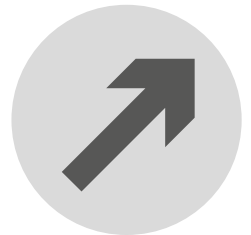


**Leicestershire's future**  
The plan for change

# From A-roads to Zebras...

## Have your say on how we look after Leicestershire's roads, pavements and verges



### Your feedback is important

Online: [leicestershire.gov.uk/highwaysconsultation](https://leicestershire.gov.uk/highwaysconsultation)

For general enquiries or comments about this consultation  
phone **0116 305 0001** or email [highwaysconsultation@leics.gov.uk](mailto:highwaysconsultation@leics.gov.uk)

**Public consultation: the consultation runs from 5 July 2016.  
Submit your views by midnight on 25 September 2016.**

# Leicestershire's future

## The plan for change

### Why change?

Leicestershire County Council has saved more than £100 million over the last 5 years and is having to save a further £78 million over the next four. We have to make savings across all areas of the council's work. We also need to make sure the service takes account of changes in legislation and national guidance.

Our road and footpath network provides connections to employment, health services, education, places of leisure, and supports industry.

Over the last years we've already made considerable savings.

In 2015/16 we had a budget of £26 million for looking after our roads, pavements and verges, using our own staff and some external contractors. By 2020 we expect our budget to be around £16.5 million.

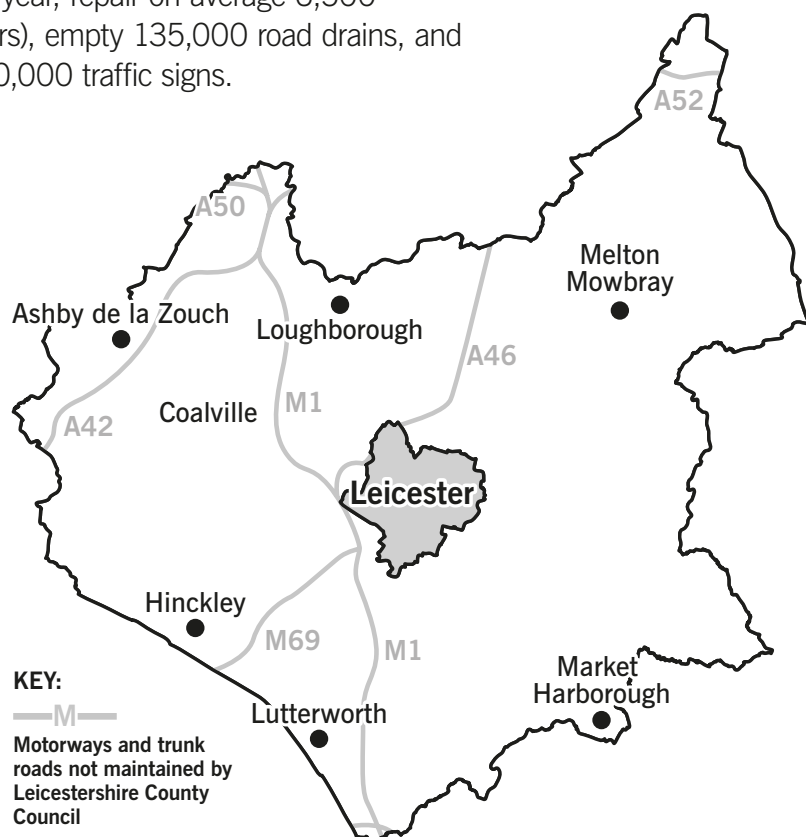
In order to make the savings required, we need to provide services in a different way in the future.

### What is the current service?

The roads in Leicestershire are amongst the best in the country and have been maintained to a high standard. We look after approximately 2,575 miles of road and inspect them every year. We upgrade the surface on around 180 miles of road a year, grit 45% of the road network in the winter, cut grass verges six times per year, repair on average 6,500 potholes per year (over the last 4 years), empty 135,000 road drains, and look after 68,000 street lights and 80,000 traffic signs.

Please note we are not responsible for maintaining the motorways and trunk roads that run through Leicestershire, or the roads in Leicester City.

Highway maintenance services are about maintaining the condition of roads, pavements, verges and associated features such as signs, bollards etc.



