

Dear Town and Parish Councils

Please find below the October Update on highway issues.

### **Car Parking Review**

I would be grateful if you could promote the Car Parking Review consultation to ensure we capture as many comments as possible.

The story is on the front page of our website on the news portal - <http://www.wiltshire.gov.uk/news/articles/parking-charges-consultation-now-live>

We've put it out on our Twitter and Facebook feeds (and will continue throughout)

It's been sent to the CEMs to share on their sites and among the community groups

A link to the consultation is being displayed prominently on the main parking landing page on our website - <http://www.wiltshire.gov.uk/parking-home>

It will go into the next Parish Newsletter – scheduled for Monday

As some of your constituents will not have computer access I list a few of the salient reasons why we are reviewing the charges below and trust this will encourage them to request a questionnaire.

Despite rising operational costs and increasing service demands, the council has not applied any inflationary increases to car parking charges since 2011 and this has resulted in service standards being reduced to levels that are now effecting the management of parking arrangements.

There is also a requirement to invest in new technologies to maximise the benefit of the council's limited resources by automating parking usage, using technology to meet the demand of parking users for quick and easy payments and to bring benefits to the local communities for example greater enforcement of parking orders outside of schools.

A number of options to increase the funding of the Parking Service have been proposed. Each option has been costed so that choices can be made in light of the effects any changes may have on the public, businesses and visitors as well as how that option contributes to the overall council budget shortfall.

Our preferred method to receive comments is through completion of the on-line electronic questionnaire available through the Wiltshire Council Consultation Portal webpage.

***Please note that there is no requirement to register or log-in to the portal to respond through the on-line questionnaire.***

Paper copies of the questionnaire are also available on request by contacting the council on the below number.

If you have any queries, please contact us using these details:

Car Parking Survey  
Parking Services  
Wiltshire Council  
Monkton Park offices  
Monkton Hill  
Chippenham  
Wiltshire  
SN15 1ER

Tel. No.: 01249 706131

### **White Lines Funding**

I would like to give my thanks to the South West Wiltshire Community Area Board and their funding of £10,000 for a white lines project. This is equivalent to 20% of the total Wiltshire Council budget for lining across the county.

The Board recognised that the Highway Service commitment to meet its statutory lining requirement meant that it was highly unlikely to undertake the discretionary lining demanded by their local community. Hence they introduced their own scheme and arrangements.

The resulting work made a real improvement and I commend the Board for their efforts.

### **Highway MyWiltshire Reactive Local Defect White Lining**

The council has finished its local maintenance white lining programme for 2017/18. This is the work in compliance with the council's inspection manual, in essence the small scale reactive works reported through the MyWiltshire system. The major work schedule continues. Major works include larger scaled lining works, development works or works following major highway schemes.

MyWiltshire reports received through the winter (for small scale reactive lining works) will be used to identify activities for summer 2018/19.

It is important to note that 'Disable Bays' are managed by the council's public health section. Highways install their lines. Unless public health deem the disable lining work as an emergency, and fund the maintenance, this lining will also be considered for 2018/19. I apologise for any inconvenience.

### **Festive Lighting and attachments to lighting columns**

It is the time of year when town and parish councils think about providing Christmas lighting and other decorations. It is important that any festive lighting, hanging baskets or banners attached to street lighting columns are safe and that the columns are able to take the loading, especially severe wind loading at this time of year.

In order to get the required electrical and structural safety assessments undertaken in good time councils are reminded to submit the details of their proposals as soon as possible. The background information and forms can be obtained from [streetlightinginwiltshire@atkinsglobal.com](mailto:streetlightinginwiltshire@atkinsglobal.com). It should be noted that for any electricity supply the town or parish council will need to enter into an unmetered supply agreement with SSE.

Decorations brighten up our towns and villages, but we do need to make sure we keep our communities safe.

### **Pavement and footway Improvement scheme**

The Council has devolved £150k to the area boards. This sum is allocated based on the length of highway in the area concerned. The funding will be incorporated into the budgets managed by the Community Area Transport Groups (CATG).

