



Winter Maintenance Policy Review

Economy & Neighbourhoods Scrutiny Panel

30th August 2022

Graham West – Service Director (Highways & Streetscene)

Mark Scarr – Head of Highways

Nick Jenkin – Business Development Manager



Background

- Winter maintenance policy was last reviewed in 2018/19
- Need to consider and respond to issues raised by Scrutiny Panel & Severe Weather Board (Sept 2021)
- Highways Working Group established to undertake the required review



Issues raised at Scrutiny Panel

1. Network review to be undertaken - in respect of the criteria required for roads to be included on a gritting route
2. The Cabinet should assess the current policy for Winter maintenance and consider this as an item for growth in the budget (Note – budget increased from £1.2m to £1.8m in 2021/22)
3. Clarification to be provided in respect of Supplementary Planning Documents and Section 106 and the scope for Winter maintenance provisions
4. The maintenance of Active Travel routes during Winter should be provided for



West Yorkshire – Gritting lengths and treatment times.

Local Authority	Length of Carriageway (km)	Length of Footway (km)	% Length of Network Gritted As Priority or Normal Routes	Time to Complete Route After Leaving Depot
Kirklees	1960	2333	53%	2 hours
Leeds	2900	>5000	43%	2 hours
Wakefield	1400	>2000	40%	2hrs 30 mins
Bradford	1842	3042	62%	2hrs 50 mins
Calderdale	1130	1093	62%	Less than 3 hrs

Kirklees has:-

- shortest treatment time (on par with Leeds Council)
- grits a higher percentage of the carriageway network



West Yorkshire – Grit bin provision.

Local Authority	Length of Carriageway (km)	Length of Footway (km)	Number of Grit Bins	Average km length of untreated carriageway per grit bin
Kirklees	1960	2333	1450	0.64
Calderdale	1130	1093	650	0.66
Leeds	2900	>5000	1263 + 285 councillor bins	1.07
Bradford	1842	3042	500+	1.40
Wakefield	1400	>2000	Grit Bins 383+ some 3 rd party funded.	2.19

