



Flintshire County Council – Streetscene & Transportation

Policy for Highway & Car Park Safety Inspections, Intervention Criteria and Response Times

Revised - April 2021

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1. Background

- 1.1 Flintshire County Council as Highway Authority is responsible for the maintenance of all adopted highways (except Trunk Roads, which are the responsibility of the North & Mid Wales Trunk Road Agency (NMWTRA)) within the County. Flintshire County Council, as the Highway Authority, has a statutory duty under section 41 of the Highways Act 1980 (England and Wales) to maintain the highways, but may be responsible for any claims which result from injury or loss to members of the public who may use them.

2. Need for a Policy

- 2.1 Flintshire County Council receive numerous claims from highway users following trips, falls or personnel loss/damage to property on the public highway. This reviewed policy will ensure the highway network is in a fit for purpose and safe condition also providing the Council with a defence against any claims it may receive.
- 2.2 By virtue of section 58 of the Highways Act 1980 (England and Wales), if an Authority can prove it had in place adequate policies and procedures to maintain the highway, and that the policies and procedures were being followed and providing there was no prior knowledge of 'the defect' before the incident date, a claim for damages against the Authority as a result of a trip, fall or personnel loss can be repudiated.
- 2.3 Safety inspections involve visiting each section of the highway infrastructure at an agreed interval. During the visit any defects that are present are noted and the required maintenance repair work arranged. Safety inspections are carried out on carriageway (roads), footway and cycleway. In addition safety inspections will take place on each publically accessible car park operated by the Council.
- 2.4 Highway inspections are carried out by the Area Coordinators based in Streetscene & Transportation's Alltami Depot.
- 2.5 The process for management of the Highway Asset, including inspection regimes is set out in the Well Managed Highways Infrastructure Code of Practice, published by UK Road Liaison Group in October 2016. The Code of Practice is not a statutory document but compliance with its recommendations is required by October 2018. The code of practice advises that a risk based approach is taken to asset management, and this means that the network hierarchy, inspection interval, defect identification and repair times are categorised and measured subject to the risks they present.

3. Carriageway Inspections

3.1 In accordance with the national Code of practice for Highway Maintenance, each carriageway in the County has been classified into one of the following groups:

Category	Classification	Detail	Length
2	Class A - Strategic Route	Routes for fast moving, long distance traffic with few frontages or pedestrian traffic	152km
3a	Class B - Main distributor	Routes between strategic routes and linking urban centres.	76 km
3b	Class C - Secondary distributor	Routes carrying mainly local traffic with large numbers of frontages and junctions	262 km
4a	Unclassified - Link Roads	Routes linking main/secondary distributors and local access roads, many frontages and junctions	666km
4b	Unclassified - Local access road	Routes serving properties only with limited access traffic.	

3.2 The following table shows the intervals that inspections that will be undertaken in respect of each road classification. The interval is based on a risk assessment of each classification as defined in the new Code of Practice “Well Managed Highway Infrastructure” – published 28 October 2016.

Description	National Guidelines Category		FCC Inspection Interval
Strategic Route – Class A	2		1 month
Main Distributor – Class B	3(a)		1 month
Secondary Distributor – Class C	3(b)		1 month
Link Road – U/C	4(a)		3 months
Local Access – U/C	4(b)	Urban	6 months
		Rural	6 months

3.3 The carriageway inspections will be carried out by the Streetscene Area Coordinators from a vehicle, driven as slowly as road conditions will allow. The Coordinator will be a passenger in the vehicle, which will be driven by a second member of the Streetscene & Transportation workforce.

4. Footway Inspections

- 4.1 In accordance with the guidelines within the National Code of practice for Highway Maintenance every footway within the County has been classified into one of the following groups:

Category	Definition	Detail	Length
Cat 1a	Prestige	Very busy main town centre shopping areas	Unknown
Cat 1b	Primary	Busy urban shopping and business areas	Unknown
Cat 2	Secondary	Medium usage routes local shopping centres	Unknown
Cat 3	Link footways	Linking local access footways, busy rural footways	Unknown
Cat 4	Local access footways	Low usage estate road footways	Unknown

- 4.2 The following table shows the intervals that inspections that will be undertaken in respect of each footway classification. The interval is based on a risk assessment of each classification as described in the new Code of Practice “Well Managed Highway Infrastructure” – published 28 October 2016.

Description	National Guidelines Category	FCC Inspection Interval
Prestige Area	1(a)	Weekly
Primary Walking Route	1 (b)	1 month
Secondary Walking Route	2	3 months
Link Footway	3	6 months
Local Access Footway	4	6 months

- 4.3 The inspections will be carried out by Streetscene Area Coordinators by walking the footway.

5. Cycleway Inspections

5.1 In accordance with the guidelines within the National Code of Practice for Highway Maintenance every Cycleway within the County has been classified into one of the following groups:

Category	Definition	Detail	Length
Cat A	Integral	Cycle lane forming part of the carriageway	Unknown
Cat B	Dedicated	A highway route for cyclist not contiguous with the public footway or carriageway	Unknown

5.2 The following table shows the interval that inspections that will be undertaken in respect of each cycleway classification. The interval is based on a risk assessment of each classification as described in the new Code of Practice “Well Managed Highway Infrastructure” – published 28 October 2016.

Description	National Guidelines Category	FCC Inspection Interval
Integral	A	As adjacent carriageway
Dedicated	B	6 months

5.3 The integral cycleway inspections will be driven as part of the carriageway inspection and the dedicated cycleway will be walked.