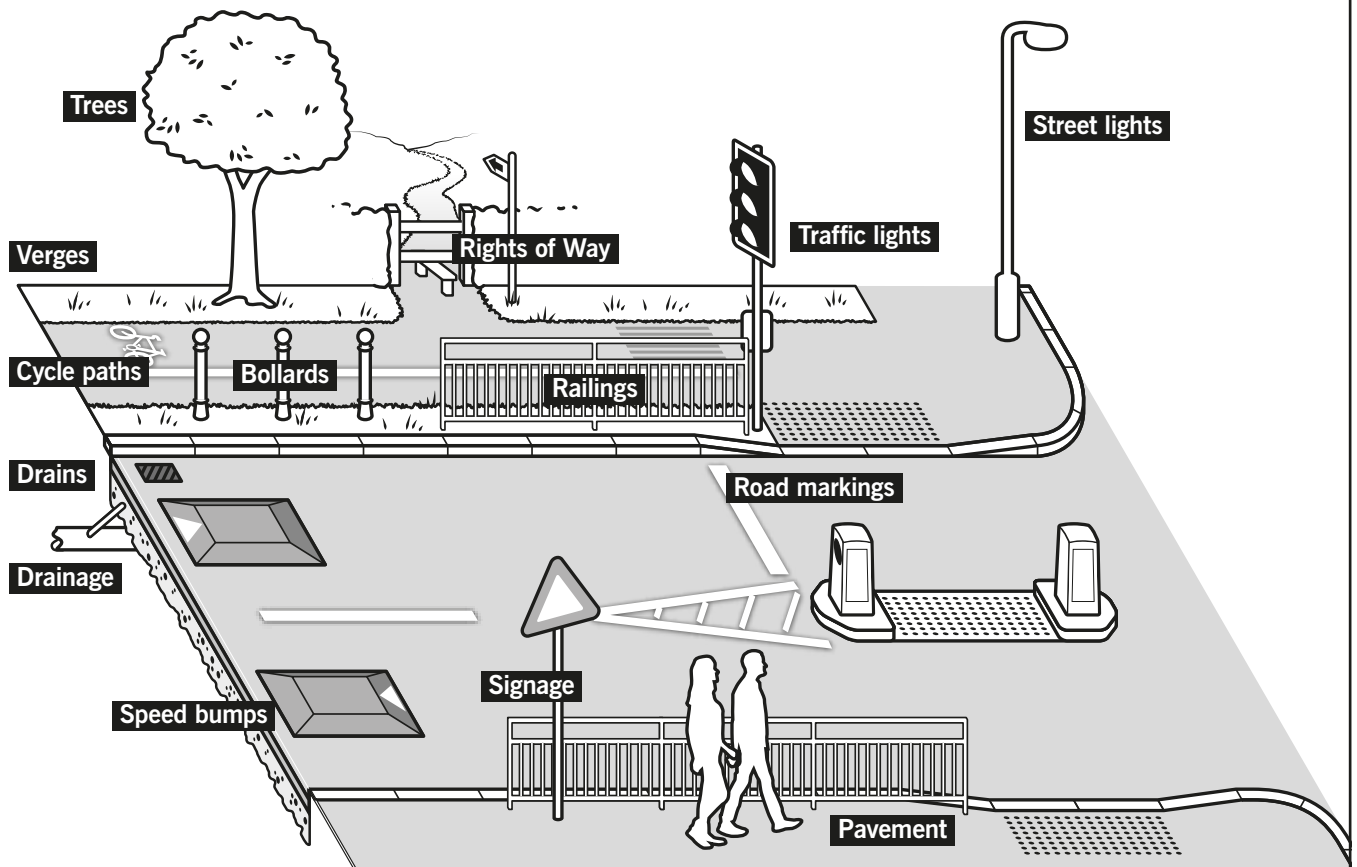
# ✓ Highway maintenance activities **include:**

## Highway maintenance and repairs

- Carrying out scheduled inspections of roads and footpaths
- Repairing potholes and reacting to other defects
- Patching and resurfacing roads and footpaths
- Treatments such as surface dressing roads and slurry sealing footpaths, which seals them and prolongs their life
- Inspecting and maintaining road bridges and major culverts
- Inspecting and maintaining streetlights, traffic signals and traffic signs
- Renewing carriageway and footway line markings
- Inspecting and maintaining crash barriers
- Winter gritting
- Emptying road drains and clearing verge drainage channels (grips) and culverts

## Maintenance of the streetscape and road-side environment

- Cutting highway grass verges in towns and villages and on rural roads
- Looking after our trees and our shrub beds
- Cleaning traffic signs
- Repainting and repairing fences and traditional finger and mileposts
- Clearing foliage blocking visibility of road traffic signs
- Maintaining footbridges and subways
- Repairing and replacing bollards etc.
- Public Rights of Way



# ✗ Highway maintenance activities **do not include:**

- Street sweeping and litter picking
- Parking enforcement
- Tackling congestion
- Planning and building of new roads
- Assessing the impact on the road network of new development and commenting on planning applications
- Vehicle speed control

## Leicestershire's future

### The plan for change

## What are we consulting on?

As a council we have a statutory duty to maintain Leicestershire's highways but there are a number of ways we can do this. The Highway Maintenance Strategy is the document we use to set out how we maintain our highways. We are reviewing our current Highway Maintenance Strategy based on changes to national guidance and the need to make savings.

