



# STOCKPORT

METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL



## HIGHWAYS COMMUNICATION STRATEGY

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# **HIGHWAYS COMMUNICATION STRATEGY**

## **1. INTRODUCTON**

- 1.1. Effective communication is essential and central to the successful delivery of any project and the complexity of that requires that all aspects of its associated communication needs are planned and delivered to a high standard.
- 1.2. Communication during the development and implementation of highway schemes/work will be used for a number of different purposes e.g. consultation, information etc., to a range of different audiences e.g. members, MP's, officers, landowners, interest groups and the public using a variety of different media e.g. press, radio, website, leaflets, newsletters, exhibitions, email.
- 1.3. The following principles need to be applied to all communication and the basic messages included in all communications must be consistent and relevant to the changing context of highway services.
- 1.4. This Strategy will work with the Councils overarching Communications Strategy and related corporate guidelines as well as the guidance from the UK Roads Liaison Group and Chartered Institution of Highways and Transportation.

## **2. PURPOSE OF COMMUNICATION**

2.1. The purpose of the communication strategy is:

2.1.1. to use prior knowledge of audiences/stakeholders;

2.1.2. to inform and consult the public and other stakeholders on highway schemes/work;

2.1.3. to meet statutory and best practice standards for communication and consultation;

2.1.4. to reassure audiences/stakeholders that their concerns are being taken into account;

2.1.5. to gain understanding and co-operation for highway schemes and work, from the public and other stakeholders;

2.1.6. to minimise disruption and inconvenience for local people and wider travelling public;

2.1.7. to defend the project and the Partner Authorities against unfair criticism and complaints.

2.1.8. In addition:

2.1.8.1. to promote the benefits of Highway improvements and maintenance within the Stockport and Greater Manchester.

2.1.8.2. to maintain and enhance the reputation of the Stockport Council, Highways and Transport locally, regionally and nationally, as professional and working in the interests of residents, businesses and the region.

### **3. PRINCIPLES OF COMMUNICATION**

- 3.1. All communications must be clear and transparent and appropriate for the target audience.
- 3.2. All communication should contain the corporate Logo, named contact officer, be in accordance with the appropriate guidelines and carry consistent identities.
- 3.3. Consultation should be carried out in accordance with best practice in an unbiased manner and include appropriate feedback for participants.
- 3.4. All communications should be technically and factually correct.
- 3.5. All communications should include contact information.
- 3.6. All communications should be accessible, including the use of interpreting services and providing information in other appropriate formats.
- 3.7. All communications will be monitored and, continuously, evaluated.
- 3.8. All responses to communications must be appropriately documented and answered.
- 3.9. Communication should be timely and consideration must be given to linked communications to prevent consultation/information overload.

#### **4. COMMUNICATION MESSAGES**

- 4.1. The main communications messages regarding the highway schemes/works are as follows:
  - 4.1.1. Demonstrate that Stockport Metropolitan Borough have a strong and ongoing commitment to involve the public and stakeholders.
  - 4.1.2. Promoting and explaining the benefits and impacts of the scheme/work.
  - 4.1.3. Benefits to the economy including the prospect of employment on the scheme/work.
  - 4.1.4. The highway schemes/works are being developed/carried out as quickly as possible to minimise disruption and address issues.
  - 4.1.5. Consideration of environmental and local issues is an important element of the scheme/work.
  - 4.1.6. Outlining the steps being taken to alleviate inconvenience.
  - 4.1.7. Ensure all statutory consultation and information requirements are met.
  - 4.1.8. Providing access to up-to date information as appropriate – through hotline, websites etc. for public, employers and political/community representatives.

**5. COMMUNICATION PLAN**

- 5.1. The highway schemes/works will affect and be relevant in a number of ways to a large variety of audiences. Major projects will need an individualised communication plan. A review of the scheme’s key information can assist in identifying the impacts and audiences for a scheme the form in appendix 1 will facilitate this process. Minor projects will also require communication based around the below aspects but a less formal approach can be successful.
- 5.2. The highways schemes/works communications plan will identify the need for ongoing liaison and information provision which needs to be carried out in a planned and systematic manner.
- 5.3. The information provision can be split into a number of target groups dependent on the scheme / work size not all options will be necessary.

