

INSPECTIONS OF PUBLIC RIGHTS OF WAY IN STOCKPORT.

Report of the Transport Strategy Manager

1. INTRODUCTION AND PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 The Chair of the Local Access Forum has requested a report on the council policy on the inspection of Public Rights Of Ways.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The Council has a Public Right of Way Inspection and Repair Planⁱ which was adopted in 2018. It has been developed as a risk based approach to Public Rights of Way (PROW) inspection and repair to meet the requirements of the 2016 Code of Practice “Well Managed Highway Infrastructure” (WMHI).
- 2.2 This plan should be used in conjunction with the latest version of the Network Hierarchy, Highway Safety Inspection and Repairs Policy Statementⁱⁱ and the related Highway Safety Inspection and Repairs Planⁱⁱⁱ. The plan provides guidance on the way in which the defects on PROW will be identified and recorded and the timescales for subsequent repair work identified. In line with the recommendation of the WMHI metalled surfaced PROW within the urban area will be inspected in line with other pedestrian / cycle routes to meet the need of the public for consistency irrespective of designation.
- 2.3 Stockport’s Rights of Way Improvement Plan^{iv} also identifies some elements of strategy regarding the maintenance of the PROW network.

3. 2021-22 INSPECTIONS PROGRESS

- 3.1 So far this financial year (April-Oct) the Public Rights of Way Officer has inspected approximately 40% of all Rights of Way (270). Over a third of these (100 +) were visited as a result of contact from the public about specific issues. This is in addition to the inspections being undertaken by Highways Maintenance of Rights of Way with sealed surfaces (bitmac etc) and those which are also on Adopted Highway.
- 3.2 Inspection of issues will consider:
- 3.3 Likelihood of Event Occurring - This is the inspector’s assessment of the likelihood of the defect affecting the safe passage of users along the PROW, or affecting the structural integrity of the PROW
- 3.4 Consequence of Event Occurring - This is the impact/severity and is quantified by assessing the extent of damage likely to be caused should the risk be realised. The consideration would include dimension of the defect, route speed, number and type of users etc.
- 3.5 The above is used to prioritise the speed of response to a defect. Examples of likely responses are as follows:

- Serious and immediate Health and Safety risk to the public for example sink hole on a path. Should be investigated and responded to immediately. With repair or make safe action taken rapidly.
- Possible Health and Safety risk to the public for example reported trip hazards. Should be investigated as soon as possible, and response assessed. Make safe as appropriate.
- Complete obstruction of a route. Should be investigated as soon as possible, and response assessed. Utility of route a factor in speed of investigation with more significant routes being inspected more rapidly. Landowner information required for action on issues regarding obstruction may delay final resolution.
- Obstruction by vegetation. If photos not available then add to site visit list for inspection. If photos are provided then site visit can be avoided. Issues added to vegetation cut list for Totally Local Company if assessed as needing clearing. Small spot issues may be dealt with by officer inspecting. Vegetation lists are issued regularly in growing season.
- Surface condition not trip hazard. Add to site visit list. None safety maintenance is addressed through the capital programme or reactive revenue programme depending on size and financial costs involved.
- Faulty infrastructure (stiles/gates). If photos not available then add to site visit list as and when possible. . If photos are provided then site visit can be avoided. Landowner information required for action on issues regarding infrastructure may delay final resolution..
- Signage issues. Add to site visit list. Regular lists issued for Totally Local Company sign shop.

4. FUTURE ACTIONS

- 4.1 The PROW inspections process is being added to the confirm computer system. This will improve the recording of inspections and maintenance and the monitoring of task completion by Totally Local Company.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

Anyone wishing to inspect the above background papers or requiring further information should contact Emily Brough on telephone number or alternatively email emily.brough@stockport.gov.uk

ⁱ [Appendix 7 - Public Right of Way Inspection and Repair Plan.pdf \(stockport.gov.uk\)](#)

ⁱⁱ [DRAFT Highway Safety Inspection and Repairs Policy Statement \(stockport.gov.uk\)](#)

ⁱⁱⁱ [Highway Safety Inspection and Repairs Plan – 2011/12 \(stockport.gov.uk\)](#)

^{iv} https://assets.ctfassets.net/ii3xdrqc6nfw/1tcFtGeSq8SiqqkoMsi8Gu/eaf0360668b1a123350a21811c8a1952/The_Rights_of_Way_Improvement_Plan_2018.pdf