

**METROPOLITAN BOROUGH OF WIRRAL**  
**TECHNICAL SERVICES DEPARTMENT**  
**WINTER HIGHWAY MAINTENANCE POLICY STATEMENT**

**Legal Requirements**

The Metropolitan Borough of Wirral, as the Highway Authority for Wirral is under a duty to maintain the highway.

Section 111 of the Railways and Transport Safety Act 2003 imposed an additional duty to ensure that, where reasonably practicable, safe passage along a highway is not endangered by snow or ice.

Wirral's Winter Maintenance Service involves:

Pre-treating the highway to prevent ice from forming

Post-treating the highway when ice has formed or snow has accumulated, subject to the availability of resources.

**Treatment of Roads**

The decision to treat roads is taken by a Senior Officer based on forecasts received from a forecast provider.

24 hour monitoring of forecasts ensures current weather conditions are known throughout the Winter Maintenance period.

It is not considered reasonably practical because of resources and costs to pre-treat all highways in the Borough.

Pre-treatment is carried out on approved routes comprising:

Principle Roads (Class "A" and Class "B" roads)  
Other strategic main roads  
Major bus routes notified by bus operators

Known problem locations and hazardous gradients may be treated when conditions dictate and are authorised by the Client Senior Officer.

Treatment of approved routes will be carried out during and after snowfall.

Treatment of minor roads not forming part of the agreed routes may only be considered in response to specific reports that they are in an icy condition and only after they have been inspected by a duty winter maintenance inspector.

During and after snow, minor roads will not be treated until approved routes have been sufficiently treated to ensure that they remain open to traffic.

These roads will then be treated on the basis of importance in response to specific requests from the Emergency Services, public etc.

## **Treatment of Footways**

Footways, shopping centres or cycleways adjacent to carriageways, are not specifically included in pre-determined routes for precautionary treatment. Cycleways are treated where they form part of the treated road network.

The decision to treat footways, shopping centres and cycleways will be made in emergency situations, once snow has settled or during prolonged freezing conditions.

There will however, be an amount of salt projected onto these areas when treatment has been carried out on adjacent carriageways.

## **Treatment Times**

The Winter Maintenance Period 2010 / 2011 runs from 15<sup>th</sup> November 2010 up to and including 3<sup>rd</sup> April 2011 but may be extended should weather conditions dictate otherwise.

Pre-treatment is normally commenced at a specified time, based on a forecast received from the forecast provider, generally between 12.00 and 14.00.

When a pre-treatment time cannot be determined due to varying weather conditions, treatment will commence within one hour of the decision being taken to grit.

In normal conditions, treatment should be completed within three hours, but may vary depending on rates of spread, prevailing weather conditions and the time of operation which may be during busy traffic periods.