

FactSheet

www.islandroads.com

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Improving and upgrading the Island's roads

A guide to our carriageway improvement work on the Island

The Highways PFI, which started in April 2013, is designed to improve the Island's road network over a period of 25 years.

Before the start of the PFI, the Island's roads were among the worst in the country with many deteriorating - with 22% having weight or width restrictions imposed or at risk of closure. Now with the investment underway the Island's network of 804kms of roads are being upgraded with a significant number already being categorised by the Department for Transport as among the best in the country.

With the most intense period of work having been carried out in the first seven years of the contract, additional work continues to bring the remaining roads up to the required standards. We usually carry out the main carriageway resurfacing work between April and November each year, but the work does extend outside of these periods when weather permits. There is also a year-round programme of maintenance work to maintain access and safety for all road users.

Prioritising and programming work



Each year we survey the roads to determine those that are most in need of attention and/or safety interventions and these surveys help inform our programme of work.

The surveys are mechanical surveys which, based on a surface assessment, provide an indication of the structural and safety characteristics of the road. These determine which roads will be treated as a priority and that programme of work is put forward to the Isle of Wight Council for agreement.

The programme also takes into account other works or events in the local area and the availability of diversion routes (available diversion routes are a particular challenge on the Isle of Wight given it is an island with definitive confines to work within, unlike the mainland when you can re-route traffic through neighbouring counties).

We also try to schedule works in areas of high tourist traffic to periods outside of the main tourist season, wherever possible. There are also restrictions in our contract when we can or cannot work

on some roads (e.g., outside schools during certain hours/days or on main roads during peak traffic hours) and this is factored into our programme of work.

In the first seven years of our contract, a period described as the Core Investment Period, we made the biggest investment into the upgrade of the Island's roads. We are now continuing to improve and upgrade the highway network as part of the lifecycle of road maintenance over the remainder of our 25-year contract.

Improving the condition of the Island's roads

Under our contract we are required to bring the roads on the public highway up to a specified condition standard and to ensure these do not fall below a minimum standard for the duration (25 years) of the contract.

These condition standards are above those recognised nationally, and they vary for different types of roads. For example, strategic (main) roads which carry a frequent, high volume of traffic will carry a different condition standard than quieter residential or rural roads.



The condition of the roads is measured during annual inspections using mechanical surveys. A small number of roads that are not suitable for the scanning vehicle to access are subject to a detailed visual inspection which will determine the condition of the road.

Not all public roads will need resurfacing if they meet the conditions required, but this is kept under review via these regular inspections. Conversely, some roads need a total reconstruction to ensure the stability of the foundations of the road. This is often a longer, more complex process requiring deeper excavations of the highway area and sometimes hand-tooled work to ensure we can work safely and carefully around shallow, water / gas / sewage / electricity / telecommunication cables and pipes which we encounter beneath the surface of the highway.

Services should generally be around 500mm beneath the highway surface but on the Island, we often encounter those that are only approximately 50mm beneath the highway surface, which require a more painstaking approach to ensure that utility apparatus is not damaged and services are not disrupted. The depth of these services are not always evident until the work commences and therefore this can extend or disrupt our schedule of work. On occasion we also encounter unmapped services which can also affect our timetable of works.

Roads that are not on the public highway, in other words private or unadopted roads are not included within our contractual work.

Keeping people informed

To help ensure people know about our work, we notify all properties directly affected by our work with letters, usually two weeks before work is due to start. The letters advise of approximate dates and proposed hours of working with maps showing the location of the work and advice on waste collections, access to properties etc during our work.



We update information boards on each site with the exact dates of work and we advise residents to read these signs frequently, once they have been erected, to keep up to date with any changes as this is often the quickest way to alert people to sudden changes, for example, where weather affects our work.

For larger schemes, we also install electronic signs, we write to all stakeholders and issue regular bulletins to those who wish to receive them.

We also publish notices of any road closures in the local newspaper and publish a list of current and planned works for your area on our website <https://islandroads.com/current-works/>

Timetable changes

From time to time our programme of works are affected by issues beyond our control and we have to adjust our programme accordingly. Some materials are affected by rain, extreme low/high temperatures or strong winds and cannot be laid successfully and to the required quality standards in these conditions. In these circumstances we have to reschedule works and as our crews move from area to area this can sometimes have a knock-on effect on other schemes too.

Sometimes, we also encounter issues on site that were not visible when making our structural surveys and assessments such as the presence of low-lying utility infrastructure (pipes/cables etc) which require additional/deeper excavations. We also sometimes find infrastructure that needs replacing and we work with the utility companies to arrange for that to happen during our works rather than these companies having to return to dig up the road at a later date. This can impact on the delivery timetables for our schemes.



We write, via a letter drop, to residents in the area of our work in advance to advise them of forthcoming activity. We also advise them in this letter to look out for the yellow information boards placed out on site (like that pictured above) for any changes to the timing of this work. If work is to be postponed for longer periods, then we write to residents again via a letter drop to let them know. We also issue updates via our Twitter account (@IslandRoads) which has a significant number of followers, and which is often picked up and shared by the local media.

Copies of residents' letters are also sent to the local ward councillor and town and parish council clerk for their information.

Planning work on different road sections

For the purposes of surveying and scheduling work, each road is divided into sections called Monitoring Lengths (or MLs). Not all sections of a stretch of road will need treating at the same time. When we communicate about works coming up, we refer to roads rather than MLs as this can be confusing for the public, however we try and indicate using maps in our residents' notification letters, which section(s) of a particular road will be completed during our work.