Initial Development of schemes	Scene setting leading to: Briefing notes and committee reports for Members, MP’s etc. Press releases to inform general public Letters and back up telephone/electronic contact with potentially affected residents regarding site investigations etc Meetings of steering group newsletters/newspapers On street public information and exhibitions including signage for major schemes as appropriate. Data gathering /questionnaires
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Development of proposed schemes	Briefing notes and committee reports for Members, MP’s etc. Briefing styled such as Appendix 2 Contact with affected landowners Contact with tenants Information and dialogue with interest groups Press Releases to inform general public Newsletters/newspapers Development of a website- webpage - social media releases One to one meetings with key people who might choose to object/impede the scheme(s) One to one or small group meetings Meeting of wider reference group Presentation to local groups including District Centre Partnerships Open forums at area committees Exhibitions Leaflets/questionnaires to those adjacent to proposed routes/works/schemes
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	<p>Contact with Statutory bodies and interest groups e.g. freight transport association</p> <p>Meeting of steering group at officer and political level</p> <p>Police Forces</p> <p>Statutory bodies</p> <p>Businesses</p> <p>AA and RAC</p> <p>Local Media/briefings/ press packs and strategy meetings with local editors</p>
Development of detailed design of schemes	As above
Application for Planning Permission etc. as necessary	Formal Planning as necessary
Scheme pre-arriving on site	<p>Members/MPs</p> <p>Contact with affected landowners</p> <p>Contact with tenants</p> <p>Information and dialogue with/for interest groups</p> <p>Press Releases to inform general public</p> <p>Newsletters/newspapers example as in appendix 3</p> <p>Social media information on facebook and twitter.</p> <p>Development of a website/webpage</p> <p>Up-to-date programme of works published inc. minor works</p> <p>One to one meetings with key people who might choose to object/impede the scheme(s)</p> <p>Advanced warning information sign</p> <p>Signage styled as shown in Appendix 4</p>
Scheme on site	<p>Contact with affected landowners</p> <p>Contact with tenants, Press Releases to inform general public</p> <p>Signs</p> <p>Provision of contact on site as well as office based contact and 24hr emergency contact for problems.</p>
Post scheme	<p>Post scheme questionnaire as indicated in pre-scheme information issued on site/ to effected parties.</p> <p>Questionnaires to be provided online – standard questionnaire for smaller scale works. See Appendix 5.</p>



**6. LIAISON GROUPS**

6.1. The need for continuing dialogue at a number of levels has been recognised as being essential to the communication process and the following groups at appropriate times need to be integrated into communication for schemes.

- i. Core Implementation Groups                      Stockport Metropolitan Borough Council Officer and political levels. Officers meeting
  
- Steering Groups                                      Officer and Member meetings as appropriate. Activities will include informing members of the progress of the schemes, discussing local concerns and issues to ensure early resolution of potential objections/ disruptions and issues
  
- iii. Wider Reference Group                      Local civic groups  
(representatives to include those from)      Parish Councils  
   Friends Groups  
   Heritage Groups  
   Environmental Groups  
   Transport Groups  
   Hard to reach groups  
   Commerce and Business Sector  
   Farmers and Landowners  
   Emergency services.  
   Meet six monthly or as appropriate once potential scheme/works have been developed for consultation

6.2. The above groups would be communicated with in different ways to ensure that they:

- felt involved;
- recognised that their knowledge was current and relevant;
- worked within their designated context;
- recognised the relationship between their action and statements and the progress of the scheme(s) including explanations of why their requests could not be accommodated if necessary.

## 7. CONSULTATION

- 7.1. Informal and formal consultation processes will be used during improvement schemes/works. Informal consultation will target specific groups and be in accordance with corporate guidelines and best practice and be appropriate in size, form etc., for the particular topic to be consulted on. Formal consultation processes will be carried out in accordance with legal requirements and existing Council policies such as [One Place One Voice](#), [Public Consultation and Engagement Policy](#) and [Consultation toolkit](#).