6. Car Park Inspections

6.1 The car parks within the County has been classified into one of the following groups:

Category	Definition	Detail
Cat A	Chargeable	Car parks with parking charges
Cat B	Non-chargeable	Car parks without parking charges

6.2 The following table shows the intervals that inspections that will be undertaken in respect of each car park classification. The interval is based on a risk assessment of each classification

Category	Definition	Inspection Interval
Cat A	Chargeable	6 monthly
Cat B	Non-chargeable	Annually

6.3 The car parks will inspected on foot by the Area Coordinators

7. Structures and Retaining Walls

7.1 This policy document deals specifically with bridges and highway structures inspections.

WMHI identifies a number of different types of inspection applicable to highway structures. These are;

- **Principal Inspections:** A close examination within touching distance of all accessible parts of the structure including where relevant underwater elements and adjacent earthworks and waterways.
- **General Inspections:** A visual inspection of all accessible parts of the structure.
- **Special Inspections:** An inspection concentrating on specific elements of a structure.
- **Safety Inspections:** An inspection that is undertaken following a report indicating a structure is damaged and may be unsafe.
- **Acceptance Inspections:** An inspection of a structure which is due to be passed into FCC ownership.

Details of all types of inspections are recorded in accordance with The Inspection Manual for Highway Structures (Volumes 1 and 2): May 2007

7.2 The Highway structures within the County has been classified into one of the following groups:

Category	Definition
Cat A	Highway Structures requiring Principal Inspection and General Inspection
Cat B	Highway Structures that require only General Inspection
Cat C	Highways Structures recorded on AMX that do not require regular Inspection
Cat D	Non-Highway Structures

7.3 The structures recorded on the County's Structures Asset Management System (AMX) will be scheduled on a frequency as described below:

Category	Frequency
Cat A	Principal Inspection every 6 years & General Inspection every 2 years
Cat B	General Inspection every 2 years
Cat C	Do not require regular Inspection
Cat D	Not Inspected

7.4 Structure Inspections will be carried out to the following minimum competency levels:

Inspection Type	Inspectors Competency
Principal Inspections	Contracted to Consultant Engineer through available procurement framework
General Inspections	Conducted by competent Area Coordinator / Technical Officer in receipt of in-house competency training to carry out visual inspections.
Special Inspections	Contracted to Consultant Engineer through available procurement framework
Safety Inspections	Contracted to Consultant Engineer through available procurement framework
Acceptance Inspections	Conducted by the Area Manager with the support of a contracted Consultant Engineer should it be necessary

7.5 Any defects identified during the inspections will be passed to the Councils structures manager for advice and direction.

8. Street Furniture

- 8.1 The inspection of Street Furniture includes seats, pedestrian and vehicular barriers, bins, fences etc. (that are not covered elsewhere in this document) that are damaged or missing, and will be inspected in line with the adjacent carriageway or footway (whichever is more frequent).
- 8.2 Any defects identified during the inspections will be recorded, and passed to the relevant team for action.
- 8.3 The need for repair and timescales in which to undertake the repair shall be based on a measure of risk. Items that are considered to represent a potential to cause serious injury or accident will require immediate response to Make Safe, Restrict Access or result in Temporary Repair. Timescales for Permanent Repair of items of Street Furniture may be impacted by availability of stock and supplier lead-times.

9. Defect Identification Criteria

- 9.1 Any defects will be identified by the Streetscene Area Coordinator during the inspection. The defect will fall into one of the following categories:

Carriageways / Integral Cycleways / Car Parks:

- RED** - A situation with potential to cause serious injury or accident.
- AMBER** - A Defect that will have a significant impact on Network User with considerations towards the vulnerability of users, severity or size of defect, and location of defect in relation to impact on Network Users. This is likely to be a defect that has a depth of more than 40mm (above or below the mean level of the carriageway)
- GREEN** - A Defect that is unlikely to have a detrimental effect on Network Users, and is likely to be less than a depth of 40mm (above or below the mean level of the carriageway)

Footways / Dedicated Cycleways:

- RED** - A situation with potential to cause serious injury or accident.
- AMBER** - A Defect that will have a significant impact on Network User with considerations towards the vulnerability of users, severity or size of defect, and location of defect in relation to impact on Network Users. This is likely to be a defect that has a depth of more than 25mm (above or below the mean level of the carriageway)
- GREEN** - A Defect that is unlikely to have a detrimental effect on Network Users, and is likely to be less than a depth of 25mm (above or below the mean level of the carriageway)

10. Response Times

10.1 The time to make safe or guard the defect will be as follows:

RED	Immediate Response - Make Safe, Restricted Access or Temporary Repair
AMBER	Repair within 5 working days
GREEN	Re-inspect at next inspection interval to monitor deterioration

11. Training of Streetscene Area Coordinators

11.1 Each Streetscene Area Coordinator will receive appropriate training to enable them to carry out the inspections. The training will take the form of 'shadowing' existing experienced Coordinators, and instruction by Streetscene Operational Managers. Before Streetscene Area Coordinators carry out their duties, a formal appraisal of their knowledge both of this policy and Highway Maintenance good practice shall be assessed by the Operational Managers..

12. Background Documents

Highways Act 1980

The new UKRLG Code of Practice "Well Managed Highway Infrastructure" – published 28 October 2016.

Policy Drafted September 2018