The process for considering and approving projects will be the same as that used for the CATG funding. In summary:

- Proposals will be submitted to the Area Board using the online community issues system, in the future this will be incorporated into the My Wiltshire App.
- Parish and town council will be required to confirm that they support the proposal before it is taken further.
- Parish and town council's will be requested to contribute to the cost of schemes they support.
- Schemes supported by the parish or town council will be assessed and then considered by the community area transport group (CATG) who will prioritise schemes and make recommendations to the area board.
- The area board will consider all proposals and decide which schemes are implemented.

Proposals that can be considered for funding

- Repairing uneven or dangerous pavements
- Resurfacing works
- Enhancing and maintaining pedestrian areas

### Submitting your application

Applications must be submitted to your local Area Board using the online community issues system:

[https://services.wiltshire.gov.uk/Forms/area\\_board/areaboards.php?firstpass\\_done=1](https://services.wiltshire.gov.uk/Forms/area_board/areaboards.php?firstpass_done=1)

Contact your local community engagement manager

<http://www.wiltshire.gov.uk/council-democracy-area-boards>

### **What about general maintenance issues?**

General footway maintenance where defects have occurred should still be reported on the MyWiltshire system for the normal processes to be followed.

### **Hedges Causing Issues On The Highway**

I have received several enquiries for the procedure for dealing with hedge encroachments on the highway.

With autumn fast approaching it seems timely to issue the reminder on how highways deal with this matter.

We always endeavour to take a sympathetic approach to these matters as we recognise the challenge of the new bird nesting season extension and that most of the issues occur as a lack of awareness by the land owner of any issue, and not by any intent.

Ideally the council would like the issues resolved by the local neighbours themselves where possible. If this is not possible often a friendly word by the local parish/ town council can negate the need for any formal approach. This resolves the matter in the majority of cases.

Likewise if a formal approach is required it is the council's experience that the best solution is if the local council initiates the procedure by sending the advisory letter.

If your council would like the standard hedge letter please let Adrian know and he will issue this to you.

If the local council does not wish to issue the letter, Wiltshire Council will advise the owner of the matter with the standard letter itself. But will always first contact the local council to check that they do not wish to deal with the matter direct.

### **Remembrance Day and Sunday**

The council as in previous years is providing additional service to support Remembrance Day and Remembrance Sunday. However, the council's resources and knowledge of events on the day are limited.

The council is delighted to work with local communities on scheduling support. If your Remembrance event requires support please contact Lisa Lowton at [lisalowton@wiltshire.gov.uk](mailto:lisalowton@wiltshire.gov.uk) or [Fiona.waind@wiltshire.gov.uk](mailto:Fiona.waind@wiltshire.gov.uk) or [craig.campbell@wiltshire.gov.uk](mailto:craig.campbell@wiltshire.gov.uk) who will be pleased to help.

We cannot clean 200 events in one day. Hence we need your information at the earliest opportunity.

We will schedule the resources on a priority bases. This may mean that some cleaning is undertaken a week before an event and then the community will need to address the issues after that time. The support will only be for recognised events, not simple requests for cleaning. If you wish support please email stating:

- The date of the event
- When you would like the cleaning
- The event and size
- What community support is being undertaken (sweeping pavements, weed control, litter collection, washing, monument cleaning etc.)
- Whether there is any other type of support required (collection of waste)
- Whether you require any equipment (very limited supply and you will have to collect)
- What support is required (re-scheduling of grass cutting, sweeping, litter collection etc.)

Please confirm the arrangements before 15<sup>th</sup> October 2017. The support Wiltshire Council can give is road sweeping (not pavement), litter collection, special grass cutting arrangements; waste collection from the highway (not private land) and removal of offensive graffiti.

We will confirm the provision by the 23<sup>rd</sup> October 2017.

## **Play Areas**

This is to advise the £30,000 commuted sum for the transfer of the council's play areas has now been fully allocated. Further transfers can be considered but will not attract any £1,000 transfer commuted sum funded. The provision will be reviewed again in 2018/ 19.

## **Weed Control**

As you are aware the Parish Steward Scheme delivers the Weed Control Service for Wiltshire Council, with areas for treatment being identified by the local council highway representative.

You may wish to ask the Parish Steward to weed control around your monument pre-any event.

As the amount of area treated by the Parish Steward is limited a number of towns and parishes have provided supporting work. This has ranged from large scale weed spraying by contractors or in-house services. This has proved very successful and I thought this may be worth considering in your local precept for next year. Another option has been local voluntary groups manually removing weeds. This works extremely well, but due to the requirements for working on the highway, can only be undertaken where safe to do so.

