

## COMMUNITIES, ENVIRONMENT AND HIGHWAYS SELECT COMMITTEE

THURSDAY, 10 APRIL 2025

**MEMBERS' QUESTIONS**

M1	<p><b>Submitted by Councillor Catherine Baart</b></p> <p><i>“Can Lane Rental fees be added to a councillor’s Highways allocation as a mechanism for directing the money to the area most impacted by traffic lights? Is there a mechanism for increasing lane rental fees if the same utility company puts traffic lights on the same section of road within a given time period – as a means of discouraging repeated temporary fixes rather than a single longer lasting solution?”</i></p> <p><b>Answer</b></p> <p>Surplus revenues received over, and above Lane Rental scheme operation costs go towards funding innovative projects that reduce the disruption of streetworks and roadworks. Projects may include trials of new innovative products and techniques, infrastructure to access apparatus more easily, and measures to cut down the noise, pollution and hazards of streetworks and roadworks. A process is in place for applicants to bid for funding for Lane Rental Surplus funds and bids are reviewed by the Lane Rental Governance Board which is made up of SCC officers and a representative of each utility company sector. It would not be possible within the Lane Rental guidelines to use the Surplus Funds as part of Councillors Highway Allocations.</p> <p>Lane Rental is charged for lane closures and road closures on the busiest roads at peak times. There is no mechanism for increasing lane rental fees if the same utility company puts traffic lights on the same section of road within a given time period. For emergency works Lane Rental cannot be applied for the first 2 days of the works, however for planned works or emergency works that exceed 2 days duration, charges are levied for works that require lane or road closures on roads that are part of the Lane Rental network for each period of occupation.</p>
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M2

**Submitted by Councillor Catherine Baart**

*“Please provide an update on the county council’s tree planting target. When will the target be achieved and what is likely to happen to the target as a result of the formation of unitary councils?”*

**Answer**

Surrey County Council’s Tree Planting Programme is complete for this year and planning is now under way for the next season of planting starting in September 2025.

Working together with partners, the Council is making great progress towards planting 1.2 million trees by 2030 and it on target. Since the launch of the initiative in 2019, over 606,880 trees have been planted across Surrey. This figure is a combination of cumulative planting across Surrey County Council's land portfolio, partner sites and other external planting in Surrey.

The Tree Planting Programme is expected to continue to deliver at a rate commensurate with aiming to achieve the target on schedule whilst Surrey County Council exists. It is hoped the Unitary authorities will take on the challenge to achieve the target in 2030.

M3

**Submitted by Councillor Catherine Baart**

*“What decides the response time on pedestrian crossing lights? As part of LTP4 and encouraging walking and cycling, can the response times of pedestrian crossings be reviewed to provide a quicker response for pedestrians while still giving drivers time to react?”*

**Answer**

The design and operation of Traffic Signals in Surrey is carried out in line with the Department for Transport design standards set out in [Chapter 6 of the Traffic Signs Manual](#).

All Traffic signal sites in Surrey are designed and installed with detectors that optimise the operation of the installation.

Some of the signal timings incorporated in the design and operation of traffic signals are mandatory to ensure the safety of all users of the facility. There is also scope within the design and operation for designers to incorporate an element of flexibility into the operation, to balance the needs of pedestrians, cyclists and equestrians while facilitating the needs of motorists.

In Surrey, Traffic signals are configured to respond to the requirements of different groups at different times of the day, this can be seen outside schools for example when pedestrians have a shorter waiting time at the start and end of the school day.

Standalone crossings are configured with a maximum time a user will have to wait for a signal to cross the road, once the button has been pushed. This is set to 30 seconds and on occasion is reduced to 20 seconds but would be less if no vehicles are detected approaching the crossing.

In locations where vehicle speeds are below an average of 35mph, the standard allows for a method of operation that will immediately call the pedestrian green signal if the crossing has not been activated with the last 30 seconds, this facility is known as pre timed max. Pre time max is considered on a site-by-site basis at the design stage of all junction refurbishment projects.

M4

**Submitted by Councillor Catherine Baart**

*“What is the base standard of pavement quality and condition; to what extent does this take account of the safety of wheelchair & mobility scooter users and those with young children in buggies & scooters who require a smooth and level surface for stability and personal safety; and how are the needs of different groups in the hierarchy of road users factored into pavement condition considerations?”*

**Answer**

The standard for quality and condition of pavements is set out in the Specification for Highway Works. This standard sets out tolerances for finished surfaces, smoothness, and texture for pavements of various materials.

As recommended by the [Code of Practice Well Managed Highway Infrastructure](#) the footway hierarchy which forms part of the [Highway Hierarchy Policy](#) considers older and younger people by giving weight to places people walk to or between, such as schools, care homes, doctors surgeries, dentists, shopping centres, transport hubs and bus stops, and considering local routes to parks, playgrounds, childcare centres, and car parks.

The footway hierarchy also considers pedestrians with disabilities across Surrey by considering the location of residential homes and health facilities. These facilities and the logical routes to community facilities most likely to be the driver of foot traffic have been considered and footway hierarchy has been increased where appropriate to link obvious walking routes between residential and health facilities to other local community facilities where pedestrian access is considered likely. These include shopping and village centres, doctors, dentists and other healthcare facilities and bus stops. The intention of this is to benefit those people by increasing the hierarchy of local footways linking facilities which will result in a higher frequency of safety inspection and greater priority in maintenance decision making.

For developments and integrated transport schemes guidance on constructing new pavements is available in the document Inclusive [Mobility A Guide to Best Practice on Access to Pedestrian and Transport Infrastructure](#). This guidance includes standards for crossfall gradients and minimum distances for a level landing for example.

We engage with stakeholders such as the Surrey Coalition of Disabled People ([Homepage - Surrey Coalition of Disabled People](#)) when consulting on our services and new schemes.

One approach is to introduce new dropped accessibility kerbs for informal crossing points wherever possible when we make changes to pavement layouts and when we are carrying out maintenance schemes. These informal crossing points will have textured paving on the pavement on both sides of the road aligned to give the direction of travel.