## **8. INFLUENCING KEY DECISION MAKERS**

- 8.1. Delivery of the schemes can be reliant on the successful application for planning permission and sufficient funding being made available to develop and implement the schemes.
- 8.2. The Planning process is an independent process but the support of key stakeholders, a low level of objections, strategic relevance of a scheme and its policy contact is crucial for the delivery of a successful outcome. These can be delivered through good communication and consultation processes.
- 8.3. The availability of funding and the speed of agreement to allow the local authority to deliver the schemes will be influenced by the attitude of key decision makers. Therefore they need to feel from the very beginning of the communication activity:
  - confident in the communication processes;
  - know that they are and have been structurally involved.
- 8.4. Key Decision Makers may include:
  - Transport for Greater Manchester
  - Transport for the North
  - Greater Manchester Combined Authority
  - Highways England
  - Central Government Officers
  - Transport Ministers
  - Council Members/ MPs
  - Local Government Officers
- 8.5. These people need to be kept informed of the scheme's process, via briefing/newsletters and regular liaison meetings and a host of other evolving techniques and procedures.
- 8.6. It is also important that the Strategic and policy contact at central, regional and local levels is monitored with appropriate lobbying undertaken to try to ensure that the Strategic context for the schemes/work is maintained or strengthened as new policies are developed or existing ones reviewed.

## **9. METHODS OF COMMUNICATION**

- 9.1. There will be a variety of communication methods used dependent on the type of information/consultation and purpose of the communication to be undertaken. These methods will be selected as the most suitable mode of communication by considering the target audience and its needs, the type of message and response required and any statutory requirements.
- 9.2. Communications will be planned and organised to try to prevent information and consultation overload and also to manage people's expectations so they are realistic and understand what is achievable and the constraints the Council is subject to.
- 9.3. There will be five broad types of communications needed:
  - prior exploratory understandings
  - general awareness based on prior positional understandings
  - informal consultation that lead to positive involvement and support
  - statutory consultation
  - specific information to targeted groups
- 9.4. Within those categories as previously identified are specific target audiences all of which need to be carefully considered with planned approaches.
- 9.5. General awareness of schemes/works and their progress will be developed using a raft of measures consistent with the complexity of the audience mix and will include press releases, website, briefing notes and packs.
- 9.6. Specific information needs will be met as a result of a unified communications plan but will focus heavily on techniques that involve the individual (as in face to face meetings, small group gatherings, up date progress sheets and audience specific leaflets, social media and website messages).
- 9.7. Informal consultation will occur via liaison and briefing meetings, exhibitions, group interactions designed on protocols that meet specific programme and audience needs and the use of existing consultation mechanisms.
- 9.8. Statutory Consultation will usually be in writing and follow the recommended guidance and good practice and Council policies for that legislative area e.g. planning applications. There will be a clear and explicit relationship between what the informal consultation and public involvement processes deliver and the needs of the formal process and its effective delivery.

## **10. MONITORING AND EVALUATION OF THE COMMUNICATION STRATEGY**

- 10.1. The success of the strategy will ultimately be judged on the development and implementation of the schemes/works with continuing local and stakeholder support and a minimum of objections.
- 10.2. The various elements of the strategy will be monitored and evaluated for their contribution to this aim. Monitoring will include level of objections, public interest and support of the scheme, levels and types of press coverage support of stakeholders and feedback on how audience when involved perceived the honesty and directness of their involvement. .
- 10.3. If evaluation of the process indicates that communication or consultation is not achieving the desired effect the communication mechanisms and messages will be reviewed and appropriate remedial action will be taken. This implies that communication will be continually reviewed to ensure that a particular process if not proving to be successful against previously agreed criteria will be intercepted and changed. If early evidence suggests that a programme of works will not fulfil the desired objective it must be adjusted to do so or not carried forward. Post scheme consultation will include questions about the success of communication to facilitate continuous improvement.

## Appendix 1: Initial Scheme Evaluation Improvement Schemes

Key Information		
Location:		
Anticipated length of work:	Start:	
	Finish:	
Type of work:		
Route Users	Major	Minor
Vehicles		
Pedestrian		
Bus route		
Commuter route		
Freight route		
Community route (main route for a particular community)		
Cross Authority Impact		
Access (primary route)		
Resilient Network		
Residential		
Retail		
Industrial		
Workplaces		
Transport facilities (railway station etc.)		
Schools		
Hospitals and healthcare facilities		
Cemeteries and Crematoria		
Amenities (parks, libraries, leisure facilities etc.)		
Period of Construction		
All day		
Off peak		
Evening		
Overnight		
Other (please state):		