### **Leaf Clearance – Hot Spots**

The removal of leaves is a discretionary service and Wiltshire Council schedules areas with known issues for extra attention. The council will shortly commence its leaf clearance hot spot programme. When leaves become detritus they will be cleared and if you have a particular detritus issue please report this on the MyWiltshire system.

### **New Grounds and Streets contract**

Thank you to those councils that feedback on the possible new contract provisions discussed in the September 2017 Newsletter. We have yet to make a decision on the service, so if your council would like to comment please can you let us know your views by the end of November 2017. Regrettably after this time it will not be possible to change the provision as the specification for the new contract will have been agreed.

### **Town Centre Cleaning**

There have been questions raised on the Barrow Cleaner attendance in town centres. The council will inspect town centres every day for litter and litter bin emptying. Once the area is clean the council will move on to address dirty areas reported through the MyWiltshire system. If you see any litter in the town centre I would be grateful if you could report this on the MyWiltshire System and we will address the matter at the earliest opportunity. MyWiltshire reports are given priority over scheduled litter picking to ensure resources are directed to where needed.

### **Winter Grounds**

Thank you to those local councils that feedback on the priority hedges and shrubs in their area. We are currently programming the priority hedges and shrubs for maintenance this winter. Please note the hedges on the link are all the hedges that we have recorded as being under consideration for maintenance. We will now prioritise those hedges and shrubs which will receive maintenance following the feedback from officers, MyWiltshire reports and local councils.

<http://www.realitygeo.com/explorer.aspx?cfg=wiltmgr>

### **Parish Steward Winter Maintenance**

As we are now rapidly approaching autumn and winter can I ask that parishes and towns consider activities that will assist their communities:

- Gullies are able to be cleared by hand are cleaned
- Improvements of minor highway maintenance issues for Remembrance Day and Sunday
- Checking the highway asset in case a white Christmas and ensure readiness
- Cleaning signs
- Etc.

I also ask that you always remember at this time of year the weather will impact on the availability of the Parish Steward. Whilst we always try to deliver to the

schedule, emergencies and snow clearance/ gritting will always take priority. For which I apologise, but trust you understand.

## **10 facts about winter maintenance in Wiltshire**

It may be relatively mild at the moment (but wet!), but Wiltshire Council is ready to keep the roads clear this winter when the temperatures drop. Here are 10 things you may not know about gritting season.

1. Wiltshire Council has 24 gritters at the ready to treat our primary network – that is 25% of the county's roads including primary A and B roads, and 50% of the network in severe conditions
2. The gritters will cover 726 miles from our strategically located depots, spreading 150 tonnes of salt each time they go out on the primary network
3. Salt, not grit, is spread, and 10,000 tonnes is held in stock at the start of the winter season
4. Weather stations are strategically placed around the county these give real time information and assist in producing accurate forecasts so helping to ensure gritters are sent out at the right time
5. A dedicated team of duty engineers monitors the weather 24/7 during the season and is supported by highways staff and a team of 24 drivers who are on standby throughout to be called into action at any time. Farmers and other specialist contractors are also on standby to help their communities with snow ploughing
6. 1,600 salt bins are being filled for use on local, lightly used roads and pavements, parish and town councils which have requested them have also given 1 tonne bags of rock salt for community use
7. The council has invested in six tractors which can assist in winter maintenance
8. Last winter the gritters went out 60 times
9. 6510 tonnes of salt was spread on Wiltshire's roads last season (2016/17)
10. Wiltshire Council has a dry run at the start of each winter season, during the run no salt is spread, but residents will see gritters out and about on the designated gritting network during the day as drivers familiarise themselves with the routes.

## **INFORMATION FROM WILTSHIRE COUNCIL**

### **Autumn and Winter Weather**

Wiltshire Council is ready to respond in an emergency should there be flash flooding, but I am calling on communities and residents to do all they can to be prepared.

The recent autumn like storms are a timely reminder that emergencies can happen anywhere, at any time, so communities need to be as ready as possible. We have been working extremely hard with our partners all summer to make sure the county is as prepared as it can be for the winter months. However, we have to be realistic about what we can do, so now is the time for residents to consider the impact of winter weather and for everyone to do their bit to keep gullies and drains

clear so that water flows without obstruction. Consideration should also be given to stocking up on sandbags which are available for personal property protection from local builders' merchants.

