed to assist in the development of this review.

Reported Road Condition

West Berkshire reports its road condition to the DfT annually from its condition survey regime. The current trends for the road network are set out in the charts below:

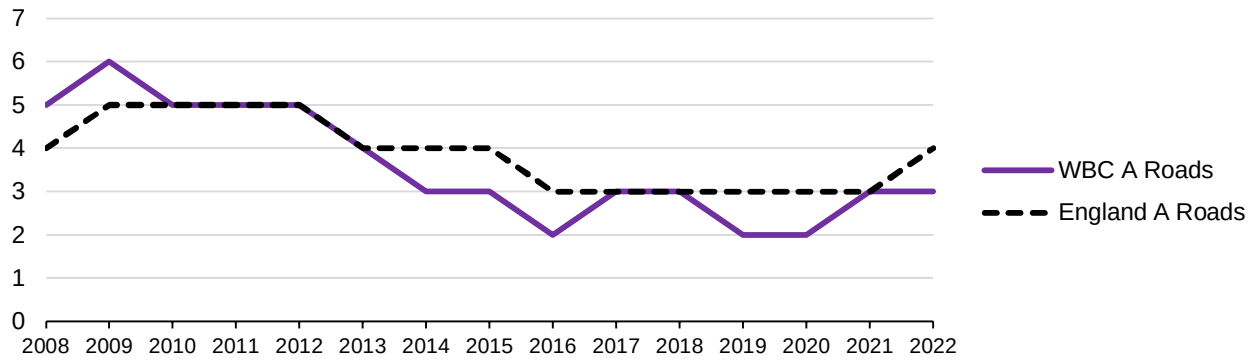


Figure 1: WBC A Roads 'Where Maintenance Should Be Considered'

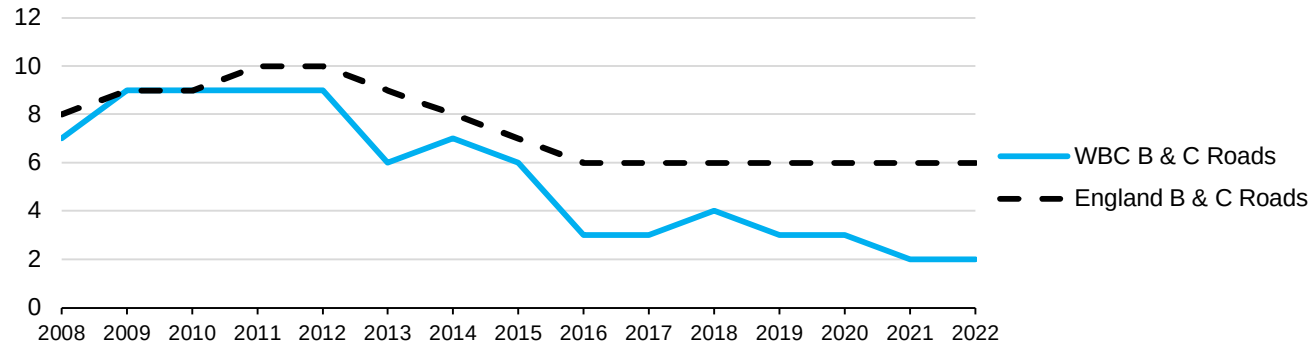


Figure 2: WBC B and C Roads 'Where Maintenance Should Be Considered'

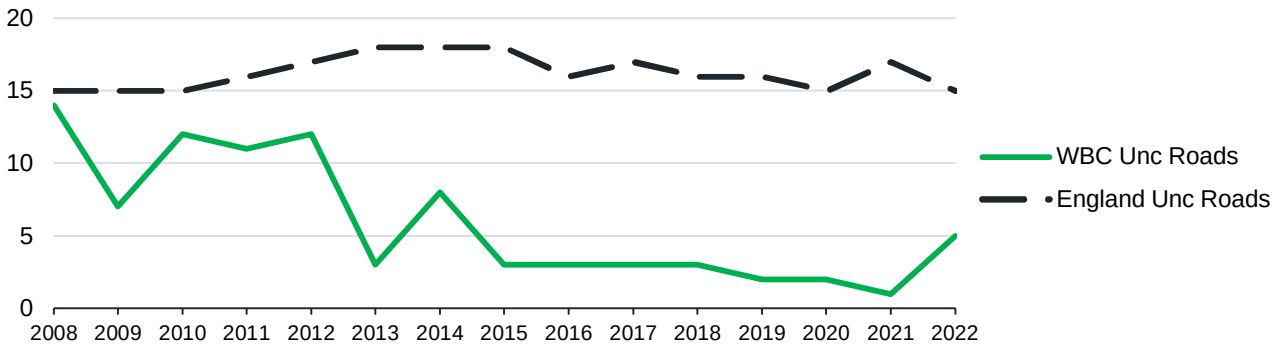


Figure 3: WBC Unclassified Roads 'Where Maintenace Should Be Considered'

These charts set out that the measured road condition in West Berkshire is consistently better than the national averages in England. This, compared to the defect numbers experienced on the network assist in concluding that the road network in West Berkshire is generally in good condition.

More detailed analysis can be found in Appendix 1.

Vaisala Road AI

During 2023 West Berkshire Council began a trial of Vaisala Road AI to conduct video surveys across the road network. This tool can identify a range of defects in the surface of carriageways and the overall condition of the network. This is done by the artificial intelligence component of the system which analyses the defects found.

The tool enables individual defects such as potholes, cracking or fretting to be identified, the presence of these defects contributes to a score for deterioration across the width of the carriageway. West Berkshire Council are currently evaluating the way in which this tool can be deployed to improve a range of asset management activities.

The trial of the video survey is ongoing, to date 52% (687 km) of the network has been surveyed. The results of this survey are summarised in the table below:

Band	Length (km)	%	Condition Band
Band 1	46.561	3.5%	Poor Condition
Band 2	32.721	2.5%	Defects Present
Band 3	60.852	4.6%	Serviceable
Band 4	130.409	9.9%	Generally Good Condition
Band 5	416.780	31.7%	Good to Excellent Condition
Not Yet Surveyed	523.408	39.8%	No Data Available
Total Network Length	**1314.83**		

Table 2: Vaisala Road AI Condition Bands for the West Berkshire Highway Network

As more data is available this information will be complementary to the other data held on the highway network.

In addition to the overall condition bands, it is possible to extract information on individual defect types. So far in 2023 there has been 3235 carriageway related enquiries, from the public and highway inspectors have raised 2586 defects. However, the Vaisala Road AI data is indicating that there are severe potholes on in excess of 4,500 10m sections which have been surveyed. These have been identified as part of the artificial intelligence processing of the survey video. Whilst the system lacks the capability of measuring the

depth of these defects, this does highlight that there are a significant number of defects which are likely to deteriorate and therefore contribute to future demand alongside diminished customer perception.

Recommendation 1

Utilise Vaisala Road AI to establish not only condition bands but inform on potential future issues on the network and establish if it is feasible to deliver preventative interventions.

4.2 Comparison with Neighbouring Authorities

A large number of the population of West Berkshire will be users of road networks which are in neighbouring authorities. Linked to this WMHI sets out recommendation 5 to develop consistency with other athorities to ensure that users of a route do not expereince significant changes in levels of service as they cross boundaries.

To support the understanding of the defect profile, data from two other 'shire' authorities were compared. The data was distilled into a defect rate per km to 'normalise' the differences in network length. These authorities did experience a more significant peak at the same time as the escalation was noted in West Berkshire. However, the previous year's data show previous trends which would indicate that the 2022/23 peak was not exceptional. This is set out in the chart below.

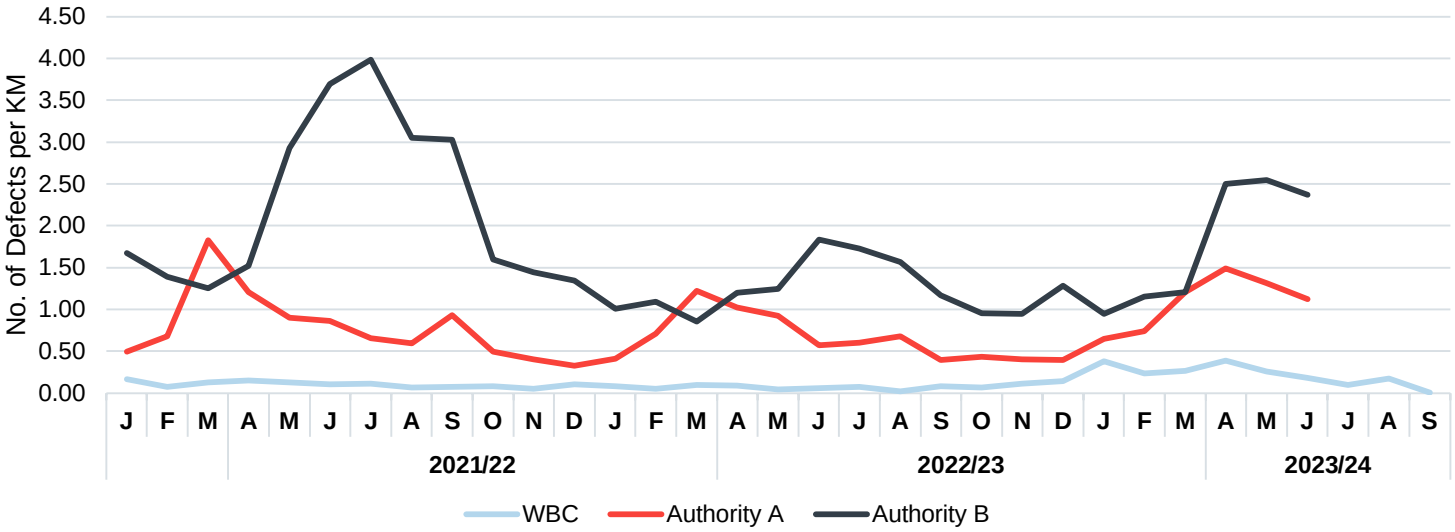


Figure 4: Emergency, Total Defect and Total Enquiry Demand

It should be noted that the volume of defect per km in West Berkshire are significantly less than the values in both Authority A and B. This would tend to suggest that the overall road condition across all part of the network is better in West Berkshire than in the comparison authorities.

4.3 The Highway Safety Inspection Procedure and Investigatory Levels

The current adopted document, Highway Safety Inspection Procedure is dated 2017. We understand that plans have been in place for several years to revise and update this document, a draft was developed in 2020 which has not yet been agreed. It is noted that the 2017 policy has numerous references to intervention level which may be an indicator the policy is founded on the previously adopted code of practice, Well Maintained Highways.

A key component of the development of policy designed to manage the safety of the highway network on a day-to-day basis is the alignment of the highway safety inspection document to the corporate objectives of West Berkshire Council. This ensures that the highway service can demonstrate a focus on both the meeting of the statutory duty of the authority and its current corporate objectives. The current policy does not include a 'line of sight' through the hierarchy of documents that guide the highway service, and this should be considered in a revision of the Highway Safety Inspection Procedure.

The inspection frequencies are founded on network hierarchy. This is set out for the carriageway and footway networks, but the network hierarchy is missing for the cycleway network. However, there is bespoke inspection frequency for cycleways so it may be an omission. The hierarchy appears derived from the example in WMHI but does not consider nuances of West Berkshire's highway network. Additionally, the network hierarchy should be reviewed to ensure that changes in the highway network through developments, transport strategy schemes and other improvement works are reflected.

Recommendation 2

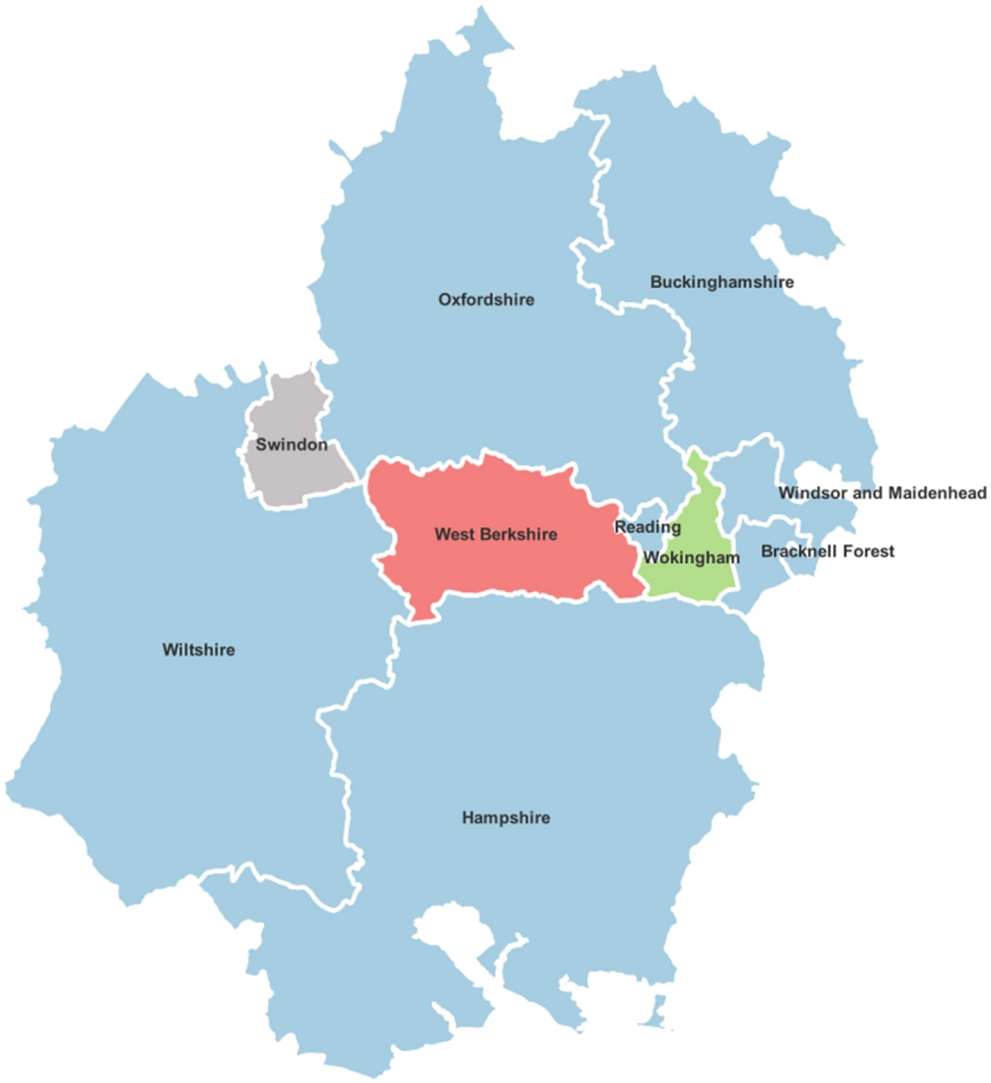
A review of the network hierarchy in order to ensure that the current inspection regime and wider asset management decisions are applied appropriately to the network and changes are captured.

There is reference in the current Highway Safety Inspection Procedure to the way that enquiries from members of the public and other stakeholders are managed, however this refers to Appendix A which sets out the parameters for what is considered a defect. It is not made clear how the reports will be processed and what is an acceptable time period for the inspection team to review the report to risk assess the defect. This may be partially included within Section 7.2, Reactive Inspections, but this is not clear.

Section 8 of the Highway Safety Inspection Procedure sets out the items which are inspected through reference to Appendix A. There are some items which appear to be omitted. For example, reference is made to damaged drainage features, but ponding is not addressed. There is no 'catch all' for highway inspectors to rely upon when occasional defects fall into the grey area between the definitions.

Appendix A of Highway Safety Inspection Procedure sets out the approach to developing Investigatory Levels for commonly found defects on the highway network. It is not clear how these have been established and how usage by all users has been considered in the development of these Investigatory Levels. This is a particularly important factor in establishing the attractiveness of active travel measures, particularly cycling as part of the local authority's objective to drive modal shift from private motor vehicles to more sustainable options. It is also a key consideration in the development of a risk-based approach.

The diagram below colour codes the neighbouring authorities by their currently established Investigatory Levels for carriageway pothole defects.



Investigatory Level Depth
50mm
40mm
30mm
Dimensionless Approach

Figure 5: Neighbouring Authorities Investigatory Levels for Pothole Defects

Recommendation 3

Update the Highway Inspection Procedure to more reflect the guidance in Well Managed Highway Infrastructure: A Code of Practice. This will include a review of the Investigatory Levels set out in the documents.

Appendix A of the Highway Safety Inspection Procedure sets out the response times for dealing with defects found on the network. This is established via a risk matrix which appears to make a rigid assessment which essentially removes probability from the individual assessment of the defect, with probability being established based on the position of the route in the network hierarchy. This both requires an up-to-date application which is accurate to the usage of the route, this may be more challenging to establish in the lower rungs of the network hierarchy.

Response times to these defects fall into four categories, with two of those fitting into an 'emergency' designation which require response in either 2 or 24 hours. Beyond these the remaining two categories are 28 days or then fitted into a forward programme for future consideration. The current defect profile would benefit from review to ensure that another step after 28 days may be appropriate, particularly for those defects such as lining which may benefit from the additional time period to allow for more efficient programming.