<b>Localised Factors</b>					
Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)					
Area of Archaeological Potential (AAP)/ Conservation areas					
Accident black spot					
Affects crossings					
Affects road/directional sign					
Affects crash barrier					
Affects lamp columns					
Affects access to vital services (electricity, gas, telephone, etc.)					
Affects subterranean pipelines (other than statutory undertakers)					
Mature trees					
Newly planted trees					
Soft landscaping					
Drainage issues					
Network Hierarchy					
<b>Pollution During Construction (likelihood (1 = least, 5 =most))</b>					
Noise	1	2	3	4	5
Air	1	2	3	4	5
<b>Highway Implications During Construction (select all applicable)</b>					
Cones					
Single lane work – off peak					
Total closure					
Footway Closure					
Cycleway Closure					
Bus Stop Closure					
Bus Route Diversion (inc. school buses)					
Special plant/equipment – Piling rig					
Other (Please state)					
<b>Primary Reconstruction Materials</b>					
Below ground so no aesthetics to consider					
Stone masonry					

Brick masonry	
Concrete	
Steel	
Tegula Paving	
Bituminous Surface	
Other (please state):	



## Appendix 2: Members' Briefing Information



### School Brow Retaining Wall No.2 Refurbishment

Stockport Council, Engineering Services will be refurbishing a retaining wall, on School Brow in the Romiley area of Stockport.

This work is being carried out as part of the Retaining Walls Scheme, which involves important strengthening work to over 100 retaining walls in Oldham, Rochdale, Stockport and Tameside over three years.

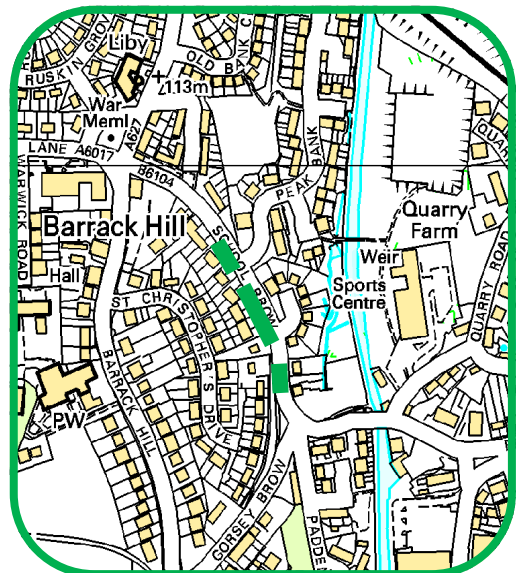
#### School Brow Retaining Wall No.2 – Refurbishment (13 week duration)

- Partial replacement of retaining wall and repointing of remaining stone wall
- Replacement of the existing metal parapet railings.

The work will be carried out in three phases, initially adjacent to No.1 Mallards Reach and working towards Peak Bank.

There are not expected to be any restrictions to traffic flow along School Brow during the works.

The footway adjacent to the retaining wall will be narrowed however pedestrian provision will be maintained at all times.



**Email notification:**

Dear Councillors,

**Highway Investment Programme**  
**Carriageway Resurfacing – Town Street, Marple Bridge.**

Stockport Council is undertaking a programme of repairs across the borough as part of the 'Investing in Stockport' initiative.

There is a commitment to invest £100m to improve roads and footpaths across the borough over a nine year delivery period. This funding will be used to carry out a range of repairs from patching to resurfacing in targeted areas which will provide a long term solution to the deterioration on the highway network.

As part of the programme, Stockport Council will be carrying out carriageway resurfacing works on Town Street (full length). These works will be carried out by our Alliance Partner Tarmac Limited.

The work is scheduled to commence from Sunday 8<sup>th</sup> January 2017 and is anticipated to take up to 1 week to complete, weather permitting.

Unfortunately, to minimise disruption and allow safe working operations to take place it will be necessary to restrict traffic movements utilising a prohibition of driving (road closure). During the working hours stated below, a signed diversion will be in operation via; Lower Fold, Bonnington Rise, Hogarth Road, Constable Drive and Hollins Lane.

Sunday Working – 09:00 to 18:00hrs

Monday to Friday – 18:00hrs to approximately midnight.

