



**OFFICER REPORT TO LOCAL COMMITTEE
(REIGATE & BANSTEAD)**

HIGHWAYS WINTER EVENT UPDATE

1 MARCH 2010

KEY ISSUE

This report provides an update on the winter event effecting highways in Reigate & Banstead during 2009/2010.

SUMMARY

The winter service responded generally well to the recent bad weather but there are areas for improvement with partner working and communications.

OFFICER RECOMMENDATIONS

The Local Committee (Reigate & Banstead) is asked to:

- (i) Note the report.

1. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

- 1.1. The current winter event started on the 17 December 2009 and finished approximately on the 14 January 2010. The Highways Service responded in line with the current Winter Service Plan that had been agreed by Cabinet in September 2009.
- 1.2. The severe shortage of salt nationally has had a drastic effect on the ability of Surrey Highways to do anything more than the 'A' road network along with isolated communities; i.e. those without an 'A' road link.
- 1.3. The ANNEX to this report gives a chronology of preparation for winter and the local snow clearance that took place within the district of Reigate & Banstead.

2. ANALYSIS

- 2.1 The Service was reacting strongly to the winter event, but when the decision to cut our salting routes occurred in early January, there was a lack of information in a format that made it clear to the public what was happening. This resulted in a lot of criticism about the reduced network routes.
- 2.2 The level of local winter maintenance work undertaken during the snow event was considerable. However reaction was patchy overall and we need to do more to have better communication with willing partners. Officers intend to review arrangements with willing partners and build a clearer communication bridge so in future we can act more widely and quicker.
- 2.3 There was a Daily Update sheet produced for County Members, it was anticipated that this would be shared with a wider audience that in many cases it was. Communications about our activities can always be shared wider and it is intended that future Daily Update sheets will go to all Parish Councils, District Members and other partners including the press.
- 2.4 There has been some criticism of the present gritting routes and these can be reviewed with County members.
- 2.5 Salt bins were reviewed as part of the review last year, however it has been decided to review these again due to some concerns raised by members.

3. CONSULTATIONS

The Winter Service Plan was widely consulted on, however sharing information as mentioned above will help to dispel the myth that not much is being done.

4. FINANCIAL AND VALUE FOR MONEY IMPLICATIONS

There are no financial implications from the recommendations in this report.

5. EQUALITIES AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

The delivery of a good winter service plan aids movement for all.

6. CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS

None

7. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This report and Annex lays out what has been done this winter. There is acceptance that we need to communicate better, share with partners and gain synergies by better partner working for snow clearance. In association with this the gritting routes are being reviewed.

8. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

To inform members of what action has been undertaken.

9. WHAT HAPPENS NEXT

Officers are reviewing: Gritting routes, salt bin locations, communications and partner working.

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BACKGROUND PAPERS:	Winter Service Manual 2009

ANNEX A

Winter Event 2009/2010 – With Reigate & Banstead Activities

1. After the winter event in February 2009 the Highways Service was asked to review its Winter Service Plan and this took place over the summer of 2009 with the final document going to Cabinet in September 2009.
2. The report reviewed the routes for treatment and the number/location of salt bins.
3. Winter service involves the treating the highway in order to:
 1. Prevent ice forming (known as precautionary salting);
 2. Melt ice and snow already formed (known as 'post salting');
 3. Removal of snow
4. The defined period for winter service this financial year is 23 October to 9 April, a 24-week period.
5. The county council is responsible for all 'local roads', these are all public highways maintained through the public purse excluding those roads maintained by the Highway Agency: i.e. M25, M23 etc.
6. The highway network is divided into three categories for the purpose of winter, these are:
 1. Priority One: - approximately 37% of the highway network
 2. Priority Two: - approximately 13% of the highway network;
 3. Priority Three: - approximately 50% of the highway network
7. The definition of the above priority roads can be seen in the Winter Service Plan which is on the County Council web site.
8. The Winter Service Plan also gives definitions for dividing the footway network into three categories.
9. There is no legal requirement to provide salt bins, though the County Council does recognise the 'self help' they can provide in appropriate locations with community assistance. Salt bins are not provided on Priority One routes.
10. The county is divided into two areas for treatment: East and West. The East is: Mole Valley, Spelthorne, Elmbridge, Epsom & Ewell, Reigate & Banstead and Tandridge; the West is the remaining districts and boroughs.
11. The general decision making for whether the County Council 'grits' or not is taken by our two constructor partners through parameters laid down in the Winter Service Manual. The use of sophisticated weather prediction systems is key to the process as well daily contact with the meteorological office during events.