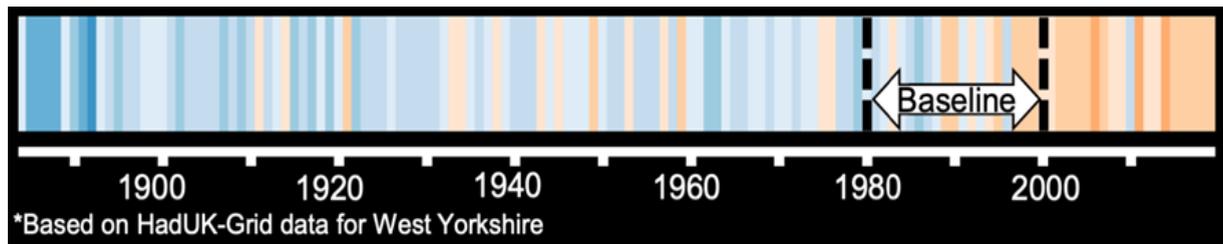
Kirklees has:-

- the highest number of bin grits on its untreated carriageway network

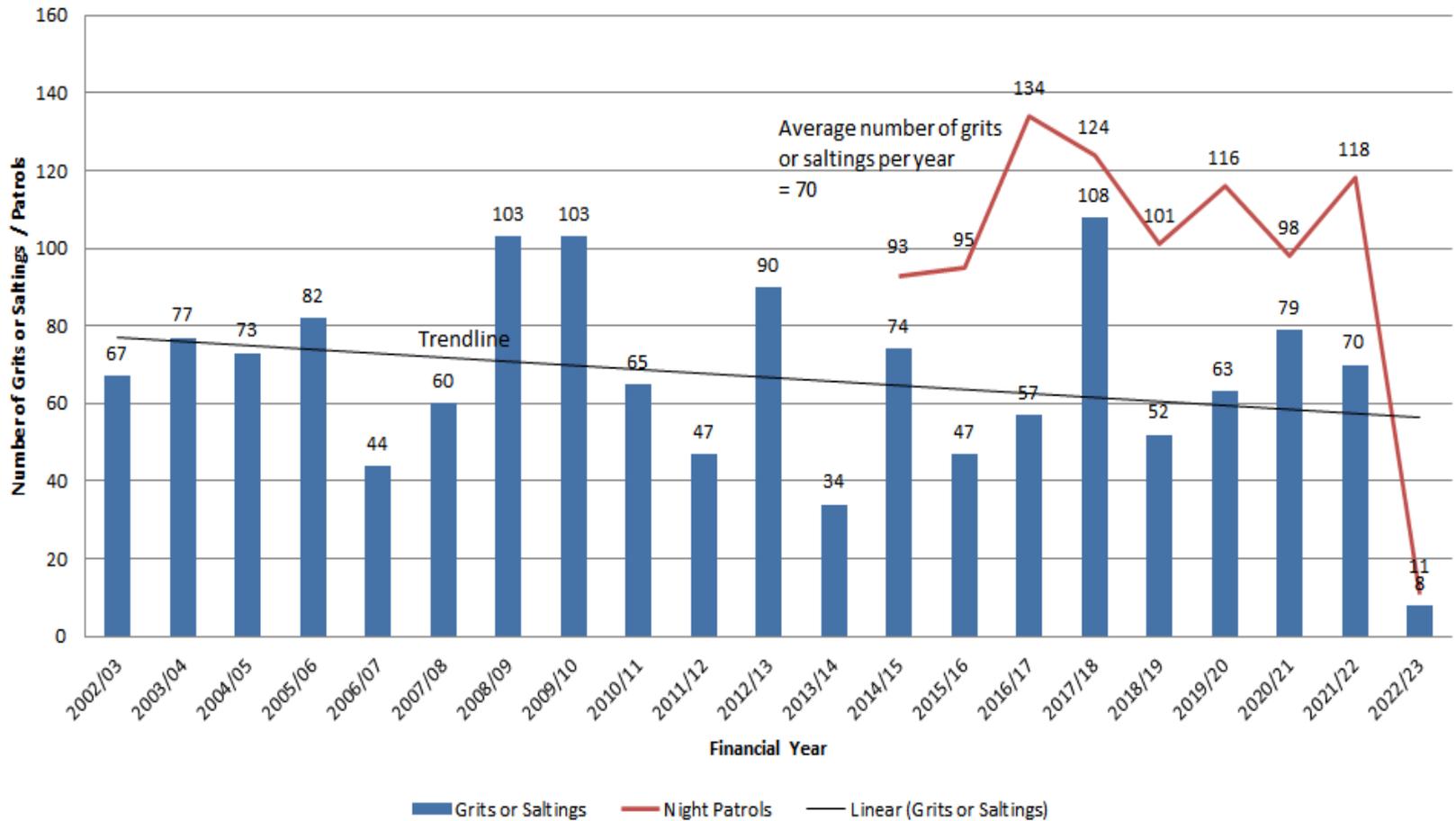


Local Climate Change Impact Profile LCLIP

- More extreme and complex weather events with more frequent storm events eg Storm Dudley, Eunice and Franklin Feb 2022
- Impact of climate changes - warmer winters, less frequent but more intense rainfall
- Anticipated decline in the number of snow events



Historic number of Grits or Saltings and Night Patrols



Recent Service Improvements

- Automated the grit bin recording and filling process
- Extended winter standby by 3 weeks to reflect extended season (now 27 weeks)
- Social media is our most effective communications medium for advising and informing public – it supports place-based working
- Review of existing Volunteers scheme:-
 - Recently contacted all groups – happy and feel it works well
 - Issued volunteers with sheet with useful information and details of a single point of contact for Kirklees



Gritter Twitter – Key Points

- Number of Gritter Twitter followers has increased to 9,600
- Link clicks went up throughout the season, especially during extreme weather events
- Viewed worldwide - America, Germany and France
- Reached 1.1 million people during snow event in November and Storm Dudley, Eunice and Franklyn in February
- Overall, we have very positive comments throughout the season and good engagement with residents through the posts we publish



Gritter Twitter – Positive Comments/Photos and Videos

Positive Feedback

- @jacksonuk2001 said "Thank you for another season and the work you do always keeping us informed with a splash of humour too."
- @venetiangmabler "Thanks for the usual service – see you again in the autumn!"
- @Calvinotis "You've all been super"

