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Dear all,

As the winter weather draws in, we are approaching the end of this year's highway improvement work. With around 90 per cent of strategic

main roads already resurfaced, this year we have focussed on residential ones with the work programme being decided based on the results of surveys we undertake to determine the condition of the network.

This survey data will also inform next year's programme which we will begin to compile over the winter months.

As you will be aware this year's activity has been affected – as with every aspect of life – by the Covid-19 outbreak.

At its height, the pandemic led to a short suspension of our carriageway surfacing work whilst we have modified work practices across the organisation to minimise risks to our staff and the general public. We were however able to keep all other highway services fully functional thanks to the commitment and professional approach from all our employees. We will continue to react to – and comply with – Government advice as the threat from Covid-19 remains.

Despite the impact of the virus, I am delighted that we were also able to maintain progress in delivering the Isle of Wight Council's scheme to improve traffic flows across Newport's St Mary's junction. While we aim to complete the scheme in December as scheduled, we are entering a critical new phase of this project during which traffic delays can be expected. You can read more about this project – and what can be done to help reduce congestion, below.

While major resurfacing schemes are not undertaken during the winter months (as



the conditions are not favourable to the performance of materials that are laid) autumn and winter nevertheless remains a very busy time for Island Roads and its staff.

There is much work to be done in terms of preparing the network for the conditions ahead. This involves activities such as surveying the road studs (cat's eyes) and replacing missing or defective studs, ensuring highway ditches are clear so they channel water affectively away from the highway and also additional road sweeping to keep gullies as clear as possible of fallen leaves. Toward the end of October we will be conducting our annual Autumn Parade where we ensure all our winter maintenance vehicles and crews are primed for action in the cold months ahead.

At this time of year we are always keen to remind members of the public about what they can do to help prevent

weather-related issues affecting the highway. Two such campaigns are Ditch It which covers how to manage watercourses near highways and also Inspect and Protect which concerns tree management. You can find out more on these topics below and on our website www.islandroads.com

Lastly, can I once again thank residents and businesses for all their support during what has been a busy and challenging year. Your support really is appreciated by all of us at Island Roads.

Keep safe and well.

Stephen Ashman,
Service Director, Island Roads

Help us keep the highways safe this winter



Winter brings with it particular challenges in terms of highway maintenance. We are keen to work with landowners to address two such challenges – those of dangerous trees and highway flooding.

Landowners have responsibilities to ensure trees on or near the highway do not pose a risk to those using the network. This risk can be greater in the winter months when high winds and sodden

ground can increase the risk of trees (or limbs) falling. We have produced a leaflet *Inspect and Protect* to inform landowners what steps they should take to try to ensure trees on their land are not a danger to road users.

Recently, Island Roads' annual inspection of trees took particular account of Ash dieback – a fungal infection that grows inside the tree, eventually blocking

its water transport systems, causing it to die.

Sadly, of the 418 trees inspected by Island Roads recently, 169 – about 40 per cent – have been identified with ash dieback.

Island Roads will now develop a plan for the best management of these infected trees. Factors such as safety, contractual requirements, and impact of felling work on the travelling public will all be considered.

Similarly, landowners with watercourses on their property also have duties to stop these overflowing onto the highway. Again, we have produced a leaflet – *Ditch It!* – on this subject to assist.

The information leaflets can be downloaded via the following links islandroads.com/inspect-and-protect and islandroads.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/02/Working-together-to-ditch-highway-flooding-leaflet.pdf



Island Roads is keen to work with landowners on both these issues. If anyone has any queries on their rights and responsibilities they can call on 822440 or email info@islandroads.com

As part of our work to prepare the network for winter, we have also undertaken a full survey of all roads studs (cats eyes) replacing all those that are defective or missing.





Junction improvement work at St Mary's on track

Work to improve traffic flows across St Mary's junction at Newport look set to be completed on schedule as the project enters its crucial final phases.

The next stage of the project will see the roundabout itself replaced by a signal-controlled junction. Island Roads will also be constructing the new bus lane at the top of Hunnyhill and installing the much sought-after signal-controlled pedestrian crossing.

With the new junction in place, traffic coming from Cowes wanting to travel west to Yarmouth, will also be able to shorten their journeys by turning right at the new traffic signals at the junction with Forest Road.

From mid-October it will be necessary to close Hunnyhill to all through traffic, except buses, to undertake the

construction work on the new bus lane and surrounding area.

However resident access will remain throughout, but from the southern end of the road only (at its junction with Foxes Road and Hunnycross Way). The stage of the work to lay out Parkhurst Road as a cul-de-sac with no through access will be completed between 23 November and 18 December.

The last few phases of the work are likely to be the most disruptive and motorists are advised to expect delays and, if possible, to use alternative routes or travel outside of peak times.

Island Roads and the Isle of Wight Council would like to thank the local community for the patience, understanding and co-operation shown during this project.

Help on hand for wildlife

Island Roads staff have been involved in two high-profile animal rescues.



Firstly, operatives John Corby and Sean Hillman were called to the main road in Calbourne recently where a brood of ducklings had fallen into a drainage system.



The pair helped release the birds and they were taken away to be cared for at the RSPCA's Godshill Animal Centre at Bohemia Corner. John later helped release the ducklings into their new home at Little Upton Farm in Ryde.

Island Roads also donated sandbags to create a lagoon to help hundreds of carp who were in danger of suffocation as the canoe lake in Sandown dried out this summer.