- We are proposing to refocus how we use resources to plan the maintenance of our roads and respond to defects.
- We are proposing to reduce the resources we spend on maintaining the streetscape and road-side environment. There are some parts of the service that we may not be able to provide in the future and we want to see how we could support communities to deliver some of these.

We would like to know your views on the condition of our network of roads, pavements and verges, how you use it, what parts and features of it you value most and if you think we are spending money in the right places.

## What are other councils doing?

Other councils have already made changes to how they maintain roads, pavements and verges so we also want to learn from them. Other initiatives we are aware of are:

- Working with Parish Councils and community groups
- Changing response times to inspect and repair some defects
- Reducing what they will maintain and how often they maintain them

## Our vision for the future

In the new Highway Maintenance Strategy we are proposing to:

1. **Prioritise high risk repairs when responding to highway defects and focus resources on planned repairs and preventative maintenance.**
2. **Reduce the number of items we look after directly and/or reduce how regularly we maintain these.**
3. **Involve communities directly in maintaining the streetscape and road-side environment.**



# Our proposals in detail

## **1. Prioritising high risk repairs when responding to highway defects and focusing resources on planned repairs and preventative maintenance.**

We will continue to carry out preventative maintenance treatments such as surface dressing and patching. This prolongs the life of the road surface and stops potholes from forming.

The county council has a limited resource for repairing defects, such as potholes. There is a balance between how quickly we carry out a repair and how durable and cost effective the repair is. A fast response is more expensive and often only provides a temporary solution.

We currently respond to highway defects based on criteria that only relate to the nature of the defect. These criteria do not reflect the location of the defect or the risk to safety of highway users. For example, we would currently respond to a defect on a busy town centre footway in the same timescale that we would respond to the same defect on a lesser used rural footway.

We propose to change the way we prioritise and repair highway defects by taking more consideration of the location and use, and targeting our resources according to the likely risk.

We will continue to treat the same number of defects overall. Assessing the risk and isolating only those that really are critical will mean we could reduce the number of high cost, low quality, rapid repairs. Responding to medium and lower risk defects in a longer timescale will allow us to programme works better and provide more first time permanent repairs at a higher standard and reduced cost.

We currently allocate resources towards sections of the network according to road classification and their assessed condition. We have budgets for our A, B and C roads, and for unclassified roads. We are looking to reclassify our network, using more relevant information than the road number classification alone, so we can target resources on a more prioritised basis. Our revised approach would mean we can better differentiate between how we maintain certain types of road, i.e. urban estate roads, urban main roads and narrow rural minor roads with low traffic volume. By using a variety of characteristics, we can better prioritise spending across the network according to the condition and priority.

# Leicestershire's future

## The plan for change

### 2. Reducing the number of items we look after directly and reducing the maintenance frequency of a range of items.

We maintain many items on the highways network and the roadside.

Examples of maintenance and repair spending on selected items are listed below.

#### Maintenance of the road-side environment:

- **Bollards**  
It costs £150 to replace a bollard when it has been damaged or knocked over.
- **Pavements and footpaths**  
Some footways between rural villages have very low usage and are not in good condition. The cost of reconstructing just 1 mile of this type of footway is £135,000.
- **Fencing and pedestrian railings**  
It costs around £200 to replace one panel of damaged pedestrian railing, a typical junction could have as many as 20 panels.
- **Shrub beds and flower beds**  
We spend £45,000 per year looking after shrub and flower beds.
- **Grass verges**  
We spend just over £900,000 per year cutting grass on road verges around the county, using our own in house staff as well as external contracts (including with 30 parish councils).

#### Road/highway maintenance

- **Street lights**  
We have 68,000 street lights, and aim to renew around 1,600 old ones each year, at a cost of £1.35 million. This does not include the cost of work to transfer existing lights to LEDs.
- **White lines and road markings**  
We currently spend £400,000 replacing worn out white lines and other road markings.
- **Traffic signs**  
We spend £200,000 per year repairing or replacing over 80,000 old and damaged traffic signs.
- **Traffic lights**  
We spend £540,000 looking after more than 400 sets of traffic lights annually.
- **Traffic calming features (e.g. speed bumps)**  
The cost of preparing the road surface and installing a pair of speed cushions typically costs £7,500. To replace a damaged cushion costs us around £1,200.
- **Cycle routes/lanes**  
We have around 80 miles of cycle paths that would cost £335,000 per mile to rebuild.
- **Drain covers and roadside drains/gullies**  
We have 135,000 roadside drains, which we empty approximately every 18 months. The annual cost of doing this is £1.04 million. We spend a further £750,000 repairing broken and blocked drain pipes.
- **Winter Gritting**  
We grit 45% of the road network on cold nights, this equates to around 1,100 miles, which costs £1.6 million per year. In comparison Nottinghamshire grit 33%, Northamptonshire 46%, Staffordshire 43% and Gloucestershire 29%.

