

# Helping you to drive safely in bad weather



2011 - 2012

# Why we salt roads

Our aim is to make the county's roads as safe as possible for road users and to reduce delays caused by bad weather.

We salt key routes when there is a risk of ice. The key routes in Wiltshire total a length of 1160km (725miles) which is 25% of the entire maintained road network. Using our fleet of specialist vehicles, we provide a 24 hour response in bad weather.

A single precautionary salting treatment will cost, on average, £17,000.

## When we salt roads

Decisions are based on road temperatures, rather than air temperatures, and salting is likely whenever road temperatures are near freezing. Other factors like moisture, heat retention and time of day or night will influence the decision. Treatment by salt is normally carried out after the evening peak traffic period or before the morning rush. This is because frost and ice do not normally affect road surfaces until late evening or early morning. Usually it takes two hours to complete a salting route.

## Which roads we salt

The following map shows the roads that are routinely salted. This network is under constant review and may be expanded during the current season.

Please remember that **the majority of minor roads will receive no treatment** and arrangements may not always go according to plan.

## Where we salt roads

With such a large road network, it would be unrealistic and uneconomic to attempt to treat all roads. All key routes in Wiltshire will receive precautionary salting when ice is forecast. This will include all motorways, trunk roads, class A and B roads and the more important lower class roads.

This should ensure the majority of road users live within a reasonable distance of a salted road.

If temperatures are predicted to remain below freezing after the morning rush, then a larger network may be salted. This additional network includes mainly lower class roads serving housing estates and main accesses to villages and hamlets.

Should conditions persist, as much of the entire road network as possible will be salted.

## Self help

Routes are subject to change, so please see the Wiltshire Council website for information updates.

Information about Wiltshire Council services can be made available on request in other languages including BSL and formats such as large print and audio.

Please contact the council on  
0300 456 0100,  
by text phone on 01225 712500  
or by email:  
[customerservices@wiltshire.gov.uk](mailto:customerservices@wiltshire.gov.uk)

# What you can do to help yourself:

With the exception of the previous two years, the typical winter weather pattern in Wiltshire has been mild, bringing with it more heavy rain, including summer storms, fog and high winds.

Because of this, few motorists have had experience of driving in snow or icy conditions and new motorists may also lack experience of driving in these difficult conditions.

As a road user (motorist or pedestrian), you have a responsibility to yourself, your passengers and other road users. Here are some suggestions to assist you in having a safe journey:

- Consider carrying winter tyres or snow chains in your car.
- Consider a course in skid control.
- As a pedestrian, wear warm clothing and appropriate footwear.
- Consider using alternative transport means?
- Consider joining a recognised breakdown or recovery service.
- When driving, always use dipped headlights when visibility is poor due to rain, snow or fog.
- When driving in heavy rain or through floods, drive slowly to reduce the risk of aquaplaning.
- It is better to travel a little further on a main road that has been treated with salt than to use untreated minor roads.

## Roads may still be icy

No guarantee can be given that roads will always be completely clear of ice or snow.

It takes time for salt to become effective after roads are salted.

Rain can wash salt off roads leaving them prone to re-icing.

In severe cold weather with temperatures below  $-8^{\circ}\text{C}$ , salt will not be as effective on icy roads.

'Dawn frost' occurs on dry roads when early morning dew falls on cold road surfaces and freezes on impact.

If raining, salting will start when the rain stops, to avoid it being washed away.

During rush hours, traffic congestion will almost certainly delay the salting operation.

**Finally**, even the most carefully organised procedures can suffer setbacks or mechanical breakdowns and as a result some salting routes may not be treated as quickly as programmed.

## Winter driving

Driving in adverse winter conditions is more difficult if you and your car aren't properly prepared. By following these simple guidelines from the Institute of Advanced Motorists you will be safer and ready to deal with winter driving problems:

## Before starting a journey, please consider

- Is your journey really necessary? If it is, plan it and give yourself plenty of time. Tell someone your intended route and how long you think it's going to take. Listen to the radio for details about road and weather conditions.
- Clean the windscreen and windows using a demisting preparation. Check that screen washers are not blocked and that the screen washer bottle is topped up and has a winter additive to stop it freezing.
- Check that the windscreen wipers are in good condition and work effectively.
- Ensure that all lights, brake lights and indicators are working properly and the lenses are clean.
- Ensure that the tyres are in good condition and are properly inflated.