Recommendation 4

Review the current defect response times across all defect types to ensure that the balance of keeping the network safe and that the delivery of repairs and interventions occur in an efficient and effect manner.

Finally, the Highway Safety Inspection Procedure does not manage expectation around defect rectification. There would be merit in considering how the principle of 'right first time' may be employed on the commonly identified defects. This may consider residual service life, the challenges of working on some parts of the network due to disruption and the process for following on temporary repairs with permanent repairs.

4.4 Defect and Enquiry Demand

During September 2022 there was a significant upgrade delivered to the system which undertakes defect management. The data developed since this upgrade is more detailed and allows more analysis.

There is a clear increase in demand in West Berkshire across the early 2023 winter period. This peak has been significantly greater than other recent winter periods and has extended further into the spring period. Whilst this is likely in part due to a shift to a more accurate method of recording defects, the accompanying enquiry demand indicates that road users across West Berkshire are reporting more defects than in previous years.

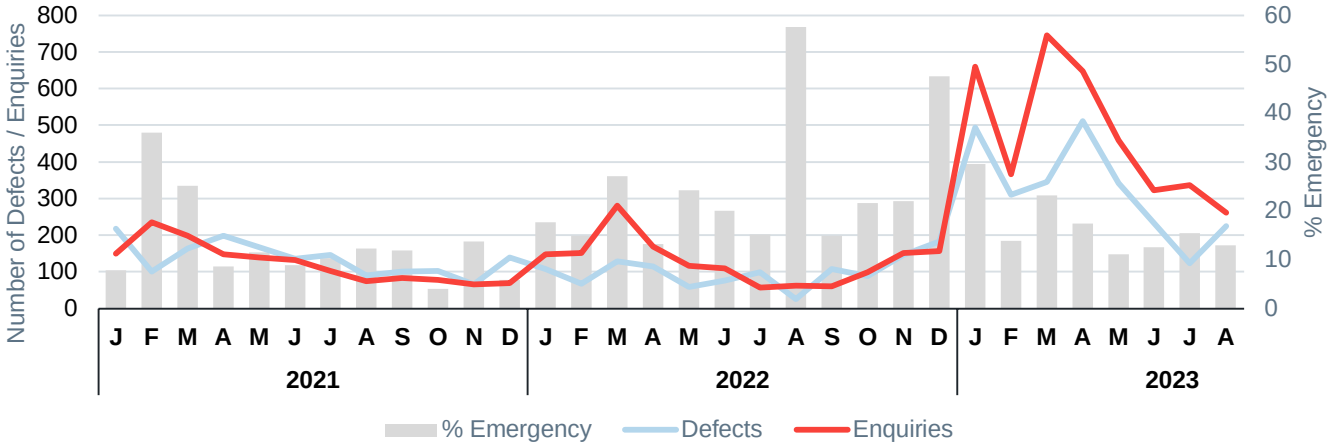


Figure 6: Emergency, Total Defect and Total Enquiry Demand

Circa 50% of the total numbers of enquiries received since the upgrade of the system were resulted as 'No Further Action' and this is likely partially linked to the Investigatory Level not being reached.

4.5 Right First Time

Whilst this topic is touched upon in the section which evaluates the current Highway Safety Inspection Manual this is a key part of the manifesto commitment and therefore has been the subject of specific review.

There is guidance on the methods of pothole repair for the industry, most notably:

- HMEP Pothole Review 2012 – Prevention and a better cure
- ADEPT Potholes - A Repair Guide
- TRL Road Note 44

These documents set out a range of options and propose service lives for various types of repairs. What is clear from these documents is that a 'prevention is better than cure' approach is favourable and to deliver these timely interventions are required.

The aspiration of local authorities is to maximise the proportion of right first-time repairs. But often there are factors that make doing a right first-time repair difficult, severe weather events can often to lead to a significant number of rapidly appearing road defects which can mean that permanent repairs are simply not achievable.

As a highway authority West Berkshire has a duty to keep the network safe and to maintain safety it's often necessary and generally appropriate to do temporary repairs and then follow these up with a permanent repair. Keeping the network safe with temporary repairs as a short stop solution reduces the authority's liability and risk for claims.

The highway service in West Berkshire does follow on temporary repairs with a permanent solution. There is not currently a link that can be tracked in the defect management system but formalising these links should be explored to allow the conversion of temporary repairs to permanent solutions to be tracked.

Recommendation 5

Explore the development of a method to link the follow up permanent repairs with initial temporary repairs.

4.6 Delivering Repairs

To deliver 'right first time' permanent repairs, programming and planning are essential, there is a need to consider what else is happening on the network, coordination is vital as disruption to the network, however necessary, is detrimental to the residents' experience of travelling around the district. Thorough planning ensures that the workforce is protected, pothole repairs may require temporary traffic orders to be in place for road / lane closures or traffic signals before works can commence on site.

Whilst there isn't an industry standard or specification for the repair of potholes, the advice contained within the ADEPT document Potholes – A Repair Guide, may be adopted as good practice. The table below extracted from this document sets out some of the treatments that can be deployed to repair potholes.

What to use (i.e., treatment)	**Where to use** (i.e., location – rural / urban and local / national)	**When to use** (Temp / Perm) (Season)	**Risks**	**Benefits**
Patching with hot asphalt, mastic or bitumen-based material	Suitable for most locations and surfaces	Permanent, all-year round	No specific risks	Recognised and the preferred solution. Accepted by users
Thermal road repairs	Most effective on hot rolled asphalt surfaces	Permanent, all-year round	May not treat an underlying failure mechanism	Restores from early-stage cracking and fretting
In-situ / thermal recycling	Suitable for most locations and surfaces	Permanent, all-year round	Needs high volume of work to be a cost-effective solution	Avoids unnecessary material wastage
Spray injection patching	Most effective on rural evolved roads with low traffic flows	Mixed reports of service life and durability, particularly during autumn / winter	May not treat an underlying failure mechanism and creates surplus chippings	May be deployed on a find and fix basis
Cold applied instant material	Anywhere, however life expectancy reduces with increased traffic	Mainly temporary, however some products are fairly permanent. (but may adversely affect perimeter material)	Different products are required for different locations and / or weather. Lack of attention and cost of return visit and reputation	Speed of repair Some products are more durable. Makes the road safe again – for a period of time

Table 3: ADEPT Potholes – A Repair Guide, Treatment Options

Whatever repair process is used, it is important that the works must be done right and in accordance with the contract specification. The repair of potholes varies with the quality of workmanship and the durability of the repair materials chosen.

Preparation is the key to a good repair, particularly for permanent long-lasting durable repairs. The excavation should be clean, and debris free, a bond coat applied to the sides and base to prevent the ingress of water.

A preventative maintenance procedure is the best follow-up to any pothole repair type, this will then create a waterproofing seal to overlay the material joints around the repaired defect as well as preventing further defects forming.

The current process for evaluating schemes for planned maintenance includes information held of defects across the highway network.

Recommendation 6

Review the current repair methods and materials delivered on the network with a view to trialling and adopting a wider, more flexible suite of repair options.

4.7 Claims Data

West Berkshire Council has a proven track record of defending claims, with more than 90% repudiated in recent years. This is due to a robust method of inspecting the network and initiating repairs. The analysis of the claims data has highlighted a significant increase in the numbers of claims being handled by the authority in the claim period between 1st November 2022 and 31st October 2023.

This significant increase is set out in the chart below and indicates that there is an increase volume of road users who are experiencing damage or injury as a result of incidents involving defects on the network.

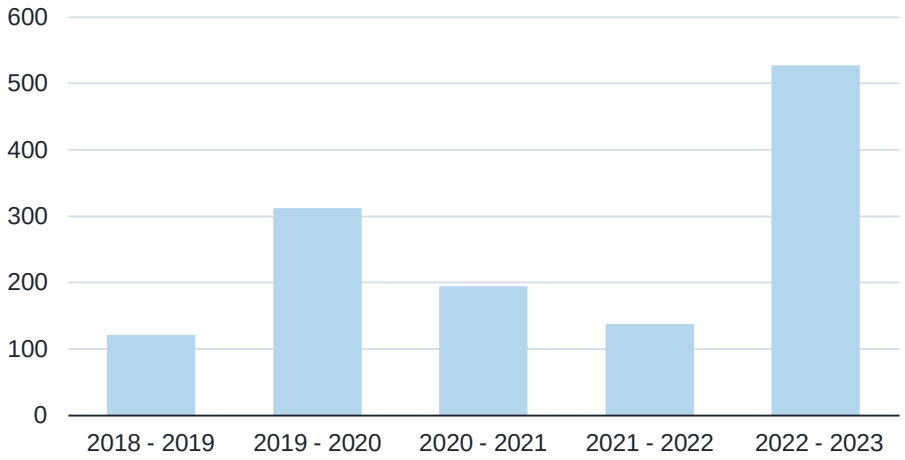


Figure 7: Claims Received By West Berkshire Council Up To End of August 2023

The increase in claims received will clearly place additional pressure on the claims handling team and increase the demand on the inspection teams to feed the process with information. This will then have the consequence of diverting resources away from those activities which maintain the strength of the defence.

4.8 Communication

West Berkshire Council have revised the highway defect reporting and management system and this update has improved the customer facing part of the system which allow the reporting of highway defects on the highway network.

Building on this improvement the development of the communication principles across the service was identified as being an important part of engagement with both councillors and road users. These principles can then be reflected in the emerging Highway Service Communication Strategy.

The following points were identified as specific options:

- Develop better information for Councillors related to highway service activities in their wards.
- Develop the wider use of video and blogs to communicate the details and reasons behind highway works.
- Develop increased engagement with councillors.
- Improve the way that the service listens and provides feedback to those who make contact.

Recommendation 7

Adopt the updated Highways Communication Plan and ensure its implementation to keep stakeholders informed of highways operations. This will include improved information and engagement for Councillors, the wider use of video and other direct communication channels and greater listening and feedback from the service.

Appendix 1 – Defect Data Analysis

The tables below summarise the analysis of the data obtained on surface related defects to support the development of the understanding of the current Defect Management demand in West Berkshire.

Reported Road Condition

	FYE 2018			FYE 2019			FYE 2020			FYE 2021			FYE 2022		
	G	A	R	G	A	R	G	A	R	G	A	R	G	A	R
Road Condition Indicator (RCI) scores for surveyed local A roads and motorways,	69	28	3	72	26	2	74	24	2	70	27	3	71	26	3
Road Condition Indicator (RCI) scores for surveyed B and C Roads							75	22	3	77	21	2	77	21	2

Table A1:1 – Road Condition Bands for West Berkshire

	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Percentage of local A roads and motorways where maintenance should be considered	5	6	5	5	5	4	3	3	2	3	3	2	2	3	3
Percentage of B and C classified roads where maintenance should be considered	7	9	9	9	9	6	7	6	3	3	4	3	3	2	2
Percentage of unclassified roads where maintenance should be considered	14	7	12	11	12	3	8	3	3	3	3	2	2	1	5

Table A1:2 – Percentage of Local Roads in West Berkshire where maintenace should be considered

Defect Data

	21		22		23		Total	
	Emergency	Reactive and Cyclical	Emergency	Reactive and Cyclical	Emergency	Reactive and Cyclical	Emergency	Reactive and Cyclical
January	17	200	19	89	146	348	182	637
February	36	64	10	57	43	267	89	388
March	41	122	35	94	80	266	156	482
April	17	182	15	99	89	424	121	705
May	19	147	14	44	38	304	71	495
June	12	123	15	60	29	204	56	387
July	15	131	15	84	19	104	49	319
August	11	79	15	11	29	196	55	286
September	12	89	16	92	1	8	29	189
October	4	98	19	69			23	167
November	9	57	32	114			41	171
December	8	131	87	96			95	227
Total	**201**	**1423**	**292**	**909**	**473**	**2113**	**967**	**4453**

Table A1:3 – Numbers of Recorded Defects by Month and Type

Type	21	22	23
Ironworks	66	64	82
Kerbs/Setts/Edge/Channels	121	95	70
Slabs, Flags & Blocks	91	65	86
Surface Defects	1346	977	2357
Total	**1624**	**1201**	**2595**

Table A1:4 – Defects by Surface Types

Detail	21	22	23
Cracking/Crazing	1	4	7
Damaged	101	79	85
Depression	1	1	1
Edge Defect	159	158	111
Missing	13	11	9
Perm C'Way Repair (PCR>1m2)	734	267	1249
Perm C'Way Repair-ROAD CLOSURE(PCR>1m2)	43	119	319
Perm F'Way Repair	129	89	85
Perm Pothole Repair (PPR<1m2)	4	2	7
Pot Hole	242	308	556
Raised	65	69	79
Rocking	50	33	32
Sunken	2	29	30
Slippery	38	1	0
Other	42	31	25
Total	**1624**	**1201**	**2595**

Table A1:5 – Defects by Surface Damage Detail

Response Time	2021	2022	2023*
2 Hours (Temporary repair or make safe)		142	444
24 Hours (Temporary repair or make safe)		55	140
28 Days (Permanent repair)		313	1989
> 28 Days (Review / Programmed works)		14	13
Total	**0**	**524**	**2586**
2 Hours (Temporary repair or make safe)			17.17
24 Hours (Temporary repair or make safe)			5.414
28 Days (Permanent repair)			76.91
> 28 Days (Review / Programmed works)			0.503

Table A1:6 – Defects by Response Time

(Septemebr Data Removed as Incomplete)*

Enquiry Data

	April	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Total
2020/21	71	97	107	98	99	98	111	89	110	149	235	199	**1463**
2021/22	148	139	132	102	74	82	77	65	68	147	151	280	**1465**
2022/23	168	116	109	58	62	57	90	139	146	643	347	699	**2634**
2023/24	600	372	204	214	156								**1546**

Table A1:7 – Enquiries by Month and Year

		April	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar
22/23	Valid						27	41	59	65	215	92	202
	Already Reported						0	0	0	1	55	108	322
	N and O Notice						0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Action Not Selected						0	0	0	0	0	0	1
	NFA						33	57	92	91	390	166	221
	Total						**60**	**98**	**151**	**157**	**660**	**366**	**746**
	% NFA						*55.0*	*58.2*	*60.9*	*58.0*	*59.1*	*45.4*	*29.6*

Table A1:8 – 2022/23 Enquiries by Action

(NFA : No Further Action)

		April	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar
23/24	Valid	145	100	85	71	80	3						
	Already Reported	242	145	120	52	21	1						
	N and O Notice	0	0	0	3	3	0						
	Action Not Selected	0	0	2	4	38	21						
	NFA	260	213	115	206	120	0						
	Total	**647**	**458**	**322**	**336**	**262**	**25**						
	% NFA	*40.19*	*46.51*	*35.71*	*61.31*	*45.8*	*0*						

Table A1:9 – 2023/24 Enquiries by Action

		April	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar
22/23	Below IL						14	14	31	25	120	67	105
	Passed to Others						7	7	18	10	29	2	17
	Other						12	36	43	56	241	97	99
	Total						33	57	92	91	390	166	221

Table A1:10 – 2022/23 Enquiries - Reasons for No Further Action

		April	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar
23/24	Below IL	117	66	46	87	52	0						
	Passed to Others	14	20	15	19	10	0						
	Other	129	126	54	100	58	0						
	Total	260	212	115	206	120	0						

Table A1:11 – 2023/24 Enquiries - Reasons for No Further Action

	2020/21												2021/22											
	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	J	F	M
Enquiries	71	97	107	98	99	98	111	89	110	149	235	199	148	139	132	102	74	82	77	65	68	147	151	280
Defects										217	100	163	199	166	135	146	90	101	102	66	139	108	67	129
Diff										68	-135	-36	51	27	3	44	16	19	25	1	71	-39	-84	-151

	2022/23												2023/24											
	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	J	F	M
Enquiries	168	116	109	58	62	60	98	151	157	660	366	746	647	458	322	336	262	25						
Defects	114	58	75	99	26	108	88	146	183	494	310	346	513	342	233	123	225	9	0	0	0			
Diff	-54	-58	-34	41	-36	48	-10	-5	26	-166	-56	-400	-134	-116	-89	-213	-37							

Table A1:12 – Enquiries and Defects by Year

Claims Data

Highways Claims Received By Policy Year - 1 November - 31 October						
	2018 - 2019	2019 - 2020	2020 - 2021	2021 - 2022	2022 - 2023	
No of Claims Received	121	312	195	138	527	
No of Claims Open	0	1	1	4	386	NOTE
No of Claims Settled	10	37	19	10	22	
No of Claims Closed No Payment	111	274	175	124	119	
Repudiation Rate	92%	88%	90%	90%	23%	
NOTE		**Includes 79 Open claims and 297 repudiated**				

Table A1:13 – Highway Claims Received by Policy Year

Highways Claims Made By Policy Year - 1 November - 31 October					
	2018 - 2019	2019 - 2020	2020 - 2021	2021 - 2022	2022 - 2023
No of Claims Made	14	31	13	15	15
No of Claims Open	0	1	1	5	8
No of Claims Settled	14	30	12	10	7
Amount Claimed	22,712.03	57,823.70	24,539.84	33,683.35	71,032.60
Amount Recovered	**-21,982.43**	**-46,669.00**	**-21,107.40**	**-15,823.31**	**-8,550.12**

Table A1:14 – Highway Claims Made by Policy Year

Appendix 2 – Member Presentation

The slides below are taken from a presentation made to members on the 26th of October 2023 at West Berkshire Council's Offices in Newbury.