Although the council offers help and support to help tackle sudden, extreme weather, the responsibility for protecting private property rests with owners. Residents can clear gullies blocked with debris but if the problem is more serious or people have other concerns this can be reported to Wiltshire Council:

- Online at <http://www.wiltshire.gov.uk/mywiltshire-online-reporting> where people will be able to leave their email address and receive updates;
- Using the MyWilts app on a smart phone - again people will receive updates
- By telephone on 0300 456 0105 the customer services team will provide a log number
- During severe weather updates will be available on Twitter @wiltshireroads

Many parishes have already completed their snow and flood plans. As we move into a period of unsettled weather, now is the time to check your plans and refresh contact details.

I would also ask your help in advising residents that:

### **Be Prepared**

It is their responsibility for protecting their home from flooding. Where they can the council, emergency services and Environment Agency will help, however if the flooding is over a large area, they may not be able to respond to every call.

Important documents and items should be stored safely in waterproof containers at the highest point of the property such as upstairs.

These may include items like:

- Passports
- Financial documents
- Insurance details
- Photos

Make a list of important and useful telephone numbers:

- Insurance company
- Water
- Electric
- Gas
- Local council
- Landlord

### **Appliances**

Make sure they know how to turn off their gas, electricity and water supplies, even in the dark.

All electrical appliances should be:

- Unplugged



- Smaller items moved upstairs or to the highest part of the property
- Larger items raised on blocks

### **Furniture**

Plug:

- Sinks
- Baths
- Showers

Weighing the plug down to prevent backflow.

Move as much furniture as they can upstairs those they can't, should be raised off the floor.

### **Insurance**

The average cost of flood damage is £30,000 so you will need to check with their insurance company that the level of their insurance policy covers flooding and add the necessary cover if needed.

- Is my property insured against flood damage?
- Does my cover provide me with temporary accommodation?
- Will any necessary clean up or repairs to my property be taken care of?
- How much compensation will I receive to cover any damages to my property and contents?

Make an emergency flood kit of items:

- Blankets
- Warm/waterproof clothing
- Bottled water
- Food
- Torches
- Radio with spare batteries
- A first aid kit

Prepare food they can store and eat without cooking, store drinking water, keep warm clothing safe and keep a mobile phone fully charged.

### **Historic and listed buildings**

For owners of historic and listed buildings English Heritage have produced an excellent booklet designed to assist those who live in, own or manage historic buildings that together with their historic fixtures and fittings are threatened by periodic flooding. Advice is provided on preventative measures to minimise flood damage as well as on the inspection, conservation and repair of historic buildings after flooding.

Visit the English Heritage website for more information.

### **Groundwater flooding**

This kind of flooding presents particular issues as traditional methods of flood defence may not be effective as the water can come up through the floor and remain for a long time.

The most effective way to keep groundwater out of their home is to use a drainage pump, to divert water away from their home or business, however in some cases there may be too much water and this would be ineffective.

### **Where you pump the discharged water makes a difference**

Water removed from a structure needs to be discharged in to a location at least several feet from their home. Regardless of whether you have public sewage or a septic tank, never pump the water into the sewage system. An overload on the system could cause the sewage to back up.

### **Pumping water onto the highway**

Great care must be taken when pumping water onto the highway. The discharged water, pipes or operation must not create a safety issue. Pipes must be placed in a manner that they will not cause trip or obstruction hazards. Water wherever possible should be discharged into a working gully or in a manner that allows the water to easily and quickly disperse.

During freezing conditions pumping should be undertaken in a manner that prevents ice and hazard issues. This could involve using grit bags or regular salting.

If the highway authority believes pumping is causing a safety issue it will instruct the householder to amend their operations or cease if no alternative arrangements are available.

You can find more information on groundwater flooding on the environment agency website. If you would like more information and advice on groundwater flooding contact:- Floodline on 08459 88 11 88.

Head of Local Highways, Parking Services and Streetscene  
County Hall, Trowbridge  
Wiltshire BA14 8JN

Tel 01249 706799

To report a highway or streetscene issue:

<http://www.wiltshire.gov.uk/mywiltshire-online-reporting>