Carry the following in your vehicle: warning triangle, hands-free mobile phone kit, warm coat, first aid kit, good torch, seat belt cutter, fire extinguisher, travel rug, tow rope, bottled drinking water, recovery service contact number, good map, pen and paper.

Adverse weather and road conditions bring an increased risk of skidding. A skid does not just happen - it is almost always caused by the driver's actions.

- Keep your speed down and increase your safety gaps when the road is wet or icy.
- Braking, steering, accelerating, decelerating and gear changing must be done gently and gradually.

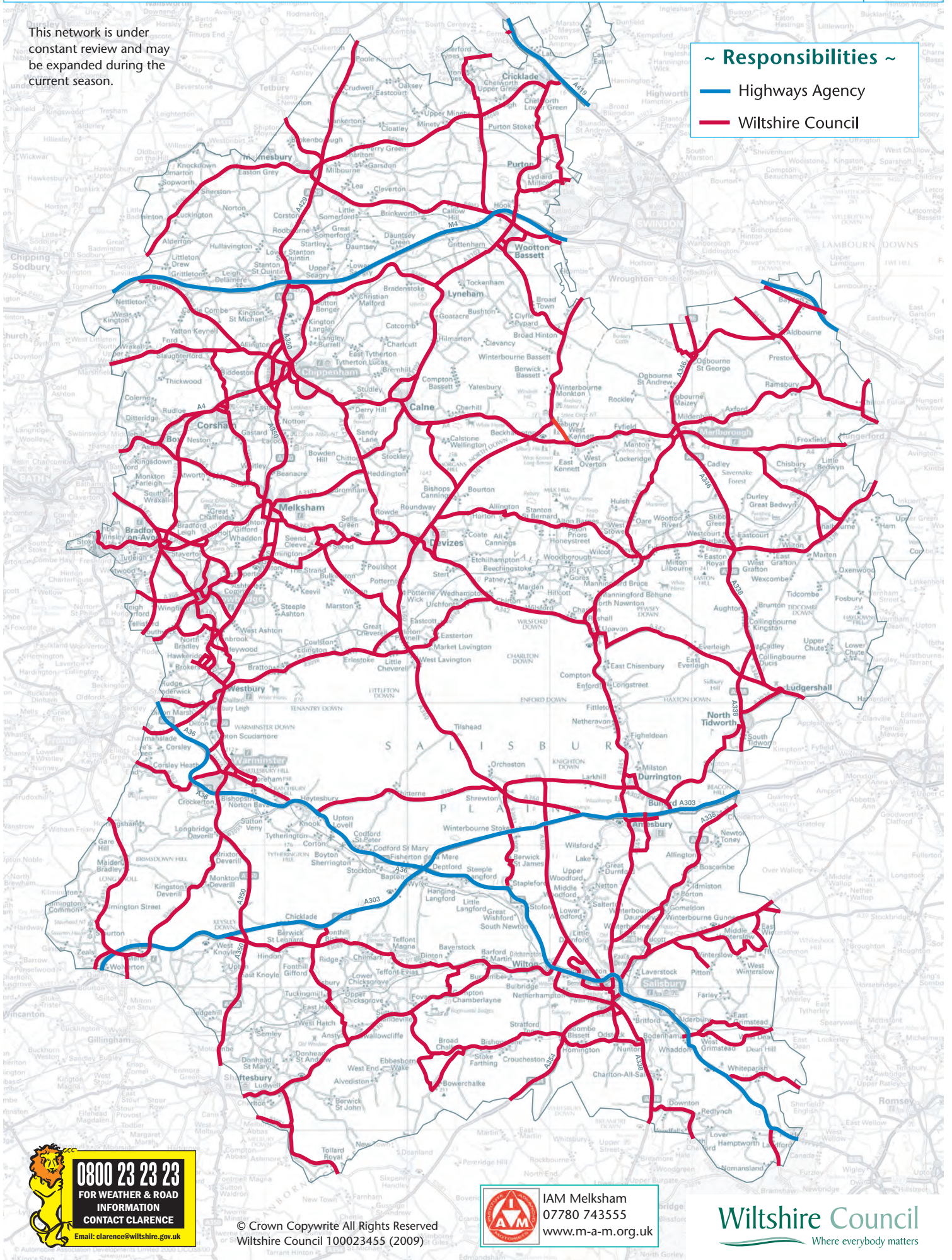
# Precautionary salting routes 2011 - 2012



This network is under constant review and may be expanded during the current season.

~ Responsibilities ~

- Highways Agency
- Wiltshire Council



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**Wiltshire Council**  
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