Link to Video Clips

[\(4\) Kirklees Winter on Twitter: "It's been a busy winter! Our team did an amazing job during the storm! Sometimes it's not an easy job, but we smashed it 🙌" / Twitter](#)

[\(6\) Kirklees Winter on Twitter: "🚧 Road closed 🚧 Our team have taken action to close the A640 Buckstones Road. Our night patrol has reported that it's the worst conditions they have ever seen up there. Video from around midnight. Plan your route and take extra care ❄️ https://t.co/hXY2CCG36F" / Twitter](#)

and Videos



First up... heading out on the first grit of the season way back in November ❄️

• Kirklees Winter @KirkleesWinter · Nov 4, 2021
Our teams getting ready to go out on the first grit of the season! Winter is coming ❄️



1 retweet, 13 likes

• Kirklees Winter @KirkleesWinter · Apr 27
We had 3 storms in one weekend #Dudley #Eunice and #Franklin. We had the teams out clearing the gullies in advance of any flooding as well as dealing with the snow ❄️

• Kirklees Winter @KirkleesWinter · Feb 19
The weather is warming up but there is lots of rain on the way. We're doing what we can to prepare for the likely standing water running into the road gullies by clearing as many as we can. ❄️ #staysafe #drivereadily



1 retweet, 5 likes

• Kirklees Winter @KirkleesWinter · Apr 27
When the snow falls our teams are not just out during the day, they go out at night and all hours in the morning too! It takes a lot of skill to drive in these challenging conditions ❄️

• Kirklees Winter @KirkleesWinter · Feb 19
We're getting ready to go out on our usual gritting route from 2pm and we'll be keeping an eye on things overnight, especially on higher ground. Please travel safely. You can check to see which routes we grit here: orfo.uk/hN8wo



5 likes

Snow Wardens

- Scheme aim - empower residents to clear paths connecting them to our normal gritting routes
- Trial over two winter seasons beginning Oct 2022 - April 2024
- Two trial locations in each ward - identified by elected members
- Providing residents with grit, PPE and small scale equipment
- Grit refills - beginning of the season & mid season



Policy Update Highlights - 2022

- Overall the winter service works well and stands comparison with other WY authorities
- Service recommends that :-
 - Winter Resilient network identified and details included in updated policy - 26% of network over 16 routes
 - Include protocol for requesting changes to routes
 - Reference to community groups but no specific mention of snow wardens



Protocol for Requesting Changes to Routes - 1

- Any new routes must be considered in accordance with the recommendations of the “Well-Managed Highway Infrastructure” DfT CoP
- Protocol established
- Changes to be considered April – June
- Need to maintain existing service levels - Normal Gritting Network routes, must be completed in two hours.
- Must take account of the safety implications of any changes in relation to road users and service delivery
- All ward cllrs would need to agree which sections of route to add and which would be removed



Protocol for Requesting Changes to Routes - 2

- Any additional routes must be operationally suitable for a gritting vehicle to access, drive along and turn round in
- Ward Councillors to consult with residents & stakeholders impacted by any changes to the Normal Gritting Route
- The cabinet portfolio holder member for E&CC will make any final approval to changes to a gritting route



Planning Approval & Winter Maintenance Provision

Mathias Franklin, Head of Planning

"Winter gritting and maintenance would not fall within the planning system or the reasonableness of S106 provisions and therefore the advice you gave to scrutiny previously is the only advice we can sustain"

Chris Dows, Highways Development Management

"Future maintenance is not a matter for the planning system and would not meet planning tests in terms of reasonableness for S106 contributions and we could not progress any SPG on this point".



Gritting Active Travel Routes

In considering any requests to grit active travel routes, consideration must be given to the following:-

- Currently 53% of the highway network is gritted. This leaves 47% of the road network ungritted
- The greater risk – in terms of financial and reputation – lies with not gritting the highway network, as opposed to not gritting active travel routes
- Active travel routes are predominantly used for social benefit and usage remains low, relative to use of the road and footway network
- If active travel routes are to be considered for gritting a priority criteria would need to be developed



Any questions