Belgrave Road update

We have been continuing to undertake regular visual site inspections of Belgrave Road and Esplanade Road in Ventnor to monitor the wall movement and cracking both at the top of the terrace and the middle and lower sections.

These surveys, which have intensified over the recent wet weather, have shown no further significant movement,

cracking or deterioration in either the top, middle or lower sections of the wall above Esplanade Road in recent weeks. The wire netting also continues to work effectively to contain any debris should it fall.

Consequently, we have now restored pedestrian access along Esplanade Road on the far (seaward) side of the road, away from the wall area and existing



pavement areas. We hope this step will provide some help to residents walking in and around the area.

The design process is now underway to look at possible solutions for the site.

Plan to extend the life of the Military Road

Plans for an engineering scheme to prolong the life of an erosion-threatened section of the Military Road at Brook have been submitted by Island Roads.



The proposal, submitted to the Isle of Wight Council, seeks to protect a 25-metre section of the Military Road that, due to ongoing erosion, is now just metres from the cliff edge.

The solution proposed by Island Roads would not only extend the life of the section, it would do so in a way that is visually unobtrusive, give due regard to environmental considerations and which would allow natural erosion processes to continue. As such, an Environmental Statement has been submitted as part of the planning process.

In simple terms, the plan is to install piles under the south side of the carriageway to isolate the road from ongoing coastal erosion. The piles would be buried so would not initially be seen from either ground level or from the beach/sea below. It is anticipated that it

would be between five and ten years before the piles becomes visible from the beach as a result of erosion.

Island Roads believes the solution is compatible with various environmental designations that protect the location; an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, a Site of Special Scientific Interest and a Special Area of Conservation. At the same time the scheme will extend the life of the road therefore preserving this important transport link for residents and visitors, between the south and west of the island.

The site is one of many defined in the Highways PFI contract as needing an engineering solution to protect the carriageway at geologically vulnerable locations. Such schemes already delivered include Bouldnor Road at Yarmouth and at Newport Road (The Graben) in Ventnor.

Island Roads helps community radio station

Community radio station Vectis Radio has increased its signal strength with a little help from Island Roads.

Following full technical clearance from the regulator Ofcom, Vectis Radio has installed a new transmitter which has extra power to improve the station's coverage to many of the outlying areas of Newport.

Station Manager Ian Mac said: "As a coastal station, it was necessary to get international approval from Ofcom for our power increase and although this arrived earlier in the year, lockdown stopped us progressing any further for the time being.

"But as we emerged from the pandemic restrictions we were keen to get things moving again and we were delighted that Island Roads agreed to donate a cherry picker to help us finally get the new transmitter up and running."

"Without their support we would have struggled – they stepped in to enable us to get the job done."

Island Roads powered apparatus manager Scott Burborough said: "As a company we are used to keeping people well-connected at ground level but were pleased to do our bit to help Vectis Radio link up communities via the airwaves."



Recycling milestone met during Godshill work



Island Roads has worked with the Isle of Wight Steam Railway to install new heritage lights at the attraction.

Five new heritage-style street lamps have been installed at the Isle of Wight Steam Railway's Havenstreet base to throw some authentic and atmospheric light on the way from the attraction's main car park to its ticket office.

Island Roads were commissioned by the steam railway to source and install the new lights and columns, which needed to be in keeping with the station's 1940s theme.

A high-tech process in which recycled material is used to resurface roads on the Island has reached a significant milestone.

The recent work to improve Whitwell Road in Godshill meant that 250,000 tonnes of recycled surface material – all taken from the Island's highway network – has now been used during the Highways PFI programme.

The recycled resurfacing product is called Recofoam and is produced on the Island at Wight Building Materials' headquarters at St George's Down on the outskirts of Newport.

It is formed by treating old 'blacktop' that has been planed off the road surface in advance of resurfacing. The planed material – which might otherwise be sent off-Island for landfill – is crushed and screened and then blended under pressure with foamed bitumen to produce the recycled surfacing material.

Not only is the whole process undertaken on the Island, reducing transport costs, Recofoam can also be laid cold which further reduces energy use. The whole process is highly regulated and operated under strict permit conditions from the Environment Agency.

Steve Ashman, Island Roads service director, said: "The use of Recofoam technology is just one of the ways Island Roads seeks to minimise its carbon footprint during what is a sustained period of highway engineering on the Island.

"It allows us to re-use large quantities of road surfacing materials that might otherwise be shipped over to the mainland for disposal. Recycling as much material as we can saves on both landfill and transportation costs and it is especially pleasing to be working with another Island business – Wight Building Materials – to undertake the process."

CLlr Ian Ward, IW Council member for infrastructure and transport, said: "This demonstrates how the highways PFI generates significant business for other Island companies.

"It is great to see that as well as providing an economic boost, the project is also being delivered in an innovative way that is mindful of the need to recycle where possible."

Local causes to benefit from more Isle of Wight Foundation funding



Fifteen local good causes working to tackle social exclusion have applied for this year's IW Foundation funding.

These applications are currently being evaluated and the successful projects will be announced in the New Year. You can find more about the IW Foundation including how to apply for a grant in February next year via the following link islandroads.com/iw-foundation

The funds provided by the Foundation are entirely separate from the monies linked to the PFI contract. Last year, projects received a total of £85,000 to help their work in tackling social exclusion.

Since 2014, the IW Foundation – comprising the partners behind Island Roads – has granted nearly half a million pounds to Island organisations, groups and good causes that work to reduce social exclusion.