12. If there is 50mm of snow on the ground then the decision will be made 'locally' using the expertise of senior Surrey Highways staff to assist and or redirect limited resources if the supply of salt etc has been taken over by central government, as happened this year.
13. The fleet size for winter in the East is nineteen dedicated vehicles with three spare, in the West there are sixteen and two spares.
14. The current winter event started on the 17 December 2009 with cold temperatures and the first snow fall of any significance occurring very late that day, the East of the county put ploughs onto the vehicles in the early hours of the 18 December 2009 and ploughing took place on major / vulnerable routes that morning; the event continued until approximately 14 January 2010, but since then we have had regular gritting of the network.
15. During the event we have had two periods of freezing rain falling onto an already frozen surface causing chaos, these two events were not forecasted and were of short duration but had a dramatic effect
16. The worse phase of the winter event started on the 5 January 2010 and up to 300mm of snow fell in some areas with the mean being more in than 150mm.
17. At this time in early January 2010 there were concerns nationally with regards to the level of salt within the country for gritting. Some highway authorities had ran out of salt and were unable to deal with the event. In order to conserve the Surrey salt stocks and be inline with national policy it was agreed by the: Cabinet Portfolio Holder, Cllr Lake, and the Deputy Leader, Cllr Hodge, to reduce our gritting network to 'A' roads only and key A & E hospitals. This policy was later extended to include 'isolated communities' which had no direct link to any 'A' road. This is still the current policy within the county due to the continuing national salt levels.
18. The following is a chronology of local events within Reigate and Banstead:

On Wednesday 6 January 2010 we went to Local Control for hand salting operations in Reigate and Banstead. These continued on through the weekend and ended on Wednesday 13 January 2010.

We had five two man gangs each hand laying salt between 7.00am to 4.00pm operating as follows:

Wednesday 6 January 2010

Salting of Town Centre Footpaths:

Banstead	High Street Bolters Lane Court Road Garratts Lane Avenue Road The Horseshoe Picquets Way Eastgate Banstead Road
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Reigate	High Street London Road Church Street Castlefield Road Bell Street Reigate Road Holmesdale Road Bancroft Road South Walk
Horley	Victoria Road Massetts Road Russells Crescent Station Approach Consort Way High Street Consort Way East Albert Road (part) Balcombe Road (part) Yattendon Road
Redhill	High Street Marketfield Way Princess Way Gloucester Road Warwick Road Matthews Road Cromwell Road Queens Way Redstone Hill London Road Station Road Hatchlands Road Linkfield Street (part) Dome Way

Thursday 7 January 2010

Continuing Town Centre routes as above

Additional roads:
Nork Way (part)

Friday 8 January 2010

Continuing Town Centre routes as above

Saturday 9 January 2010

Continuing Town Centre routes as above

Plus all secondary school roads:
Picquets Way
Noke Drive
Pendleton Road
Balcombe Road

Sunday 10 January 2010

Continuing Town Centre
routes as above

Additional roads:
St Mary Road
Cheyne Walk
Tattenham Crescent

Plus East Surrey College
Road:
Claremont Road

Monday 11 January 2010

Village Centres:

Walton on the Hill
Lesbourne Road
Honeycrook Lane
Salfords Shops
Woodhatch Shops
Waterhouse Lane
Chipstead Parade
Rectory Lane
Woodmansterne Street
Smallfield Road Shops
Albert Road
St Johns Road
Lee Street
Hooley Lane
Nork Way Shops
Eastgate Shops
Fir Tree Road Shops
Shelvers Way Shops

Tuesday 12 January 2010

Return to Town Centre
routes