FIXING POTHOLES

Introductions

Matthew Lugg OBE - Director of Local Transport WSP UK

- 40 years' experience in the highways industry working in local and central government and private sector.
- Led the 2012 Pot-Hole Review (Prevention and a Better Cure) whilst seconded to the Department of Transport for Transport Minister Norman Baker.
- Led the development of much of the national Local Roads Highways Asset Management Guidance.
- International expert in highway maintenance and asset management, presented in USA, China, Australia & the Middle East.
- Former President CIHT, ADEPT and Chair of the UK Roads Board.
- Numerous accolades including OBE for services to Local Government.

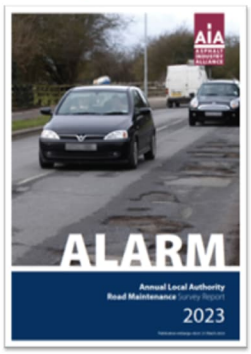
FIXING POTHOLES

Agenda

- Setting the context
- Local road condition in West Berkshire
- Manifesto commitments
- Best Practice
- WBC Current Practice
  - Comparison with surrounding Authorities
  - Investigatory Levels
  - Defect and Enquiry Demand
  - Right First Time
  - Delivering Repairs
  - Claims
  - Communication
- Recommendations

FIXING POTHOLES

Annual Local Authority Road Maintenance (ALARM) Survey 2023



Adverse weather

Adverse weather conditions, particularly wetter winters with more intense downpours and storms and hotter, drier summers, coupled with increased traffic volumes and the age of the network can result in accelerated deterioration and unpredicted failures.

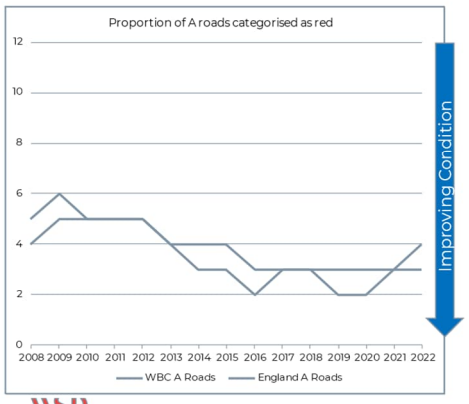
The combined impacts are more acute on evolved and often less well maintained – and therefore less resilient – roads, where water can penetrate existing cracks or defects, leading to the formation of potholes and, in time, undermine the entire structure of the road.

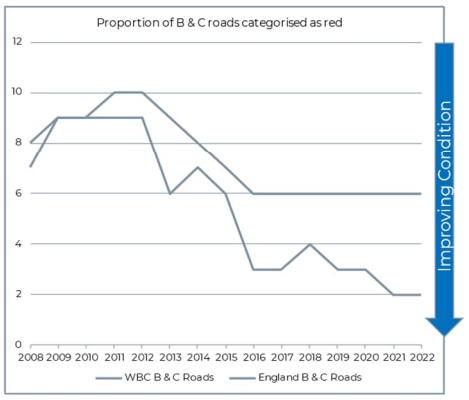
→ The average shortfall in the 2021/22 carriageway budget has **leapt nearly 50%** to £6.4 million per authority, with the total shortfall in the year exceeding £1 billion.

Carriageway budget shortfall up to **£1.30bn**

FIXING POTHOLES

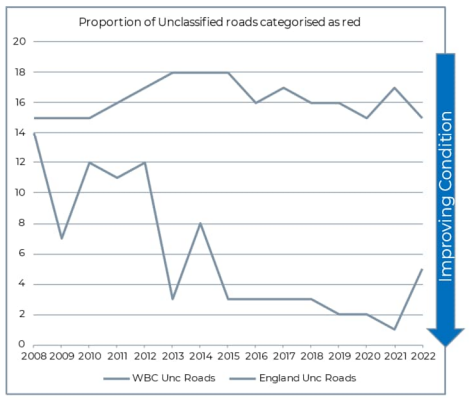
Road Condition West Berkshire – Classified Network





FIXING POTHOLES

Road Condition West Berkshire – Unclassified Network



FIXING POTHOLES

Hotspots

Sept 2022 Onward Mappable Data

B4494 Nr Leckhampstead

Recorded in 9 Separate Months in Period.

B4000 Ermin Street, Nr Woodland St Mary

Recorded in December 22, February, March and May 23

Northbrook St, Newbury

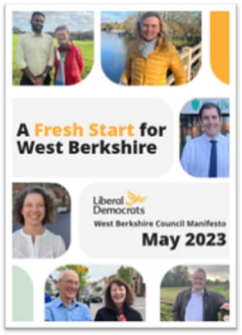
Recorded in 9 Separate Months in Period.

FIXING POTHOLES

West Berkshire Liberal Democrats Manifesto May 2023

Maintaining the road network and improving traffic flows

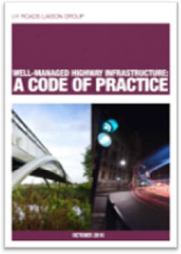
1. Maintaining the road network in good condition.
2. Fixing potholes first time and fixing dangerous ones within 72 hours. Enabling the reporting of potholes via a West Berkshire mobile app.



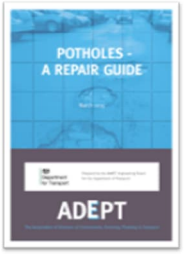
FIXING POTHOLES

Best Practice Guidance

Local authorities should adopt the principle that prevention is a better cure to improve the resilience of the highway network and minimise the occurrence of potholes.



A Code of Practice designed to promote the adoption of an integrated asset management approach to highway infrastructure based on the establishment of local levels of service through risk-based assessment.



Reflects on the Winter of 2017 / 18 and sets out advice for what can be done. Whilst there are no simple solutions, steps can be taken to prevent the situation being any worse than it really needs to be.

FIXING POTHOLES
Current Practice – areas of focus

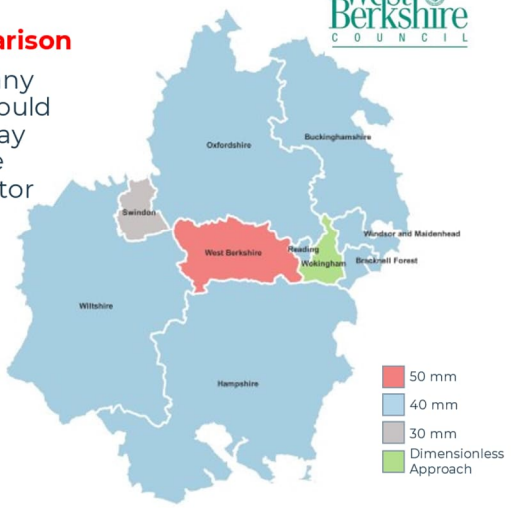
- Defect identification and reporting
  - Moderation
  - Feedback
- Response times / prioritisation
- Temporary / Permanent Repairs
- Repair techniques
- Material selection / specification
- Programming (access / road space booking)
- Operational delivery
  - Quality of repair

FIXING POTHOLES
Neighbouring Authorities Comparison

Investigatory Level is defined as any defect that a reasonable person would recognise as a defect in the highway asset when travelling via the mode being used by the highway inspector at the time of inspection.

Response times, the time taken to repair defects, are in line with neighbouring authorities

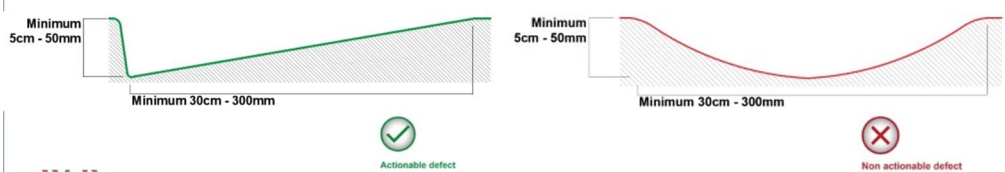
- 2 hours
- 24 hours
- 28 days
- Review / Programmed works



FIXING POTHOLES
Investigatory Levels

- No nationally agreed definition of a pothole

- Investigatory Level also depends on the shape of the defect



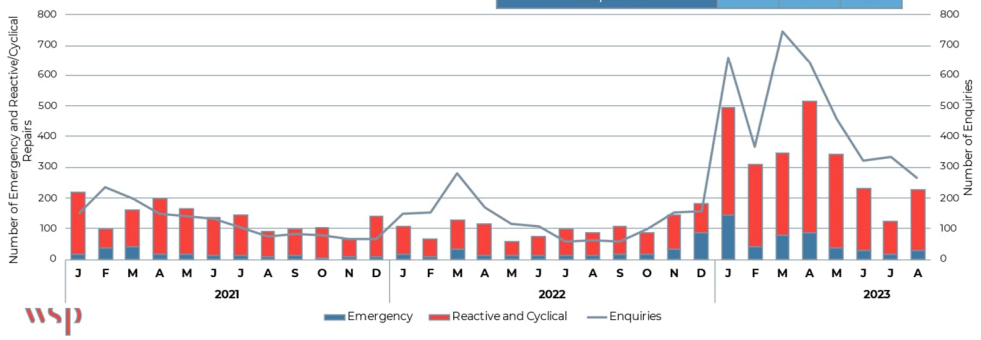
FIXING POTHOLES
Defect and Enquiry Demand

2023 Defects *(to the end of August 23)*

- 22.5% response time of 24 hours or less.
- 77% required a 28-day response.

Average Number Repaired Per Month		2021	2022	2023*
Defects	Temporary	17	24	59
	Permanent	119	76	264
Enquiries		123	130	475

*Up to end August 23

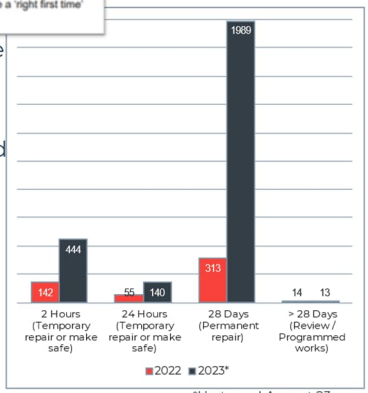


FIXING POTHOLES
"Right-first time" Repairs

How do we decide which potholes to fix first?

Safety is always the priority. When it's not possible to carry out an immediate permanent repair because of other hazards like prevailing weather conditions, flooding etc, we will temporarily 'plug' the pothole to remove the immediate hazard. Otherwise, we aim to complete a 'right first time' repair.

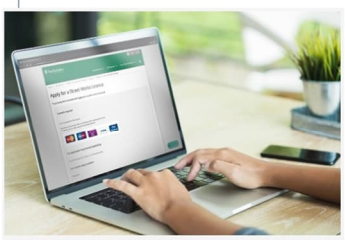
- What does this mean?
  - The objective of 'right first time' delivery is to do the job correctly in accordance with the policy and specification.
  - A pothole or other similar defect is resolved to provide safety for highway users, to protect the road or footway structure and minimise risk and liability.
  - 'Right first time' repairs must seek to minimise the risk of further failure.
  - Durable repairs include keeping water out and withstanding the traffic stress in any particular location
- Temporary Repairs are generally in response to emergency situations to ensure the safety of the network.



*Up to end August 23

FIXING POTHOLES
Delivering Repairs

- No common industry guidance or specification available on how to deliver 'right first time' pothole repairs.
- Programming and planning are critical for successful delivery of 'right first time' repairs.
  - Defect clusters
  - Road space booking
  - Temporary road closures
- Appropriate traffic management is important when considering a 'right first time' approach and safety of the workforce is paramount at all times.



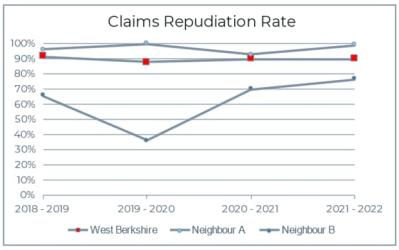
FIXING POTHOLES
Claims

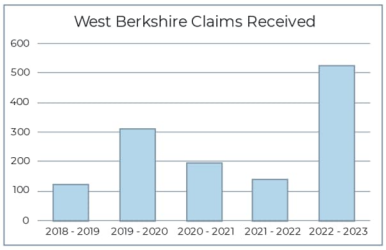
- The repudiation rate is strong.
- Total number of claims received jumped significantly in 2022 - 23.
- Increased enquiries and defects for the current year may place pressure on teams and increase the costs of defending claims.

Pothole-related claims

% of road user compensation claims in England and Wales (average per authority)

72%

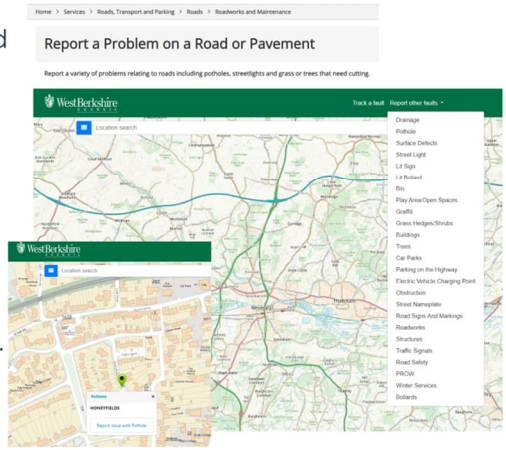




Up to end August 23

FIXING POTHOLES
Communication

- New problem reporting system and feedback in place.
- Develop and deliver a refreshed communication and engagement plan.
- Better information for councillors related to highways activity in their wards.
- Wider use of video and Bloggs – to explain highways work.
- More engagement with councillors.
- Improve listening and feedback.



FIXING POTHOLES
Recommendations

- Change Investigatory Levels - increases the number of actionable defects
- Review Repair Techniques / Specification
- Improve Data Collection – this means exploring new technology
- Improve Communication – would help improve customer satisfaction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Level 2
100 Wharfside Street
Birmingham
B1 1RT

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Innovation	Strengths
Warm SMA asphalt	Use of less Carbon in production Road is open to road users sooner
Preservation	Quick process Provides a protective seal that can significantly extend the performance life of an asphalt road surface,
Micro asphalt Rejuvopatch	Seals and waterproofs carriageway defects no need for excavation cold lay - significant carbon reduction
Micro asphalt Rejuvoflex	Seals and waterproofs footway defects no need for excavation cold lay - significant carbon reduction
Roadmender	Reduced costs due to less depth, Quicker to undertake for repair, Requires 70-80% less new material per m2 Reduced HAVS exposure /noise and waste produced
Ultracrete tough Patch	Can be used as a 1st time permanent repair No repeat visits Cold material no carbon usage Works when pothole is under water
Miles Mac – Carbon neutral	Help meet West Berks carbon reduction programme
Higher RAP content in wearing courses	use of recycled materials, less virgin products,

Use of mini planer to carryout carriageway patches	Reduction of HAVs Certainly of depth overall reduction of costs against tradionally 90mm patches material wastage reduced
Jet Patcher –TBC jointly choose suitable sites in the Spring and arrange a programme	
lower PSV use 60 PSV rather than 65 - reduce need for expensive high stone PSV	will allow the use of increased RAP material, cheaper product due to being more available
Rubber crumb	Allow the use of alternative materials so becomes more sustainable
Single layer material	Reduced costs due to less depth when required - not standard 90mm all the time, Quicker to undertake for repair as only one type of material, Reduced wastage Reduced HAVS exposure /noise and waste produced
OCL foambase Cold Recycled Bound Material / HBM	Significant savings as 100% recycled product Use of less Carbon in production Cold lay material Ideal in footways / Basecourse
Textureblast	Quick process, meaning roads could remain open, minimising disruption Raises skid resistance levels and improve the safety of the road surface compared to resurfacing, retexturing significantly reduces the carbon impact of a project as hot applied asphalt is not required significantly extend the performance life of an asphalt road surface,

Rosehill Products	Quick process, using recycled rubber products. Product does not deform - standing up well on sites chosen quick to install
Introduction of Causeway ordering system	Replacement of failed system (SMART) Streamline job scheduleing / completion process Remove the need for paper Finace systems brought up to date
Cell Pave	Reduced carbon compared to standard grass concrete sections. Reduced manual handling, quicker to install as a result Robust
Kerbo - charger ducts	Reasonable quick to install. Customer feedback good. Provides a cheap way of preventing people tripping over cables

Innovation Log

Weakness	Results
Use of warm mix additive is an additional cost to production Some manufacturers charge more for warm SMA	If laid at depths >40mm material seems to withstand high traffic usage
need to be aware of original skid resistance values as leaves a temporary decrease in skid resistance post-application although skid resistance levels will return to their original values, the rate of this is proportional to the site's traffic levels	No results available at this time as only used product 1st in October 2020
no structural strength added to pavement	Laid on two roads, good feedback in general 1 complaint
no structural strength added to pavement	Programme started November and runs until March - mixed results
Does not work well in wet/rainy weather conditions as a result certain patches failed and had to be redone.	Reasonable successful when used in dry warm weather
More expensive compared to other cold products	Very successful when laid and compacted correctly, No highway claims due to failed pothole repairs reported since Feb 2020 HPAS approved to work on high speed roads
Where carbon off setting can be used, product more expensive consideration needed to where best to use product	paper written
Dependant of PSV of material	Successfully laid on A4 will be monitored over the next few years