Access to properties in the working zone will be maintained wherever possible but may be restricted for certain periods as the work progresses.

Information boards will be erected on site advising road users of the programmed work prior to the work commencing. Residents and businesses directly affected will receive a letter in due course explaining the scope of the work and timescales involved. We have also consulted with TfGM (buses) and they will make the necessary arrangements to bus services that will be affected. Although some local disruption is inevitable this will be kept to a minimum by our staff on site.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you require any further information, finally I would like to take this opportunity to apologise for any inconvenience that may be caused by this work.

With regards

Highways and Transportation

## Appendix 3: Public Briefing Information



### **The Broadway Retaining Wall Refurbishment**

Stockport Council will be refurbishing The Broadway retaining wall, that is supporting the raised footpath along a section of The Broadway (No. 2 - 20) & Vernon Road (No. 70 -74) in the Bredbury area of Stockport.

This work is being carried out as part of the Retaining Walls Scheme, which involves important strengthening work to over 100 retaining walls in Oldham, Rochdale, Stockport and Tameside over three years.

The project will comprise the following works:-

#### **The Broadway Retaining Wall – Refurbishment (8 week duration)**

- Traffic management and temporary traffic lights system.
- Vegetation clearance and power wash to wall where applicable.
- Take down top section of wall and rebuild with new cast cappings.
- Rake out and pressure point mortar beds within retaining wall.
- Replace, repair and provide a protective paint system to existing railings and timber post/fence panels.
- Take out existing steps and replace with new.
- Excavate existing footpath (in sections) and replace with new tarmac surface.

The carriageway adjacent to the retaining wall will be reduced to a single carriageway under a temporary traffic light system. Pedestrian access will be provided and controlled by diverting the public into the closed lane of the carriageway and around the works site as part of the traffic management . All works will be segregated from the public.

The traffic management system will cause some delay to passing vehicles, and residents wishing to park at the foot of the wall will have to find alternative parking. However in doing so this will allow the contractor to work from the carriageway reducing the need to close the footpath above and thus preventing access to the adjacent properties.

Access to the surrounding properties should be as normal for the majority of the works, however towards the end of the scheme the footpath is due to be resurfaced, and this operation will cause some disturbance. The resurfacing works will be kept to a minimum and undertaken in sections so that access to the surrounding properties is still possible.

The site welfare and storage location is planned for the open grassed area opposite the retaining wall.



Date:- 5th December 2016  
Ref SP051216

Dear Sir or Madam,

**Investing in Stockport - Improving Stockport's Highways  
Carriageway Resurfacing – Town Street, Marple Bridge.**

Stockport Council is undertaking a programme of repairs across the borough as part of our 'Investing in Stockport' initiative. One of the key themes of the initiative is investing in Stockport's economic growth and regeneration to create more opportunities for local residents.

As part of this work, Stockport Council has committed to invest £100m to improve roads and footpaths across the borough over a nine year delivery period. This funding will be used to carry out a range of repairs from patching to resurfacing in targeted areas which will provide a long term solution to the deterioration on the highway network. For more information visit:

<http://www.stockport.gov.uk/hjp>

As part of the programme, Stockport Council will be carrying out carriageway resurfacing works on Town Street (full length). These works will be carried out by our Alliance Partner Tarmac Ltd.

The work is scheduled to commence from Sunday 8<sup>th</sup> January 2017 and is expected to take up to 1 week to complete, weather permitting.

Unfortunately, to minimise disruption and allow safe working operations to take place it will be necessary to restrict traffic movements utilising a temporary prohibition of driving (road closure). During the working hours stated below, a signed diversion will be operation via Lower Fold, Bonnington Rise, Hogarth Road, Constable Drive and Hollins Lane.

Sunday Working – 09.00 – 18.00hrs.

Monday - Friday – 18.00hrs to approximately midnight.

Access to properties in the working area will be maintained where possible however may be restricted for certain periods as the work progresses. To assist us please do not park on the road in the limits of the proposed work during the times stated above.

Information boards will be erected on site advising road users of the planned work. We have notified TFGM buses and they will make the necessary arrangement to bus services that will be affected.

If you have any queries or specific delivery requirements, please call the number at the head of the letter.

