

County Councillor Report May 2025

West Sussex Road Network

West Sussex County Council's figures for the 2024-2025 financial year have highlighted the significant progress made by its highways team in improving the condition of the county's 2,500 miles of road.

Between April 2024 and March 2025, the Council's highways team delivered a wide programme of essential reactive maintenance and proactive improvements including:

- 44,767 potholes repaired, using durable methods such as 'sawn and sealed' patching and 'spray injection patching'
- A decrease in the average time between receiving a report and repairing a pothole to just 14 days
- 134.5 miles of surfacing works, including surface dressing, micro-asphalt and major carriageway patching
- 36,031 sqm of small and medium scale patching

Over the winter months, the highways teams have also been working hard to keep drainage systems clear and ensure water can run off the roads as effectively as possible, cleansing 123,000 drainage gullies and completing 63 small scale drainage schemes. These works help to protect road surfaces from water damage and reduce the risk of flooding in the event of heavy rainfall.

As part of our efforts to improve winter resilience on the road network, extra resources were provided to clear more gullies, ditches and areas where leaves build up. Extra CCTV resource was also brought in to monitor and identify issues, and an additional jetting unit was provided to clear flooded areas and get them moving as soon as possible.

The team's hard work has been reflected in the number of reports of defects, such as potholes or blocked drains being submitted by the public. In recent years, there has been an upward trend in the number of defects being reported, however, in a clear sign of the improvement in the condition of the county's road network, there has been a drop in reports from 69,669 last year to 53,574.

New partnerships with Volker Highways Limited and FM Conway underpin this shift from reactive fixes to proactive maintenance.

At the start of this financial year, the Council transitioned to working with Volker Highways Limited for the delivery of core carriageway maintenance across the county. Volker Highways' remit covers everything from rapid-response pothole and jet patching repairs to our winter maintenance programme and vegetation management. A key focus of the

contract will be the cutting of average repair times by up to 25% while still ensuring that high quality services are consistently delivered.

At the same time, FM Conway took on the contract for cyclical and small-scale drainage works. Their responsibilities include routine gully cleansing and the installation of new pipes and chambers, applying root-cause solutions to reduce repeat defects and extend the lifespan of drainage assets. As part of this new partnership, the frequency of the gully cleansing programme has also been increased. This means that all 140,000 gullies will now be emptied every 2 years instead of every 4 years.

Partnering with Volker Highways and FM Conway means the county can accelerate both its reactive repairs and its proactive maintenance programmes across Local Highways Operations in another step towards its goal of a more resilient, well-maintained network. As part of its commitment to be carbon neutral by 2030, it is looking forward to working with both organisations to adopt greener technologies and materials to reduce its environmental impact.

More information about ongoing improvements to the road network can be found on the council's [Better Roads campaign page](#).

A high number of illegally operating trade vehicles were caught during a crackdown by police and council officials on the outskirts of Horsham. The enforcement was carried out on the A264 which has recently been subjected to large levels of roadside litter. As well as Sussex Police, the enforcement included Horsham District Council officials along with the Environment Agency, the Driver and Vehicle Standards Agency and West Sussex County Council.

The Materials Recycling Facility (MRF) in Ford, run by Biffa on behalf of the County Council, handles the mixed recycling from homes across the county. Tours are available Monday to Friday for schools, community groups and individuals in West Sussex at no charge. On a tour you can see the advanced sorting systems separate different recyclable materials. Each session includes a presentation, a guided tour and a chance to ask questions. For further details contact 01903 712620.

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