	Trial starting in January after initial delay. Sites need to be identified better to achieve output Due to lack of sites available needed to postpone
	no programme started as yet
Possible SCRIM readings lower than anticipated Client not convinced	Trail site Andover Road summer 2022
Possible SCRIM readings lower than anticipated Concerns over recycling product in the future	Ruled out at present due to concerns regarding material
Cost of material - need to work with suppliers to make more cost effective	Areas where used no signs of deformation, looks similar to standard materials
can not be used as wearing course yet needs a slurry / surface dressing as protection or wearing course layer	Trail to be carried out on Andover Road Paper to be written
Can leave surface very open textured / plucking out can then occur	Compared to resurfacing, retexturing significantly reduces the carbon impact of a project as hot applied asphalt is not required Results show that the road surface is restored to the same – or better – skid resistance as when it was first laid. 10,000msq carried out 2022/23 Council saved approximately 1,000 tonnes of high-quality virgin aggregates and 40 tonnes of hydrocarbons Savings of more than 50,000kg of carbon dioxide due to shot blast surface retexturing system.

if not correctly installed subject to bolts becoming loose,	no issues with speed humps installed
Learning new system trainers not fully up to speed with sytem teething issues not addressed in a timely fashion	implementation - early teething problems but now running smoothly
Costs comparable with traditional grasscrete	no issues experienced
can be fiddly if footway uneven, Not sure at present how hard wearing product will be. Will need to be totally replaced if footway improvements works carried out Who maintains going forward!	Will continue to monitor - no issues at present

Case Studies / links if available	Useful web links	Outcome / Business as usual
		implemented permanently on contract
	Asphalt preservation can double the surface life of roads, says ASI MD – Highways News (highways-news.com)	Initially put on hold further trials expected May 2024
	Rejuvopatch Cheshire West & Chester – Rejuvo JPCS	Similar product now used as provided by Colas not Rejuvo
Before After West Berkshire 2.pdf	Rejuvoflex – Rejuvo JPCS	Similar product now used as provided by Colas not Rejuvo
PDF BST-102 Best Practice Case Study - Road Me	www.roadmenderasphalt.com/	Not plans at present to continue
		implemented permanently on contract, used as primary pothole filler
	awaiting final sign off	implemented permanently on contract
		Due to issue of trying to get 30% high PSV stone currently unviable

		implemented permanently on contract
		no further action at present time
paper being written to join up with Miles Macadam works		implemented permanently on contract
		no further action at present time
need agreement re costs		implemented permanently on contract
		implemented permanently on contract
https://www.volkerhighways.co.uk/en/news/detail/road-retexturing-solution-helps-achieve-carbon-savings	Textureblast - WJ	implemented permanently on contract

Rosehill-Highways-Case-Study-Speed-Cushions-	One Piece Speed Cushions, Rubber Speed Bumps Suppliers: Rosehill Highways UK	implemented permanently on contract
		implemented permanently on contract
Greener parking for West Berkshire	https://www.groundtrax.com/cellpave-hd-truck-grade-heavy-duty-paving-system/	implemented permanently on contract
Kerbo Charge v2.1 Install Instructions Envirobed and	EV Charging Cable Gully | Pavement Charging | Kerbo Charge	Awaiting update from West Berks Council to see if they wish to continue

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School Streets Scheme, Francis Baily, Thatcham

Committee considering report:	Individual Executive Member Decisions
Date of Committee:	19 July 2024
Portfolio Member:	Councillor Stuart Gourley
Report Author:	Cheryl Evans
Forward Plan Ref:	ID 4374

1 Purpose of the Report

1.1 To inform the Executive Member for Environment and Highways of the responses received during the statutory consultation of an Experimental Traffic Order, which gives effect to a "Car Free School Streets" initiative at Francis Baily Primary School.

1.2 To discuss the level of success of the project during the initial six months of the scheme.

1.3 To make recommendations as to the continuing operation of the project.

1.4 Explore additional initiatives to help reduce the parking issues raised by local residents in the vicinity of the school site.

2 Recommendations

It is recommended that:

2.1 The Experimental Traffic Regulation Order which gives effect to the traffic restriction is made permanent.

2.2 Enforcement of the restriction using an ANPR camera be carried out to improve compliance with the restriction.

3 Implications and Impact Assessment

Implication	Commentary
Financial:	The costs of implementing the permanent order can be funded from an appropriate Capital budget.

Human Resource:	None.			
Legal:	The Traffic Regulation Order will need to be sealed by the Legal Services team.			
Risk Management:	None.			
Property:	None.			
Policy:	The consultation was in accordance with the Council's consultation procedure.			
	Positive	**Neutral**	**Negative**	**Commentary**
Equalities Impact:				
A Are there any aspects of the proposed decision, including how it is delivered or accessed, that could impact on inequality?		x		N/A
B Will the proposed decision have an impact upon the lives of people with protected characteristics, including employees and service users?		x		N/A
Environmental Impact:	x			Encouraging and enabling active travel will reduce the environmental impact of travel and is part of the Council's Environment Strategy.

Health Impact:	x			Encouraging and enabling active travel will promote physical activity.
ICT Impact:		x		N/A
Digital Services Impact:		x		N/A
Council Strategy Priorities:	x			• Thriving communities with a strong local voice • Tackling the climate and ecological emergency: Successful school streets initiatives will help deliver the priorities within the above plans to reduce the environmental impact of travel and improve the overall network management.
Core Business:		x		Although contributing to the above Council Strategy Priority and wider social and environmental objectives, the delivery of this type of project is not in itself a statutory service.
Data Impact:		x		N/A

Consultation and Engagement:	Local stakeholders and road users were consulted on the proposed school streets initiative by way of; • School expression of interest survey (July 2022) • Statutory advertisement of Experimental Traffic Regulation Orders (Aug 2023 to date) • Public meeting, engagement exercise to consider access concerns raised by local residents prior to the scheme being introduced (Aug 2023) • Set of FAQ's (Aug 2023) • Consultation Hub – Design feedback of implemented scheme (Sept 2023) • 2nd Public meeting, engagement exercise to report on actions raised at 1st meeting and receive updates on local experiences (Feb 2024) This report has been circulated to all Thatcham Ward members ,Thatcham Town Council and shadow and minority members.. The following comments were received: No comments have been received by the time of this report but any comments received up to the date of The ID meeting will be verbally presented during it.

4 Executive Summary

4.1 This report highlights the feedback received during the statutory consultation of an Experimental Traffic Order which gives effect to a "Car Free School Street" scheme in the vicinity of Francis Baily School in Thatcham. The purpose of this report is to enable a decision to be made as to whether the scheme is made permanent, modified or discontinued.

4.2 Whilst no statutory objections to the making of a permanent Traffic Regulation Order were received, a number of comment and suggestions have been made, particularly in respect of the level of compliance with the restriction and issues concerning displacement of traffic to other roads in the local area.

5 Introduction/Background

Introduction

5.1 A "Car Free" School Street is a road near to a school with a temporary restriction prohibiting entry to motorised traffic at school drop-off and pick-up times. The restriction applies to school traffic and through traffic, with exemptions for local residents and those

with particular needs. The intended result is a safe, healthy and more pleasant environment for everyone.

5.2 School Street schemes in isolation will not tackle all safety concerns raised outside schools. Various road safety initiatives need introduction and regular attention to achieve longer term behavioural change, for example Park and Stride schemes, cycling, pedestrian and scooter training programmes and improved infrastructure.

Background

5.3 The Department for Transport's Active Travel Fund (Tranche 4), gave the Council the opportunity and an injection of funding (£30K) to undertake a second School Streets scheme in the district, to follow on from the successful pilot scheme introduced in Calcot in 2021.

5.4 Francis Baily was chosen for this scheme due to the continued parking issues outside the schools raised by local residents as well as the school at peak drop off and pick up times.

5.5 The Traffic and Road Safety team had worked previously with the school on a number of occasions and approached the Head Teacher and Kennet Academy. All parties agreed to participate in the scheme.

5.6 This scheme main aims are to:

(a) Cut down on traffic and parking pressures outside the main school entrance on Skillman Drive.

(b) Remind drivers using the A4 that a school is sited along this route and at key times children are present in high numbers.

(c) Discourage car journeys to/from school and encourage more walking, cycling and scooting.

(d) Encourage those that need to travel by car to use identified Park and Stride locations including Dunstan Green Park and Old Bluecoats.

6 Supporting Information

Consultation

6.1 The scheme was launched on 5th September 2023, at which point an Experimental Traffic Regulation Order came into force to prohibit motor vehicles from entering the restricted streets, namely Edwin Close, Jedburgh Close and Skillman Drive between the hours of 08:15 and 09:15 and 14:30 and 15:30 Monday to Friday (Term time only), and the necessary regulatory signs were erected at the roadside. The extent of the restriction is shown in **Appendix A**.

6.2 When the Experimental Traffic Regulation Order came into force, a statutory consultation began, inviting comments on and objections to the restriction. In addition to the statutory consultation, which is essentially a formal legal process and not especially accessible to many stakeholders, comments were invited via an online

portal (https://www.westberks.gov.uk/FBschoolstreets). Feedback has also been collated from the two public meetings held and from emails. The consultation period ran for six months, at which point the comments received were collated and analysed. Separate documents summarising the consultation process are included as **Appendix B** (Consultation hub) **Appendix C** (public meetings).

6.3 The key messages arising from the consultation are as follows:

(a) No formal (statutory) objections to the restriction have been received.

(b) The majority of respondents agreed with the scheme's aims to reduce traffic and parking pressures on Skillman Drive.

(c) Several respondents said that they felt safer walking or cycling because of the restriction.

(d) Many respondents have observed over time that some parents are ignoring the restriction and therefore suggested that formal enforcement be carried out.

(e) Some suggestion that pupils lack road safety awareness and asking for more education to encourage and enable safe walking, cycling, and scooting to school.

(f) Residents impacted by any displacement and inconsiderate parking issues have raised concerns that the scheme has increased issues in surrounding roads.

(g) It was suggested that the Council should seek to increase alternative areas where possible to help with the parking displacement.

Monitoring of the scheme

6.4 Data was collected before and after the scheme was launched using variety of methods.

(a) Speed radar devices.

(b) Car volume counts.

(c) Civil Enforcement Officer patrols – 25 visits in total:

- A4 London Road – 20 visits, 1 notice issued, 3 cars observed.
- Skillman Drive – 4 visits, 0 notice issued, 0 cars observed.
- Jedburgh Close – 1 visit, 0 notice issued, 0 cars observed.

6.5 A summary of the results can be found in **Appendix B** (Other monitoring data),

6.6 The main points arising from the collection and monitoring of the data are:

(a) There is a significant increase in non-resident parking when the school term starts. However, the data does not support the anecdotal reports of an increase of displacement of parking to surrounding streets following the introduction of the school streets scheme.

(b) Good early compliance after the scheme was introduced, vehicle parking volumes have decreased across the roads being monitored. There is an assumption the scheme is being monitored and nice weather may have influenced behaviour at these times.

(c) At 2 months & 6 months post-scheme introduction data collection identifies increases in non-compliance on Skillman Drive.

(d) The new 'SLOW DOWN' ProGEN Vehicle Activated Sign situated on the A4 Bath Road either side of the Francis Baily A4 entrance (opposite the Esso garage), results show high driver compliance during drop off and pick up times. The additional message of 'School Ahead' has had a positive impact as demonstrated in the November and beyond data.

Has the scheme met its objectives?

6.7 Residents have reported a significant improvement in the previous parent parking issues in Skillman Drive i.e. parking on or blocking resident drives, abusive confrontations with parents.

6.8 Active Travel surveys with the school community (Staff, parents, and Year 5 & 6 pupils) highlighted barriers and concerns relating to being more motivated to increase active travel – **Appendix D**.

The following elements have also been introduced and now well used by school community:

- More covered cycle and scooter storage for both pupils and staff along with cycle helmet storage lockers.
- A shelter to help parents to take cover from inclement weather.

6.9 Data collected by the ProGEN Vehicle Activated Sign on the A4 Bath Road outside the school shows that vehicle speeds have reduced at school opening and closing times.

Further measures

6.10 Various additional measures have been suggested in consultation responses and will be considered in detail and implemented where possible using existing capital budgets.

7 Options for consideration

7.1 To discontinue the Francis Baily School Streets scheme and remove the restriction on vehicular access. In view of the positive reaction to the scheme and the encouraging shift towards active travel for journeys to school, this is not recommended.

7.2 To extend the restricted zone to include surrounding roads. Whilst it is acknowledged that surrounding roads do experience parking associated with the schools during term time, our surveys did not indicate a significant increase since the scheme was introduced. Extending the restricted zone is therefore not recommended, but parking issues in will continue to be monitored.

7.3 To make the School Streets scheme and the associated restriction permanent, as proposed below.

8 Proposals

8.1 In view of the above, it is proposed that:

(a) The Experimental Traffic Regulation Order which gives effect to the traffic restriction be made permanent.

(b) Enforcement of the restriction using an ANPR camera be carried out to improve compliance with the restriction.

9 Conclusion

9.1 It can be concluded that the School Streets project at Francis Baily has succeeded in encouraging non-car travel to the school via Skillman Drive and creating a safer and more pleasant environment in the vicinity of the school.

9.2 In order to maximise the effectiveness of the scheme, enforcement of the restriction and various ancillary measures in the local area are required.

Appendix A – Francis Baily School Streets map

Appendix B – 6 months consultation summary and additional data information

Appendix C – Public Meeting summaries

Appendix D – Active Travel Survey summary (school community)

Background Papers:

ID4097 - School Streets Pilot Project, Calcot Infant and Junior Schools

Subject to Call-In:

Yes: ☒ No: ☐

Wards affected: Thatcham South and Crookham

Officer details:

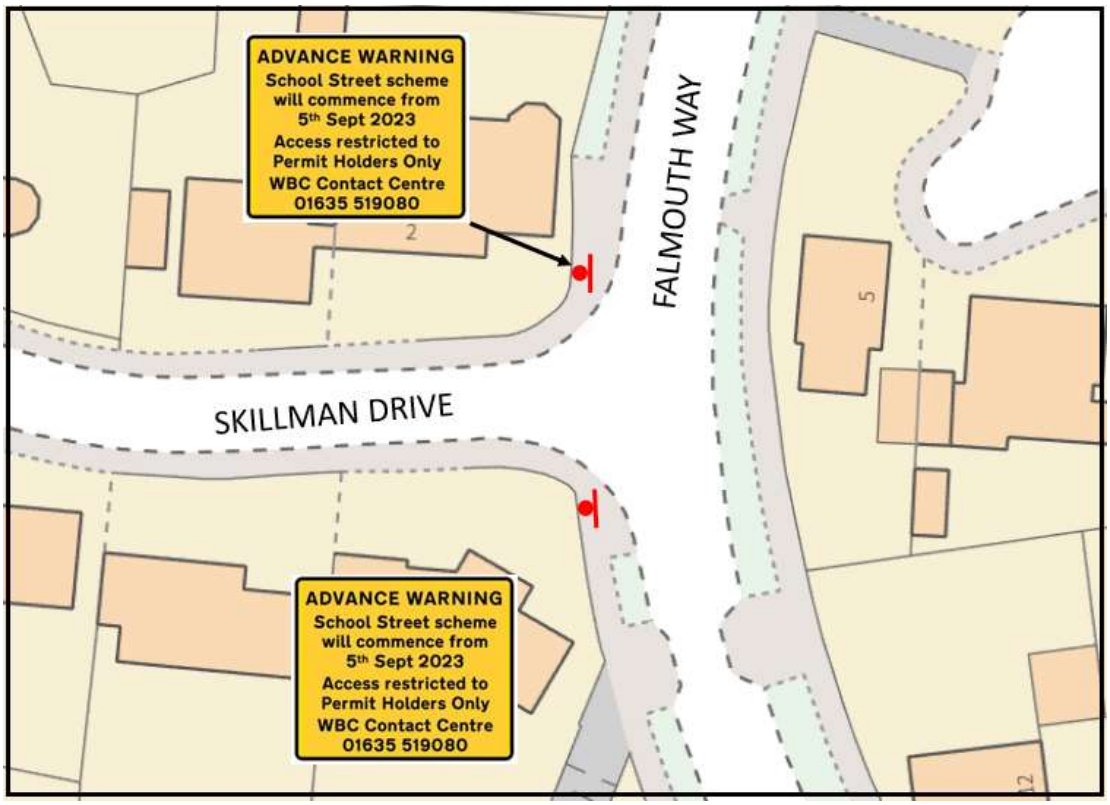
Name: Cheryl Evans
Job Title: Senior Road Safety Officer
Tel No: 01635 519984
E-mail: cheryl.evans@westberks.gov.uk

FRANCIS BAILY SCHOOL STREET – SIGNS (WDM Ref WBC2324-415)