Not all sections of a particular road or pavement require the same treatment (there are a wide variety of different types of treatment).

In some cases, existing sections of roads may be in a condition that allows for treatment later in the programme.

In the short-term this may potentially lead to some differences in the appearance of an entire section of road, however over time this will become less apparent.

Access to parking and property during works

We try wherever possible to maintain parking and access to properties and businesses during our work where is practical and safe to do so, but in some cases the nature of our work means that we have to restrict parking or access so this can be completed as quick and safely as possible. For example, our work may require deep excavations (e.g., where a road is being reconstructed) or the use of hot materials and heavy machinery which might damage vehicles or present safety concerns. In many cases we also need full access to the road, and sometimes adjacent roads, in order to complete our work. In all these incidences we ask residents, who might need access to their vehicle during our work, to find a place to park their vehicle safely outside of our road closure before the work starts. We do however, in all our schemes, maintain pedestrian access to properties and businesses as long as it is safe to do so.

If residents have a medical condition, a disability and/or a social care problem such as mobility problems or near-term pregnancy that may impact on them being able to use the pedestrian access provided, we ask, in our residents' letter, for them to contact us so we can make arrangements to assist them during our works.

Removal of vehicles

Having notified residents to remove their vehicles ahead of our work, if we find vehicles still within the vicinity of our road closure once work begins, we first try and locate the vehicle owner on site to request that they move their vehicle. If we are unable to locate them quickly, we make arrangements to move the vehicle ourselves, using a recovery vehicle, to a safe location outside of the road closure.

We then inform our helpdesk of the action taken and any car registration details, so that vehicle owners can be advised of the location where their vehicle has been relocated when they contact us.

Night works

When a particular road has a high volume of traffic, it is often more appropriate for us to carry out the works at night to minimise large-scale disruption during the day. When we work through the night we try, where possible, to keep particularly noisy work to the early part of the evening and open the road to traffic each morning if it is safe to do so. Where work needs to be carried out on busy roads during the day, we try, where possible, to programme these outside of key commuter times. We have also programmed work on side roads into night works, due to the impact it may have on the adjoining main road. An example of this is Ranelagh Road in Lake which may have impacted on the adjoining main road Lake Hill had the work not been completed at night.

Road markings

It is not always possible for us to complete the road markings immediately after surfacing works. This may be due to the type of surfacing treatment used or the need to remove loose chippings from the carriageway.

We have separate teams working on the ironwork (manhole/drain covers) adjustment and road markings. We anticipate that these works will be completed in their entirety no later than four weeks after any surfacing works have been completed.



Road cracking/defects

From time to time, our resurfacing treatments can be affected by a variety of issues causing the surface material to crack or other defects to appear. This can include anything from the weather - affecting materials when they are being laid - or a sudden failure of utility infrastructure beneath the surface, or groundwater seepage, or ground movement, or poor foundations.

We try where possible to anticipate anything that may affect our surfacing treatments and/or carry out preparation works before we complete it, but sometimes these issues arise through circumstances beyond our control. However, all of our work is carried out to a specified contract performance standard. We carry out our own checks to ensure these are met. If any works have failed these tests, for whatever reason, they will be rectified as soon as practically possible, or as part of a programme of work, and at our cost.

Other highway works



Not all highway works are undertaken by Island Roads. Utility companies, for example, also carry out works on the public highway and some private contractors may also require access to the public highway, for example, for scaffolding or skips.

Over the last six months, there have been 4,311 works on the highway – around a quarter of which have been carried out by Island Roads. More than 20 percent of the roadworks have been the result of unplanned emergency repairs by utility companies while WightFibre have also worked on more than 620 sites as part of the upgrading of the Island's broadband infrastructure.

Utility companies have a legal right to maintain and improve their apparatus. Island Roads' role is to work with them to minimise disruption on the network. A new Streetworks Permit scheme was introduced last year to give better control over statutory works on the highway. This means these organisations have to 'book' time on the highway and apply for the appropriate permissions. While we cannot stop these works from happening without good reason, this process aims to reduce congestion and disruption for residents.

You can read more about this scheme here <https://islandroads.com/streetworks-permit-scheme/>

Other non-statutory works also require permission and we have a host of forms on our website which contractors are required to complete prior to beginning any works <https://islandroads.com/forms/>

This does however exclude emergency works by utility companies which have to be completed urgently to safeguard residents and highway users and to reinstate services (e.g., gas, water, electricity).

Find works in your area

You can click on the current works tab on our website <https://islandroads.com/current-works/> to see the works Island Roads are carrying out each week across the Island.

You can view a map of all roadworks on the Island and identify who is carrying out the work in a particular location using our 'Roadworks Live' tab on the main menu of our website www.islandroads.com Alternatively you can go direct to One.Network via the following link <https://one.network/custom/isleofwight/>

Report a problem

To report a carriageway resurfacing issue simply click on the [Report it Online](#) section of our website. There you will be able to check if the issue has already been reported and if not, you can enter details to report the problem. The system can also provide updates on progress. Alternatively, you can email info@islandroads.com with the relevant details.

In an emergency where there is a threat to public safety, for example, a fallen tree blocking the highway, please call 01983 822440. This phonenumber is manned 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

You can visit our website for more details about any of our services www.islandroads.com