We are proposing to reduce costs by reducing, sharing or ending the maintenance of some of these items.

- We could reduce or remove the number of items that we look after to cut ongoing maintenance costs:
- We could work closer with Parish Councils and community groups to help them to deliver some services that we will have to reduce, for example cleaning traffic signs, painting fencing and cutting vegetation.

### **3. Involve communities in maintaining the streetscape and roadside environment**

We already have various schemes in place with Parish, Town Councils and local communities, such as the Tree Wardens, Flood Wardens and Snow Wardens.

Some Parish Councils already take responsibility for cutting grass verges.

We think there are opportunities to build further on this. Joint working can help reduce costs whilst resulting in a service that is more tailored to the needs and aspirations of local communities.

Many local authorities have started, or are considering, devolving or sharing certain responsibilities for highway maintenance to Parish and Town Councils.

Examples include 'Lengthsman Schemes', where a range of minor works are carried out by Parish Councils in return for some funding.

We can also see benefit in better collaboration and communication between local communities and our highway maintenance service, such as in planning road maintenance works and responding to defects.

One possible way could be a Highway Warden scheme, collaborating with Parish and Town Councils to provide a link with the council's maintenance teams. The duties of a highway warden could include:

- Direct reporting of highway defects and issues, receiving feedback and disseminating information
- Communication of planned works to the community
- Responsibility for minor works in a community
- Dealing with local obstruction issues such as overhanging hedges
- Enabling community self help

### **Who would this affect?**

- All Leicestershire residents and council tax payers
- People who use the road and footpath network in Leicestershire
- Parish and Town Councils
- Communities and businesses

## How the consultation will work

**The consultation begins on 5 July 2016 and will end at midnight on 25 September 2016**

To submit your views please fill out the consultation survey and make sure it reaches us by midnight on 25 September 2016 at the latest. If you are able to, please complete this survey online as it will save us money. It's available online at [leicestershire.gov.uk/highwaysconsultation](http://leicestershire.gov.uk/highwaysconsultation).

Paper copies of the survey are available on request by calling 0116 305 0001.

Please note additional information and a dedicated survey are available for Town & Parish Councils and for any other groups and organisations interested in working with the county council to take care of our roads and maintain the streetscape and roadside environment.

## What happens next?

When the consultation closes, we will analyse the feedback and use this to develop more detailed highway maintenance policies and proposals which will be discussed by the council's Cabinet in Autumn 2016.

## You can view the latest information in a number of ways

Visit us online [leicestershire.gov.uk/highwaysconsultation](http://leicestershire.gov.uk/highwaysconsultation).

Our web pages will be kept up-to-date with the latest information and developments. You'll also be able to access the survey here.

Send an email to [highwaysconsultation@leics.gov.uk](mailto:highwaysconsultation@leics.gov.uk) to register for the latest news and updates.

Follow us [@leicscountyhall](https://twitter.com/leicscountyhall) for general updates from the council, including the developments on the budget.

Alternatively, you can telephone **0116 305 0001** to ask for information in printed or alternative formats.





This information is also available in  
Easy Read format call **0116 305 0001** or  
email **highwaysconsultation@leics.gov.uk**

જો આપ આ માહિતી આપની ભાષામાં સમજવામાં યોડી મદદ  
ઈચ્છતાં હો તો 0116 305 0001 નંબર પર ફોન કરશો અને  
અમે આપને મદદ કરવા ઓવરથા કરીશું.

ਜੇਕਰ ਤੁਹਾਨੂੰ ਇਸ ਜਾਣਕਾਰੀ ਨੂੰ ਸਮਝਣ ਵਿਚ ਕੁਝ ਮਦਦ ਚਾਹੀਦੀ  
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এই তথ্য নিজের ভাষায় বুঝার জন্য আপনার যদি কোন  
সাহায্যের প্রয়োজন হয়, তবে 0116 305 0001 এই নম্বরে  
ফোন করলে আমরা উপযুক্ত ব্যক্তির ব্যবস্থা করবো।

اگر آپ کو یہ معلومات سمجھنے میں کچھ مدد درکار ہے تو براہ مہربانی اس نمبر پر کال کریں  
0116 305 0001 اور ہم آپ کی مدد کے لئے کسی کا انتظام کر دیں گے۔

假如閣下需要幫助，用你的語言去明白這些資訊，  
請致電 0116 305 0001，我們會安排有關人員為你  
提供幫助。

Jeżeli potrzebujesz pomocy w zrozumieniu tej informacji  
w Twoim języku, zadzwoń pod numer 0116 305 0001,  
a my Ci pomożemy.