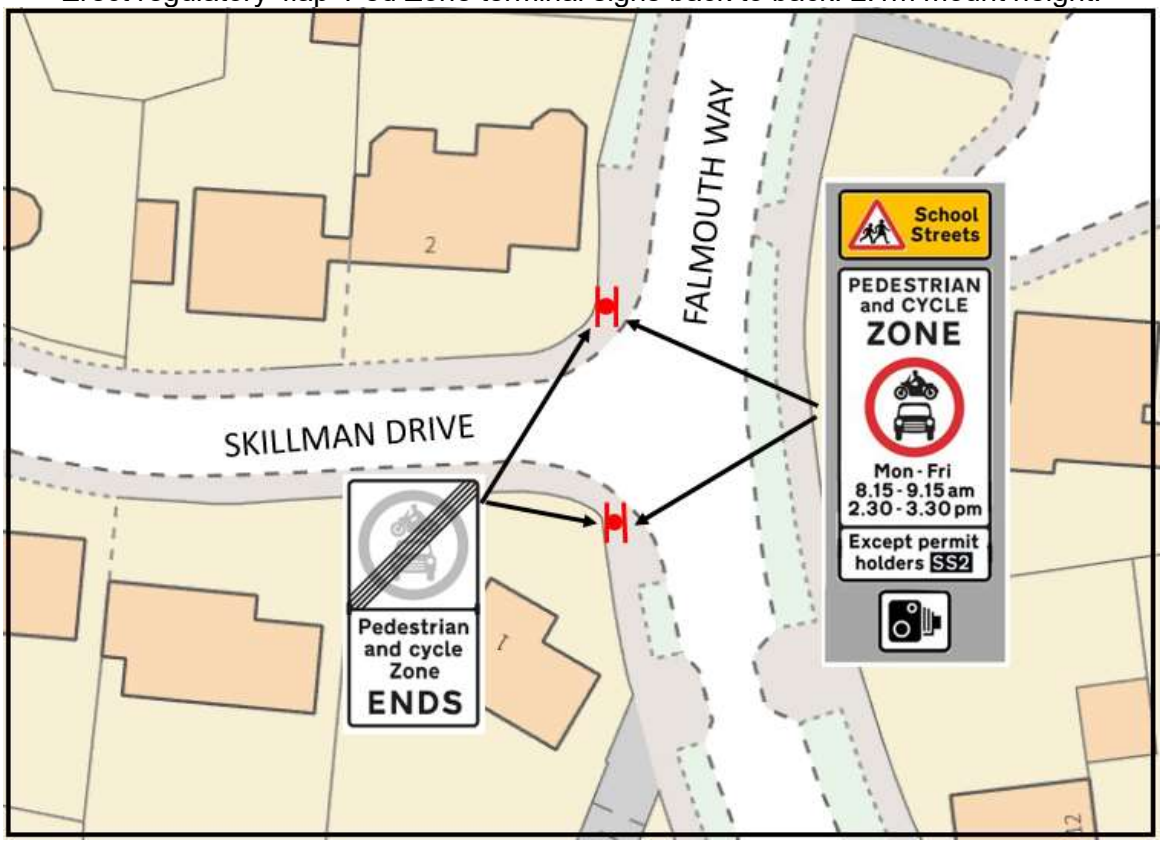
Install 2x posts at back edge of footway as marked on-street (76mm, 5m length – regulation signs are 2m height and will be erected in Sept on these posts. 2.1m clearance needed above footway for the regulation signs)

Erect 2x AWS (used for Calcot School Street scheme 2021 - to be retrieved from store and adhesive label provided by SignWays added, showing new operational date for scheme)

- Post and AWS installed w/c **Mon 10th July** 2023 <u>if possible</u> (school term ends 20 July)



Mon 4 Sept - Remove to store AWS for future use
Erect regulatory 'flap' Ped Zone terminal signs back to back. 2.1m mount height.



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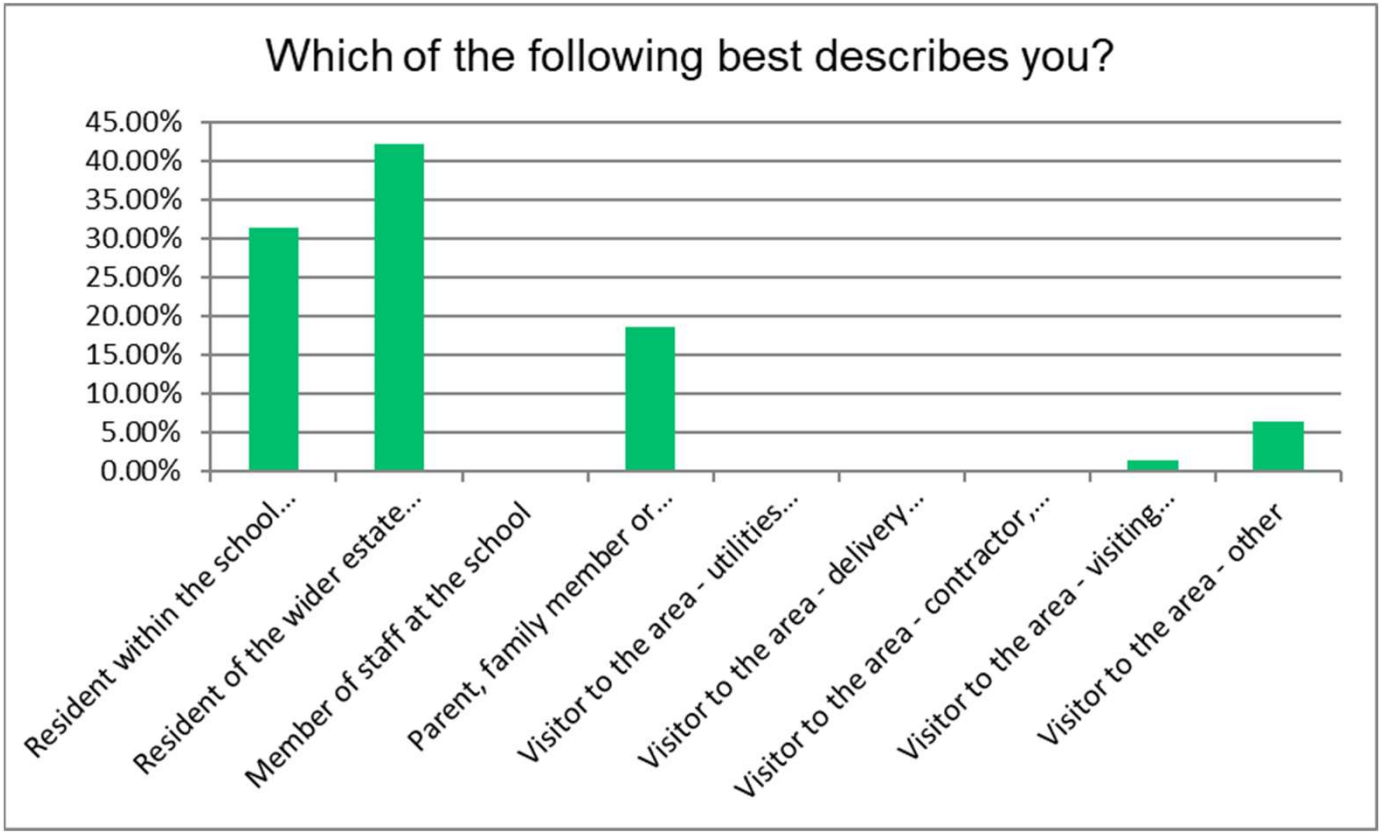
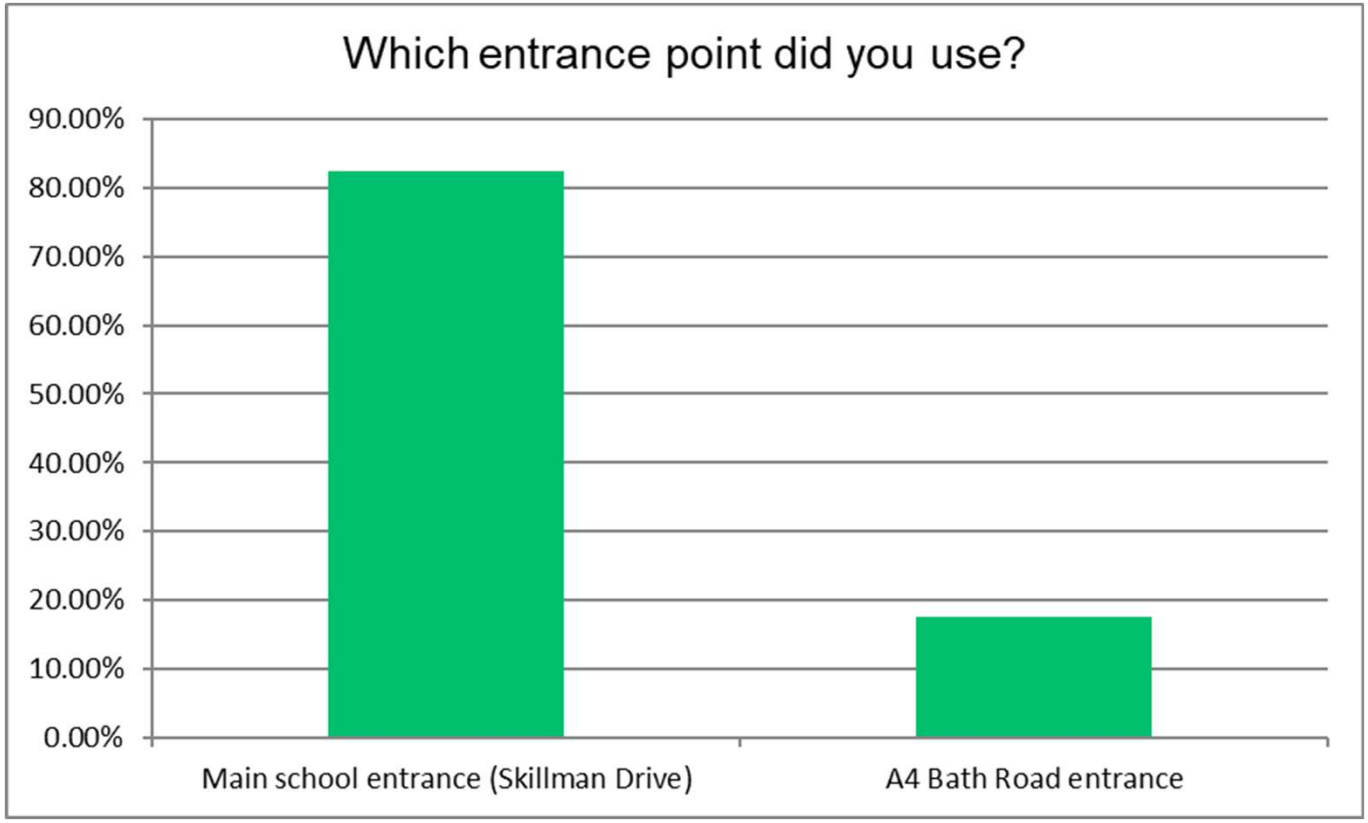
Francis Baily School Streets