Finally, I would like to take this opportunity to apologise for any inconvenience that may be caused by this necessary work.

Yours faithfully

Highways and Transportation

Dear Sir/Madam,

**Investing in Stockport - Improving Stockport's Highways**

**Surface Dressing – XXX Road between yyyy and zzzzz**

Stockport Council is undertaking a programme of repairs across the borough as part of our 'Investing in Stockport' initiative. One of the key themes of the initiative is investing in Stockport's economic growth and regeneration to create more opportunities for local residents.

As part of this work Stockport Council has committed to invest £100m to improve roads and footpaths across the borough over a nine year delivery period. This funding will be used to carry out a range of repairs from patching to resurfacing in targeted areas which will provide a long term solution to the deterioration on the highway network. For more information visit <http://www.stockport.gov.uk/hip>

As part of the programme, we are due to carry out surface dressing works on xxxx Road between yyyyyy and zzzzzz. The work will be carried out by our alliance partner Colas Ltd.

Surface dressing is a preventative maintenance treatment that seals cracks in the surface preventing water ingress in the structure of the road. Benefits include improved texture, skid resistance and a reduction in the likelihood of potholes forming on the surface. The application can be applied in a relatively short period of time, minimising disruption to the travelling public. After the new surface has been applied the road will be swept periodically to remove any loose aggregate. This is normal and is part of the embedment process of the new road surface.

The work is scheduled to commence on @@@@ and will take up to @ days between the hours of 8am and 5pm, weather permitting. Information signs will be erected on site advising road users of the start date.

Access to properties in the working area will be maintained where possible however may be restricted for certain periods as the work progresses. To assist us please do not park on the road during the times stated above while work is taking place.

Finally, I would like to take this opportunity to thank you in advance for your co-operation.

Yours faithfully,

ABCD  
Highway Engineer  
Highway Planned Maintenance and Minor Structures

## Appendix 4: Advanced Warning Information Signs



**For more information about the work  
taking place at this location**

**Visit:** [www.stockport.gov.uk](http://www.stockport.gov.uk) **or**  
[www.roadsupport.info](http://www.roadsupport.info)

**Call:** 0845 366 6700 (local rate)

**1020 x 765 mm**



**INVESTING  
INSTOCKPORT**



— ON THIS SCHEME WE ARE WORKING IN PARTNERSHIP WITH —

**SOLUTIONS SK**

**HIGHWAYS INVESTMENT PROGRAMME**



**WORKS IN  
PROGRESS**

**PERMIT No.**



**EMERGENCY  
TELEPHONE No.**



**SORRY FOR ANY INCONVENIENCE**

[www.stockport.gov.uk/investingingrowth](http://www.stockport.gov.uk/investingingrowth)

Appendix 5 – Post Scheme Consultation (Generic)

# Asset Management Post-work Questionnaire

Thinking about the work undertaken by the council near your property please complete the following questions.

Works Reference Number \_\_\_\_\_

Street Name \_\_\_\_\_

Carriageway  Footway  (tick as applicable)

<b>Information Provided</b>				
On a scale of 1-5 (with 5 being regularly updated, and 1 being not informed at all) how would you rate the information provided to inform you about the work taking place?				
1	2	3	4	5

<b>Work Duration</b>				
On a scale from 1-5 (5 being very satisfied and 1 being very unsatisfied) how satisfied were you with the time the works took to complete?				
1	2	3	4	5

<b>Quality of Work</b>				
On a scale from 1-5 (5 being very satisfied and 1 being very unsatisfied) how did you feel about the quality of the work completed?				
1	2	3	4	5

<b>Tidy up After Work</b>				
Was the site left tidy after the works were complete with all equipment/signs removed? Yes/No				

<b>Delivery</b>				
On a scale from 1-5 (5 being very satisfied and 1 being very unsatisfied) how satisfied or dissatisfied are you that the method of delivery minimised the impact on highway users?				
1	2	3	4	5

<b>Improvement</b>				
On a scale from 1-5 (with 5 being essential and 1 being unnecessary) how necessary do you feel the work was?				
1	2	3	4	5

Do you have any further comments about the work undertaken?

Thank You for completing this questionnaire. If you have any further comments about this work please email [??@stockport.gov.uk](mailto:??@stockport.gov.uk).