Review – 6 months public consultation

Q1 – 140 respondents overall

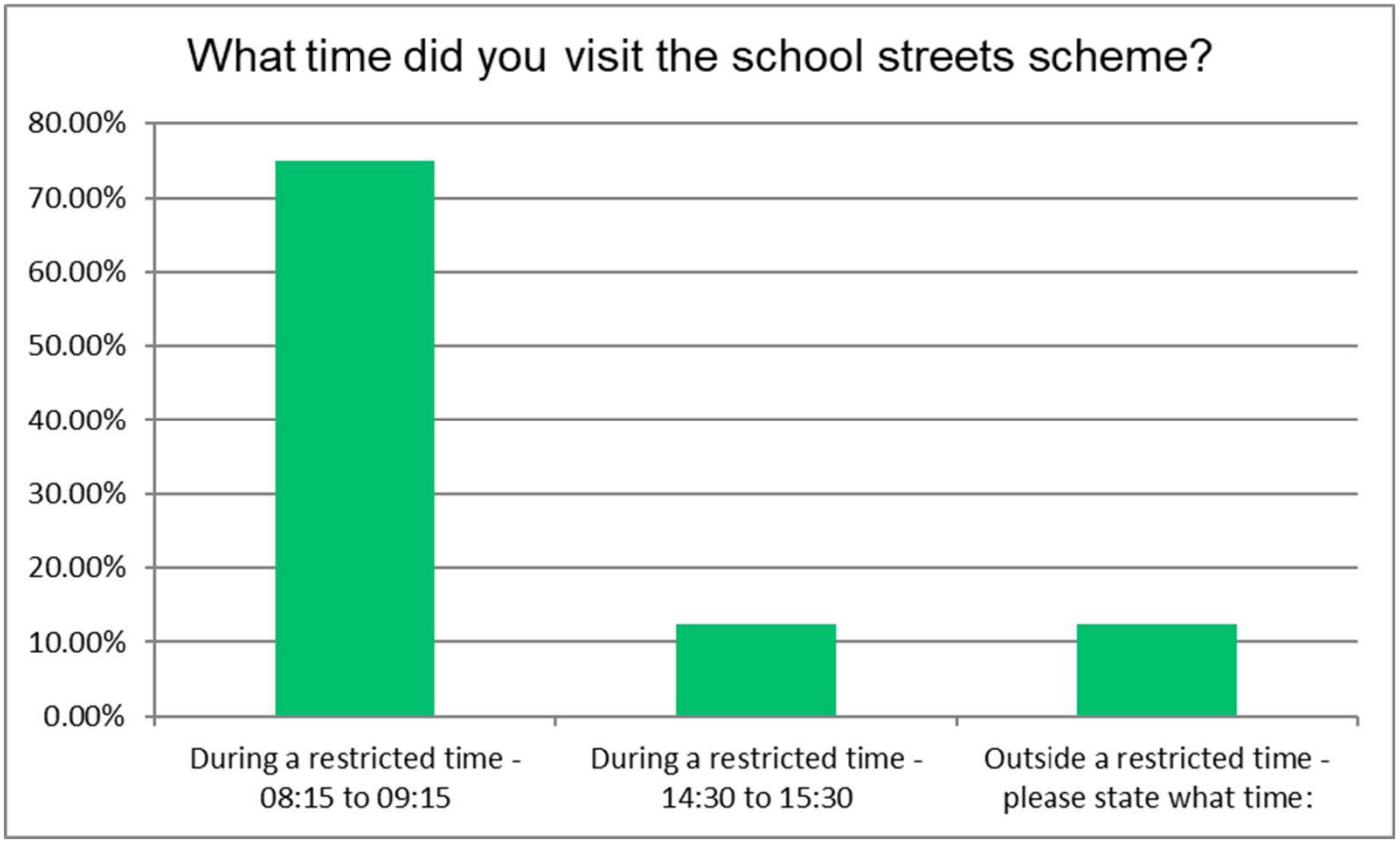


Q2



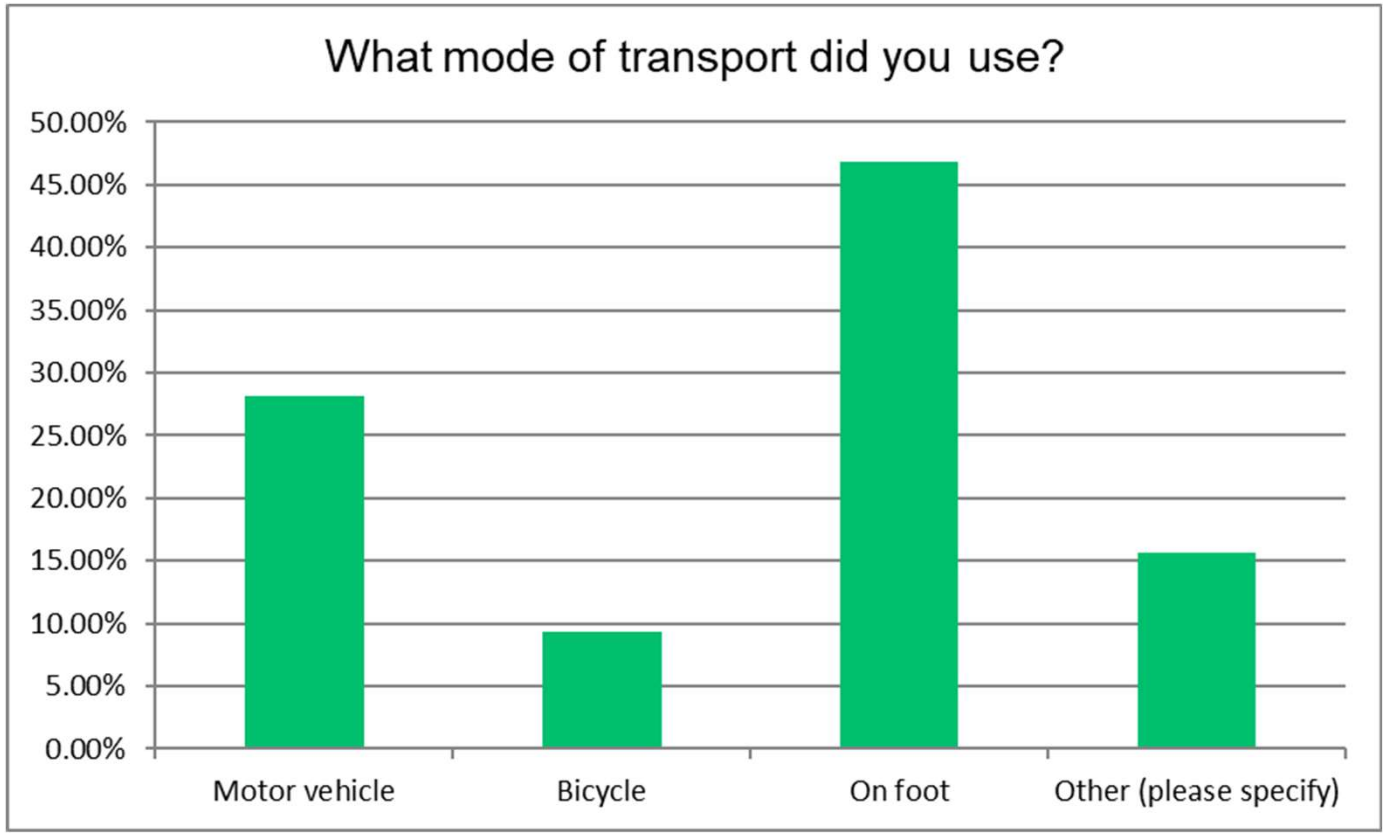
34/140
Main – 28
A4 – 6

Q3



32/140
AM – 24
PM – 4
Other -4

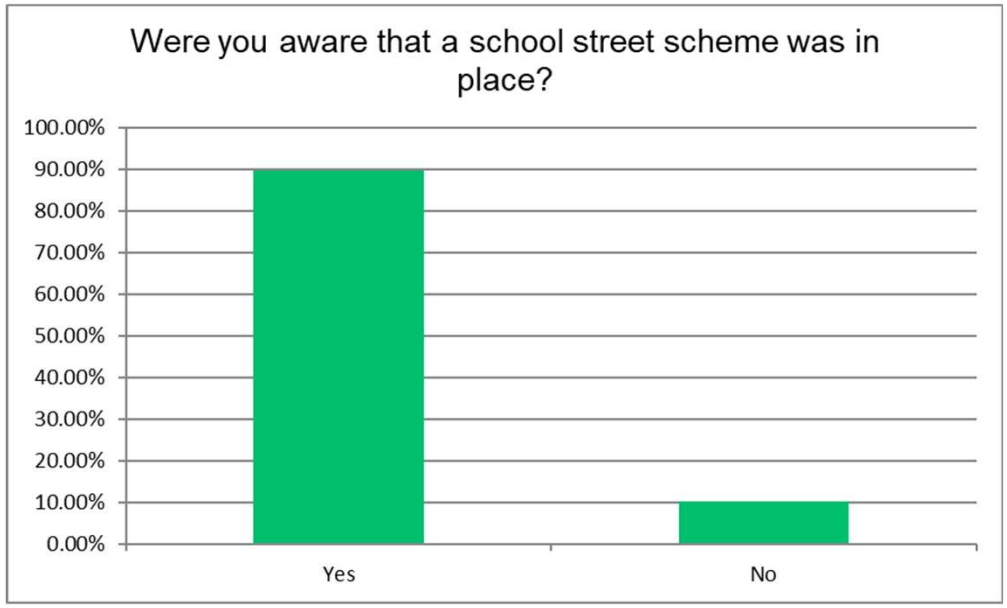
Q4



32/140
Motor – 9
Bicycle – 3
Foot - 15
Other -5

Other –
- Park & Stride (3)
- Mobility Scooter (2)

Q5 & Q6

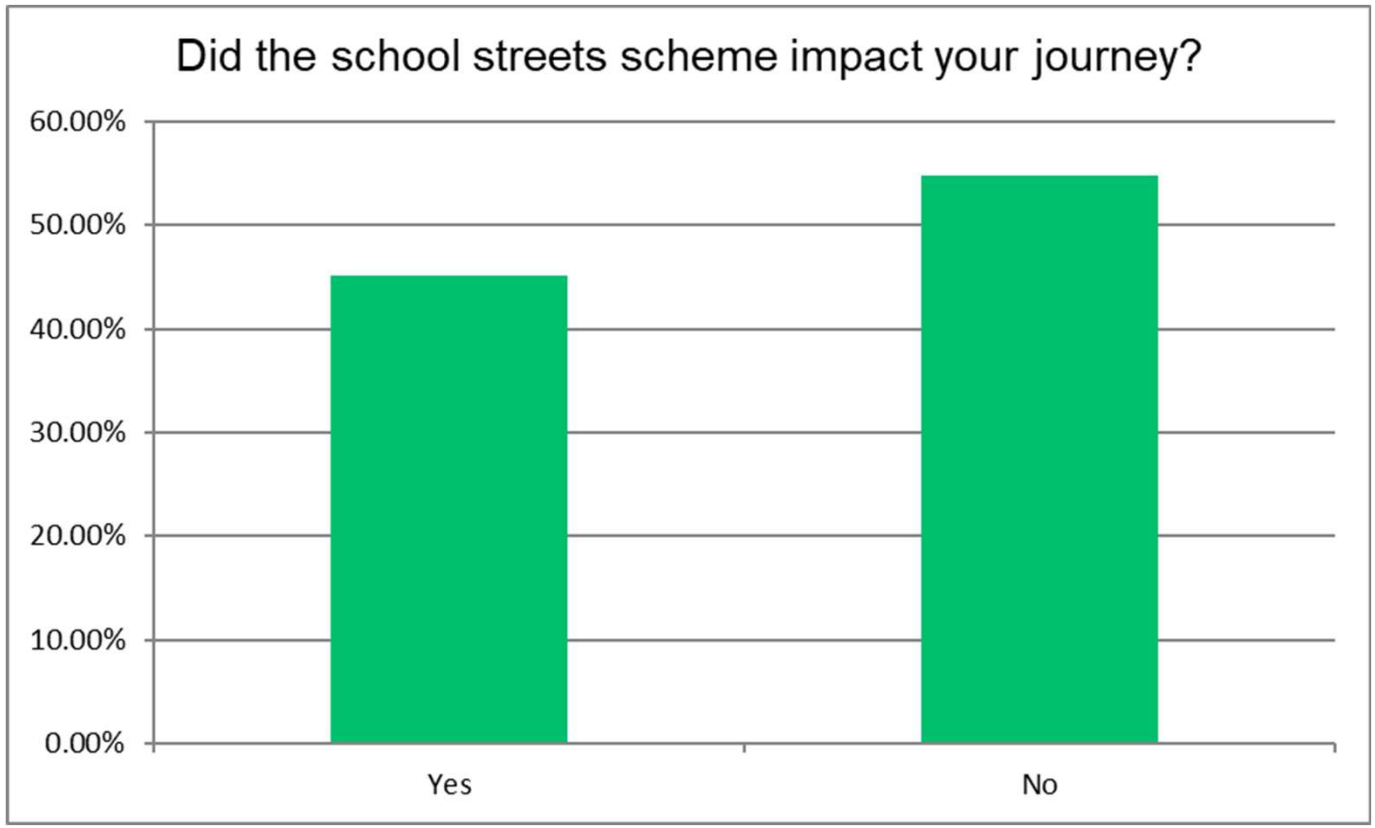


136/140
Yes – 122
No – 14

121/141
Other –

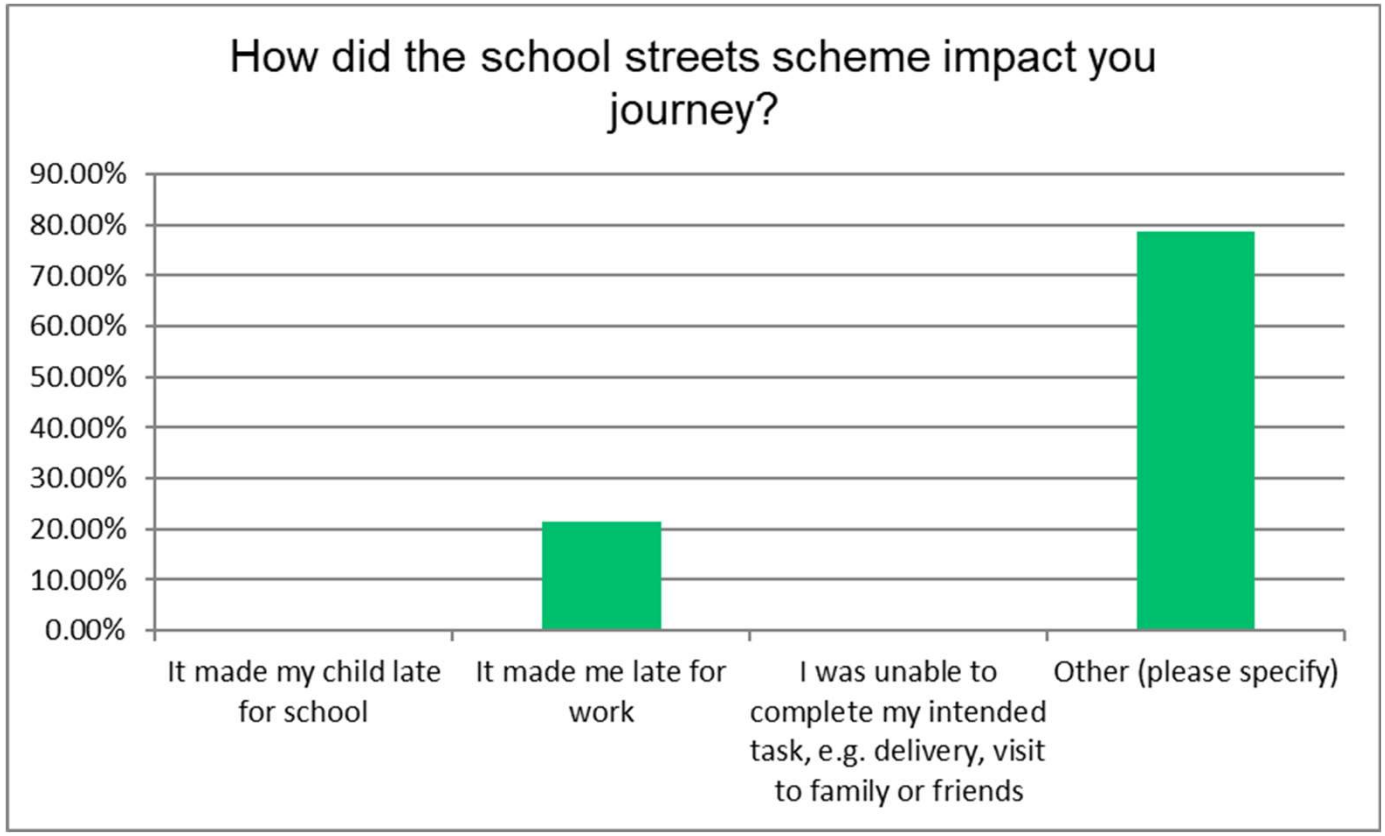
- SS sign at end of road (18)
- Email (1)

Q7



31/81
Yes – 14
No – 17

Q8



14/140 answered

- Late (4)
- Other (11)

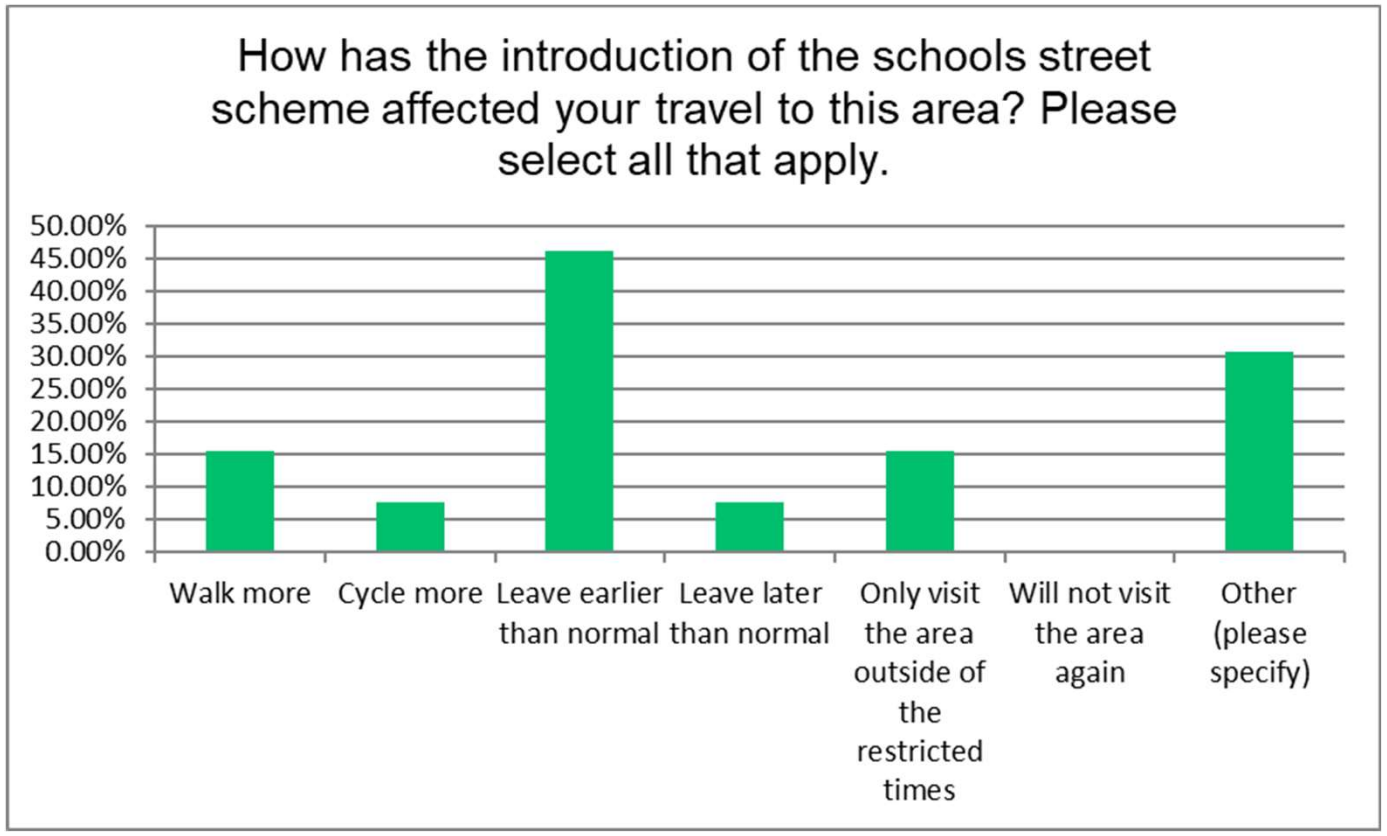
1. Had to leave earlier (3)
2. Positive impact, felt safer (6)
3. Changed child care (1)
4. Problem moved to Hurford (1)

Q9

31/140 answered

- Yes (13)
- No (18)

Q10

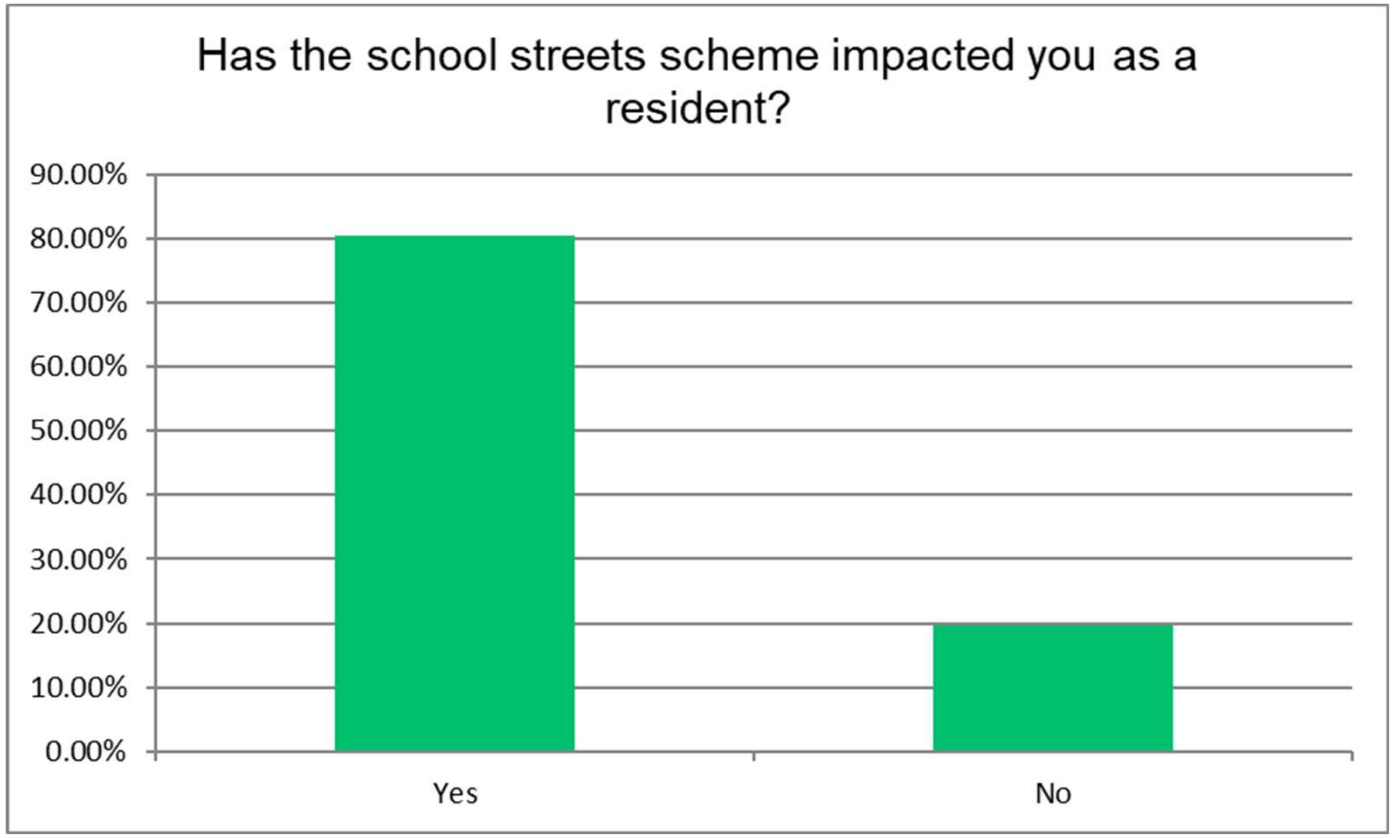


13/140 answered

- Other (4)

1. Financial (2)
2. Needs enforcement (2)

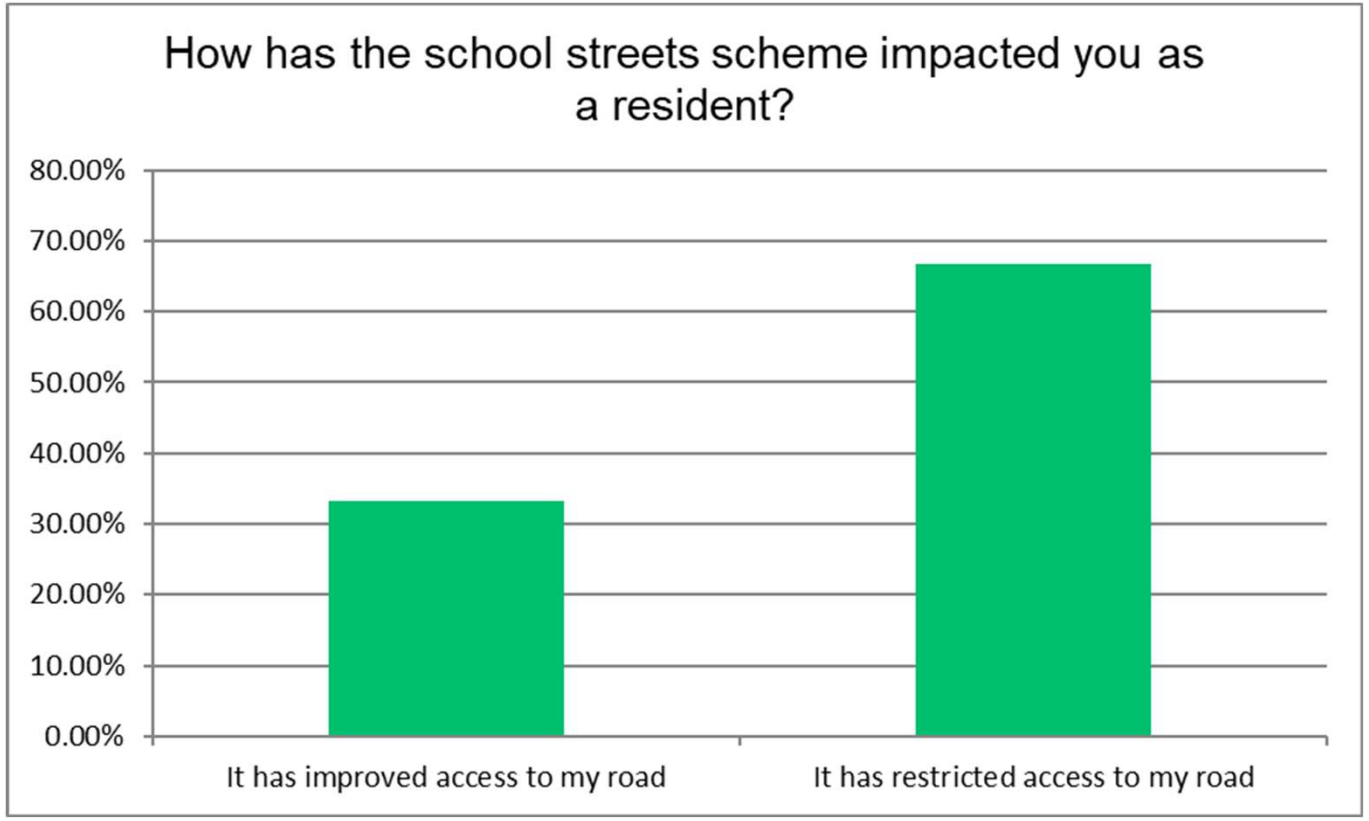
Q11



102/140 answered

- Yes (82)
- No (20)

Q12



81/140 answered

- Improved (27) – live with in scheme
- Restricted (54) – live surrounding roads

Q13 & Q14

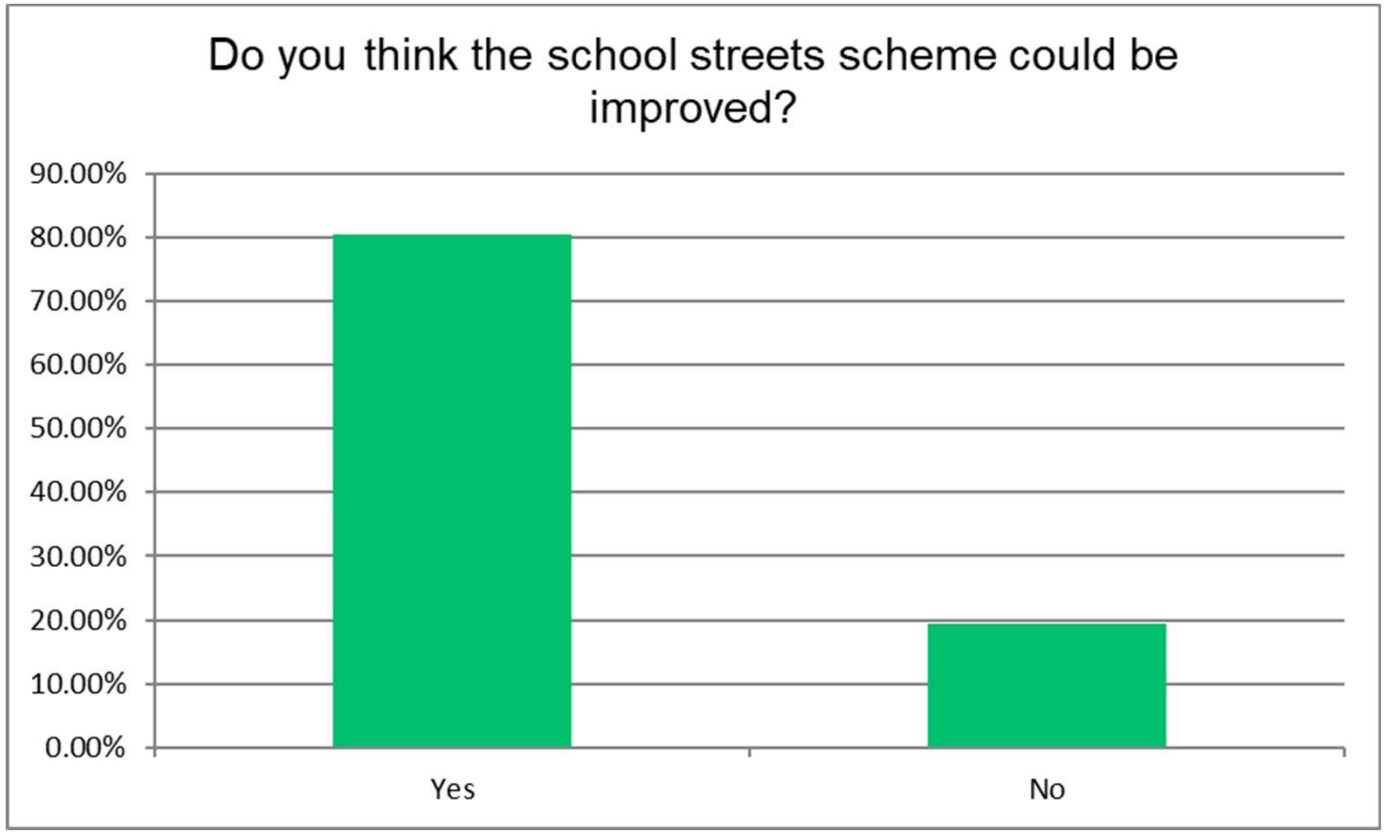
80/140 answered

- Yes (51)

All that answered Yes report issues related to surrounding roads ie Hurford Drive or family/ friends access

- No (29)

Q15



128/140 answered – feedback Q16

- Yes (103)
- No (25)

Q16 – scheme improvement feedback

106/140

- Widen restriction to include other near residential roads (23)
- 20mph in area (1)
- provide grasscrete parking on Falmouth Way (1)
- Request for formal Enforcement (44)
- Park & Stride options (7)
- Remove (5)
- Other – educate parents, more entrance points to school, repair pavements, home to school transport options, everyone forced to walk that lives within a mile,

Q17 – further comments

100/140

- Scheme good in principle but needs monitoring/ enforcement
- Positive impact outside school– feels safer and should be used outside more schools
- Safety of the children must be a priority
- No longer have issues of inconsiderate parent parking
- Less stressful now in the mornings
- Parking issues have just moved to surrounding roads
- Council needs to be more accountable for pavement maintenance including foliage cutbacks that restrict pavement widths
- Needs better communication at start of scheme to ensure everyone is fully aware of what it will mean
- Parents that attend a school need to take more responsibility of their actions
- Please make the scheme permanent

Other associated schemes

Park & Stride

- TTC – agreed Dunstan Green Park as Park & Stride point (agreed Jan 2024)

1. Site to be resurfaced (TTC to confirm when completed)

2. School pupils are involved with creating a Park & Stride map and tasks relating to encouraging everyone to swap to active travel choices. (launch date tbc)
3. In-school park & stride term competition
4. School to introduce some Road Safety ambassadors with Years 5/6 (peer to peer)

Other monitoring data

A4 Speeding

- Two ProGENS introduced (Sept 2023) uses school ahead message during School Streets restriction times

DATE	11-Oct	12-Oct	13-Oct	14-Oct	15-Oct
DAY	MON	TUES	WED	THURS	FRI
08:00	3.8	5	0	10.9	3.1
08:15	1.9	1.9	6.1	1.7	0
08:30	0	0	2.2	0	5.6
08:45	0	1.7	4.5	6.2	0
09:00	1.6	0	0	0	3.3
09:15	1.9	3.9	8.1	6.3	3.3
09:30	1.8	2	0	1.8	1.6
09:45	0	0	0	0	3.6
10:00	4.6	1.7	3.2	3.6	0
14:00	2.9	4.4	4.5	1.3	1.7
14:15	1.5	5.7	1.3	3.2	0
14:30	1.4	2.7	1.6	4.3	2.9
14:45	0	4.5	1.8	0	3.6
15:00	6	1.5	1.8	1.9	0
15:15	3.4	0	2	1.7	0
15:30	2.6	1.6	1.5	4.3	0
15:45	3.4	0	0	5.3	3
16:00	5.3	0	6	3	0

DATE	06-Nov	07-Nov	08-Nov	09-Nov	03-Nov
DAY	MON	TUES	WED	THURS	FRI
08:00	0	4.5	0	4.9	7.3
08:15	0	0	0	0	6.7
08:30	0	0	0	0	0
08:45	0	0	0	0	0
09:00	5.3	2.1	4.4	4.7	4.5
09:15	0	4.9	0	5.6	2.5
09:30	0	2.4	6.6	2.9	0
09:45	2.6	2	6.8	0	4.7
10:00	2.7	0	3.7	5.6	5.4
14:00	2.2	5	11.9		4.8
14:15	0	2.9	4.5		3.8
14:30	2.6	6.5	4.8		0
14:45	0	6.7	8.6		0
15:00	0	2.4	2.9		2.9
15:15	0	0	0		0
15:30	0	0	2.2		0
15:45	0	0	5		0
16:00	5.3	2.4	0		1.9

DATE	26-Feb	27-Feb	28-Feb	29-Feb	01-Mar
DAY	MON	TUES	WED	THURS	FRI
08:00			2.3	0	2
08:15			0	0	3
08:30			0	0	0
08:45			2.3	0	0
09:00			0	7.1	0
09:15			5.9	0	0
09:30			2.9	3.6	0
09:45			2.4	2.3	2
10:00			6.2	6.2	4.4
14:00	2.9		9.8	4.9	2.4
14:15	2.3		0	4.4	2.6
14:30	7.7		7.1	9.6	9.3
14:45	2.2		14.9	0	0
15:00	2.9		0	0	0
15:15	0		0	0	0
15:30	2		7	0	0
15:45	0		0	0	2.1
16:00	8.2		7.9	2.3	2.2

Vehicle Volumes: Pre/ Post term times

- Significant increase in non-resident parking when school term starts
- AM non-resident parking is higher than PM

TIME	08:15 - 09:15								14:30 - 15:30							
Base	(Pre)	Average	Tues (Term start)	Mon (All school in)	Tues (All school in)	Average	veh no	%	(Pre)	Average	Tues (Term start)	Mon (All school in)	Tues (All school in)	Average		%
Date	01/09/23 & 04/09/23		05/09/2023	11/09/2023	12/09/2023		+/-		01/09/23 & 04/09/23		05/09/2023	11/09/2023	12/09/2023		+/-	
Skillman Drive CN/1	50/35	43	126	142	155	149	106	71%	30/26	28	22	32	17	25	-4	-14%
Falmouth Way CN/8	115/143	129	193	173	199	186	57	31%	140/113	127	155	143	141	142	15	11%
Hurford Drive CN/5	32/24	28	54	56	55	56	28	50%	20/24	22	54	47	29	38	16	42%
Bollingbroke Drive CN/1	17/20	18	47	37	41	39	21	54%	29/25	27	53	35	44	40	13	32%
Archangel Way CN/2	57/45	51	69	71	54	63	12	18%	54/52	53	50	50	50	50	-3	-6%
NOTE WEATHER - DRY/ HOT																

Vehicle Volumes– Post scheme (Sept 2023)

- No significant change could be due to early compliance

Parking displacement analysis Pre and Post School Streets

TIME	08:15 - 09:15								14:30 - 15:30							
Base	(Pre)	Average	Tues (Term start)	Mon (All school in)	Tues (All school in)	Average	veh no	%	(Pre)	Average	Tues (Term start)	Mon (All school in)	Tues (All school in)	Average		%
Date	01/09/23 & 04/09/23		05/09/2023	11/09/2023	12/09/2023		+/-		01/09/23 & 04/09/23		05/09/2023	11/09/2023	12/09/2023		+/-	
Skillman Drive CN/1	50/35	149	126	142	155	149	0	0%	30/26	25	22	32	17	25	-1	-2%
Falmouth Way CN/8	115/143	186	193	173	199	186	0	0%	140/113	142	155	143	141	142	0	0%
Hurford Drive CN/5	32/24	56	54	56	55	56	-1	-1%	20/24	38	54	47	29	38	0	0%
Bollingbroke Drive CN/1	17/20	39	47	37	41	39	0	0%	29/25	40	53	35	44	40	-1	-1%
Archangel Way CN/2	57/45	63	69	71	54	63	-1	-1%	54/52	50	50	50	50	50	0	0%
NOTE WEATHER - DRY/ HOT																

Vehicle Volumes– 2 months Post scheme (Nov 2023)

- Archangel Way – equipment had been tampered with
- More parking on Falmouth Way (AM)
- More parking on Skillman Drive (PM)

Parking displacement analysis

TIME	08:15 - 09:15								14:30 - 15:30							
2 months post	(Pre)	Average	Mon	Tues	Fri	Average	veh no	%	(Pre)	Average	Mon	Tues	Fri	Average		%
Date	01/09/23 & 04/09/23		06/11/2023	07/11/2023	10/11/2023		+/-		01/09/23 & 04/09/23		06/11/2023	07/11/2023	10/11/2023		+/-	
Skillman Drive CN/1	50/35	149	134	124	98	119	-30	-26%	30/26	25	42	37	37	39	14	35%
Falmouth Way CN/8	115/143	186	192	283	146	207	21	10%	140/113	142	95	102	122	106	-36	-34%
Hurford Drive CN/5	32/24	56	21	25	15	20	-36	-175%	20/24	38	17	19	26	21	-17	-84%
Bollingbroke Drive CN/1	17/20	39	33	31	24	29	-10	-33%	29/25	40	23	20	28	24	-16	-69%
Archangel Way CN/2	57/45	63	36			36	-27	-75%	54/52	50	43			43	-7	-16%
NOTE WEATHER -	DRY/ CLOUDY															

Vehicle Volumes– 6 months Post scheme (Mar 2024)

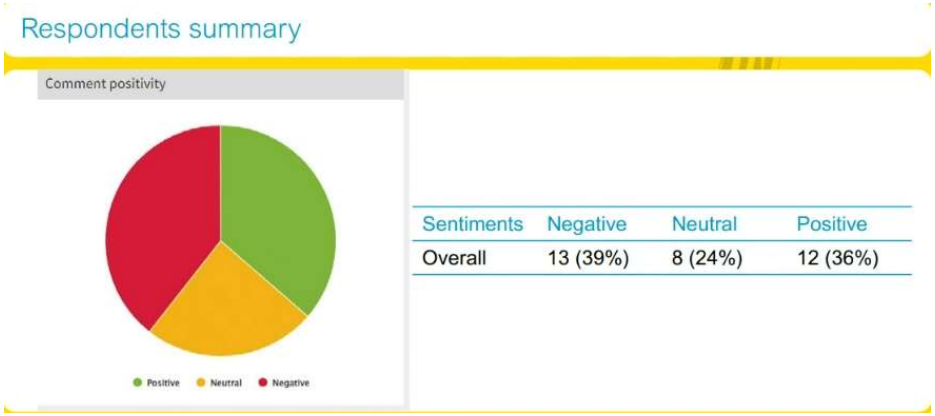
- Archangel Way – equipment had been tampered with AGAIN
- Move parking in Skillman Drive (PM)

Parking displacement analysis

TIME: Mar 2024	08:15 - 09:15								14:30 - 15:30							
6 months post	(Pre)	Average	Mon	Tues	Fri	Average	veh no	%	(Pre)	Average	Mon	Tues	Fri	Average		%
Date	01/09/23 & 04/09/23		11/03/2024	12/03/2024	08/03/2024		+/-		01/09/23 & 04/09/23		11/03/2024	12/03/2024	08/03/2024		+/-	
Skillman Drive CN/1	50/35	149	69	88	70	76	-73	-97%	30/26	25	49	42	44	45	20	44%
Falmouth Way CN/8	115/143	186	no data	145	126	136	-51	-37%	140/113	142	no data	84	94	89	-53	-60%
Hurford Drive CN/5	32/24	56	13	14	22	16	-40	-243%	20/24	38	7	18	25	17	-21	-128%
Bollingbroke Drive CN/1	17/20	39	25	24	24	24	-15	-60%	29/25	40	20	27	39	29	-11	-40%
Archangel Way CN/2	57/45	63	no data	no data	no data	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	54/52	50	no data	no data	no data	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!
NOTE WEATHER -	WET / CLOUDY															

Francis Baily School Streets Meeting 14/08/23

Residents Comments and Response

No	Discussion Point	Officer Comment
1	Data on the WBC website indicated that the Calcot Scheme was not as successful as being reported (39% negative response, 36% positive response)	The response summary tabled below is all responses to the project. Of the negative responses 4 were from respondents who live significantly outside the school streets zone and were not connected to the school community. The remaining negative responses were from the school community. Residents that responded were generally positive. 
2	Parking on grass verges, damaging surface (has been reported to WBC but no action to date), suggest installing 'grasscrete' and allowing verge parking.	The proposal project is aimed at reducing access during the busy school times and removing the indiscriminate parking that occurs. If adhered to, hardening verges will not be necessary.
3	When evaluating the trial, what criteria would deem it successful, as impact on school and residents will be different.	The aims and the objectives of school streets has been agreed by Executive: • Cut down on traffic and parking pressures outside schools. • Discourage car journeys to school and encourage walking and cycling. • Make the streets outside schools safer at the start and end of the day.

		• Improve air quality and create a more pleasant environment for everyone. These are measured in a number of ways across various council departments. The schemes are introduced under experimental orders and anyone can feedback either via direct email at activetravel@westberks.gov.uk or via or the councils consultation hub https://www.westberks.gov.uk/school-street-schemes all information received is used to assess the next steps of the scheme.
4	Closure on the access connection between Francis Bailey and Kennet Schools has exacerbated the situation.	The closure was a result of 3 safeguarding issues in recent months, but he would liaise with the School's. The School was looking to potentially reinstate the recessed 'muster' area at the entrance of the A4, and looking at potential for an access point that had been identified behind Domino's Pizza.
5	Inconsiderate parking across driveways / turning in driveways / pavement parking.	Noted, it is hoped that the proposed scheme with reduce this nuisance.
6	Abuse from some drivers if challenged.	Noted, as above.
7	The scheme will displace the problem elsewhere, particularly Hurford Drive.	This is a risk – and it is important we receive feedback from the local residents as to the live situation. Some studies have shown that displacement may not be as widespread as some may fear https://www.sustrans.org.uk/media/10843/school-streets-and-traffic-displacement-technical-report.pdf The Calcot scheme demonstrated more transition to alternative modes of transport (more walking and cycling) verses displaced vehicles. It is important to continue to evaluate and monitor each site that we introduce and will continue to do so.
8	The school has never signposted parents/carers to alternative car parks (at Dunstan Green and the Old Bluecoat School for example).	Both the school and Thatcham Town Council in 2022 were involved in looking at alternative park and stride options including use of Dunstan Green and Bluecoat school, this was not taken forward at that time. Further discussion to take place with TTC Recreation & Amenities Committee to see if they would support additional signposting to the use of these areas for Park and Stride. The school do regular newsletters to parents that ask for support to park considerately and to encourage use of park and stride and their parking policy supported this (available from their website)

9	A number of queries around the requirement to register for exemption and the impact on ad hoc visitors, emergency services, delivery drivers etc.	Hopefully these are now covered in the FAQ but for any specific queries please email activetravel@westberks.gov.uk
10	Clarification needed on what was deemed 'proof of eligibility'.	The FAQ's define the eligibility – until the ANPR camera is introduced there is need to specifically provide proof of eligibility as we have no way of enforcing adherence. As a resident or as the school, you can currently register who you think to be eligible by way of an email to parking@westberks.gov.uk – proof is not required.
11	It was suggested to introduce via a 6 month trial with no ANPR cameras, followed by a 6 month trial with ANPR cameras, followed by introduction of fines.	We agree that a year trial split into two six month sections (without and with ANPR) would give a more representative view of the scheme. Officers will investigate whether this can be accommodated within the legislation and report back. Every effort will be made to make this happen.
12	There was a query with an issue when registering own car registrations and JW agreed to liaise with colleagues to address the issue.	This has been reported back to the relevant team and the correct procedure will be followed in future.
13	Signage at the entrance to the road is too wordy. JW advised that this sign was for information only, the Traffic Order signage would be much clearer.	Noted
14	Safety concerns over children riding scooters in the middle of the road, request school advises that it is not a pedestrian zone.	This will be raised with the school.
15	Hazardous condition of some pavements.	Will be reported to the Council's Highway Asset Team for inspection.
16	There was a request that residents have sight of, and the ability to comment on, the Memorandum of Understanding between WBC and the School.	This information will be available to view on the councils website https://www.westberks.gov.uk/school-street-schemes The contents of which is solely agreed with the school management team.
17	Thank you for chairing a meeting of local residents (Monday 14th Aug) concerned with the proposals surrounding access issues, in and around Francis Bailey school. Having listened to all the concerns raised, the information given out filled a number of gaps, but left others, which I'm sure you will be looking at during the next couple of months. Might I propose the following:-	To answer the points raised by I can confirm that I've asked our Highways Maintenance team to include the yellow lines and access markings on Skillman Drive in their next order with our contractors, as they are in need of refurbishment. The other three points are not however matters that we would be able to consider as all of the properties in Skillman Drive, Jedburgh Close and Edwin Close have driveways, garages and space off-street to accommodate two or more vehicles. Such properties would not qualify for parking permits under the terms of our Parking Policy and obviously

	1. Re-paint the existing double yellow and white lines. 2. Paint single yellow lines in all other areas and install signage indicating 'parking permits only' - with specified times if necessary. I'm sure there are examples already available. 3. Issue all residents with parking permits (covering the number of vehicles at each property). 4. Issue all residents with a number of 'temporary' passes that can be loaned by a resident to a visitor to display when parked adjacent to the property they are visiting. These proposals are specific for 'on-Road' parking, visitors turning up to see residents and park on private driveways will not be affected, resolving some of the issues mentioned during the meeting. This would also benefit residents by allowing unrestricted access/egress to have road and 'freedom of movement' for visitors. This is unlikely to impact on delivery drivers as they would be unlikely to be in the road for extended periods of time. Emergency vehicles and service vehicles would be exempt. Like the scheme you are currently investigating, this would need 'policing', regular visits from a traffic warden would cover this. I have visited in friends in Brighton recently where a similar scheme has been implemented in residential areas. I would appreciate it if you could give some thought to the above and let me know your thoughts.	we wouldn't introduce a scheme that none of the residents would benefit from. Our permit schemes, where they've been introduced around the district, also require residents to purchase permits for an annual fee per vehicle and although we do allow Visitor Permits to be bought for an additional fee not all residents are happy to be paying to park on 'their street'. Double yellow lines are already in place on Skillman Drive and prevent vehicles parking close to the junctions on this approach road to the school, however if the remaining areas were marked with single yellow lines, with respective parking restrictions which would prevent vehicles parking on-street during peak school times, I would consider that to be a greater inconvenience for residents and their visitors than any restrictions associated with the School Street scheme. I would like to emphasise the 'experimental' aspect of this School Streets scheme. We consider this proposal to be the best solution to the problems residents have voiced concern about for many years, but if at the end of the experimental period the majority are unhappy with the restrictions then it needn't be made permanent. The exemptions which will be part of the legal Traffic Order for this scheme, as described in the FAQ sheet that residents have been provided with, do allow quite a wide range of vehicles to still enter the road but hopefully the significant congestion that used to occur will be addressed by the scheme.

Francis Baily School Streets - Public Meeting 21/02/24 @ 7pm
Thatcham Town Council

Discussion points from meeting

Comments from residents within the scheme (Skillman Drive etc.):

1. Initially compliance with the restrictions was very good, but since the repeat offenders are contravening the restrictions (probably compounded by winter weather).
2. The scheme has definitely been good for residents.
3. Compliance has reduced over time.
4. General consensus that ANPR would be welcomed.
5. Concern expressed about children walking and scooting in the middle of the road. Pedestrian zone signage gives the impression that there will be no vehicles. Signage mandated by regulations, but education to be considered going forward.
6. A concern was raised regarding medical deliveries, which we will give some thought to.
7. Question was asked about how many times we have patrolled in Skillman to look at the issues and compliance?
8. Would like to see parents fined from the start if cameras introduced (explained at the meeting that we have to introduce a grace period to encourage behavioural change).

Comments on displaced traffic:

9. A number of comments from Hurford Drive that it is felt that the situation has got worse since the introduction of the scheme.
10. Request for additional CEO presence and drop-ins to be carried out by Local Ward Member to observe the issues.
11. Request to be submitted to Community Police to patrol and involve School staff.

Requests for alternative/additional proposals to be considered:

12. Could a park and stride/walk be developed (answered at the meeting with regards Dunstan Green car park).
13. Are further options viable.
14. Could consideration be given to creating a parking bay on the verge area of Falmouth Way for parents to park in.
15. Could the gate be left open to allow access from Kennet Heath estate. Answered by School: Two incidents where unauthorised access was gained, and the Police had to be enforced and there is no way of checking and managing who is walking through. Therefore, not possible.
16. Request from the School to run some educational sessions for school children (WBC happy to do so).

Other comments:

17. General encouragement for all to formally respond to the consultation and the school kindly offered to assist with this.
18. General concern expressed about abuse from some repeat offenders, which would need to be directed to the Police.

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Schools & Parents

School Streets Newsletter (July 2023)

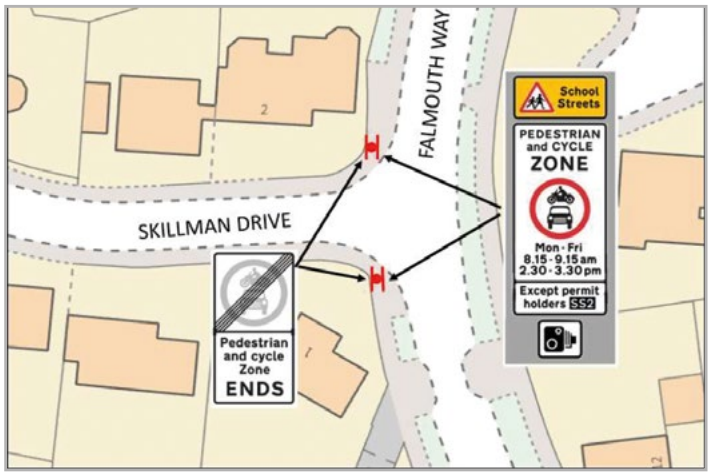
School Streets is a community-based approach, which aims to:

- Cut down on traffic and parking pressures outside schools.
- Discourage car journeys to school and encourage walking and cycling.
- Make the streets outside schools safer at the start and end of the day.
- Improve air quality and create a more pleasant environment for everyone.
- Encourage families to walk to school where possible to be healthy and improve well-being.

These schemes put children and families first, to keep them safe and healthy by encouraging walking, scooting, and cycling. Changing the way in which we all travel is not about altering our lifestyle or making any big commitment. It's about exploring the changes you would like to make that work for you, your life, your family, and your commitments. If everyone takes one small step, we can make a real difference.

September 2023 (TERM TIME ONLY)

A car-free School Streets scheme will be introduced around the roads to Francis Baily Primary School in September 2023. Access to the school via Skillman Drive will be restricted for one hour in the morning and one hour in the afternoon. During these times no-one can enter or exit unless their vehicle is registered with the Councils Parking Team or has a valid Blue Badge. If you have any questions, please email us directly at Parking@westberks.gov.uk



Staff, parents, and pupils (Year 5 & 6) were asked to participate in an Active Travel survey to help us identify what was needed to remove the barriers to encourage more walking, scooting, or cycling to school.

Here is what you said:

Parents (224 responses)

#1 - Entrance via the A4 needs to be opened at 08:30 and if collecting from the afterschool club.

#2 – Vehicles speed on the A4, 20mph would make it safer.

#3 – Not everyone can walk or cycle to school (live too far away).

#4 – During wet weather and in the winter, it's easier to drive.

#5 – Now the connecting field through Kennet is closed the journey is much longer.

#6 – Need a School Crossing Patroller.

#7 – Concerns about the pedestrian crossing along the A4.

#8 – Home and work commitments are different for everyone.

Staff (59 responses)

#9 – No personal storage lockers.

#10 – Too much to carry.

#11 – No staff cycle storage.

#12 – Live too far away

Pupils (103 responses)

#13 – We need cycle storage at the front of the school.

#14 – I want to gain more independence, feel more responsible and practise before going to secondary school.

#15 - Because I am not ready in the morning, I make my parents late and that means we end up driving to school instead of walking.

We cannot solve everything plus there are some important reasons why some things cannot change….

#1 - The gates on the A4 cannot be opened at 08:30 as the playground is used by those at the breakfast club and cannot be contained therefore it is a safeguarding issue. The school have however agreed to arrange afterschool club collection via the A4 up to 4.30pm

#5 - The connecting field through Kennet is closed to ensure all pupils are protected whilst on the school grounds.

What we will be working on….

(depending on budget and staffing resources available)

#1 - The gates on the A4 cannot be opened at 08:30 as the playground is used by those at the breakfast club and cannot be contained therefore it is a safeguarding issue. The school have agreed to open them at 8.40am earlier than the gates at the front of the school and would encourage parents to use the A4 vehicle gate. The school is also looking into how the A4 gate could be used at 4.30pm when some clubs finish.

#2 – A4, Bath Road outside the school during school drop off and pick up times will be monitored regularly. We will be installing equipment to monitor the speed, volume and type of the vehicles using this road. This will raise awareness of driver speeds and presence of children crossing to get to school.

#4 – Installation of a parent shelter on the playground near the A4, Bath Road to protect parents waiting for their children on wet days.

#5 - The pathway connecting Francis Baily School with Kennet School is closed to ensure all pupils are safe whilst on the school grounds. The access through the site was unsafe previously and left both schools vulnerable.

#6 – School Crossing Patrol volunteers

#7 – Review of the A4, Bath Road pedestrian crossing west of the school near to the roundabout.

#13 – Cycle storage at the front of the school.

#14 – Develop a Walking buddy programme with Year 5 and 6

How you can help….

School Streets is not just about closing the road it also aims to help you identify ways in which you might be able to rethink your journey to help make the areas outside your school a safer and less stressful environment, and to make the school run more enjoyable.

Active Travel keeps you fit and improves mental health. It's a convenient way to exercise every day and you can save money on parking, fuel, and gym fees!

Cycling / Scooting can be quicker, and you can avoid those traffic jams.

Walking is free; its great exercise and you can time your journey precisely. If it's too far to walk all the way, why not try **Park & Stride**; this means parking a little bit further away from school and then walking the last 5/10mins to the school gates!

What happens next….

Have your say – The car free School Street scheme will remain in place for a minimum of 6 to 9 months, throughout this period you will be able to provide us with feedback on how the scheme is going for you. All feedback needs to be directed to www.westberks.gov.uk/FBschoolstreets as this will be used to determine whether the scheme will be made permanent.

For further information or enquires please contact us via email: activetravel@westberks.gov.uk

WBC/C&T/CE/0723

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