



Wigan Council Highways & Network Management Transparency Report 2026 Core report

How we maintain local roads, pavements, and the wider highway network in Wigan

A1 – What we are responsible for maintaining

Wigan Council is responsible for maintaining a highway network with an estimated asset value of £1.6 billion, serving more than 330,000 residents across the borough's 77 square miles. The network connects 14 towns and communities through an extensive road system that supports residents, businesses, public transport, walking and cycling.

As part of Greater Manchester, Wigan works closely with Transport for Greater Manchester (TfGM) and the Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA) to manage key routes and support wider transport objectives. Our highway infrastructure plays a vital role in keeping people and goods moving safely and efficiently, while supporting economic growth, social connectivity and environmental sustainability.

The Council has a statutory duty to maintain the highway network and adopts an asset management approach that balances customer needs, local priorities, network condition and available funding. We focus on planned, preventative maintenance wherever possible, recognising that early intervention helps extend asset life, improve safety, reduce disruption and deliver better value for money than reactive repairs. This approach supports our wider commitment to maintaining a safe, resilient and sustainable highway network for all users. Some of the key assets maintained include:

- **Carriageways – 1,088 KM**
- **Footways – 1,738 KM**
- **Public Rights of Way – 500 KM**

- **Cycleways – 182 KM**
- **Streetlighting Assets – 39,960**
- **Highway Gullies – 63,013**

Wigan's highway network presents significant maintenance challenges due to its scale, complexity and level of use. With more than 1,800 km of carriageways and footways, it is one of the largest local highway networks in Greater Manchester and provides vital connectivity for residents, businesses and public transport.

The network is subject to continual wear from increasing traffic volumes, heavy goods vehicle movements and utility company works, all of which contribute to the deterioration of road surfaces and footways. In addition, more frequent and severe weather events, including prolonged periods of rainfall, flooding incidents, storms and freeze-thaw conditions, are accelerating asset deterioration and increasing maintenance demands.

As with all highway authorities, Wigan Council must balance finite resources against a wide range of competing priorities while ensuring the network remains safe, resilient and fit for purpose. To address these challenges, the Council adopts an asset management approach that prioritises planned and preventative maintenance wherever possible. This enables interventions to be carried out at the most appropriate time, extending asset life, minimising disruption to network users and delivering better long-term value than a predominantly reactive approach to maintenance.

A2 – Road conditions in Wigan

A2.1. A roads

Year	Percentage of road in red category	Percentage of road in amber category	Percentage of road in green category
2023	2.3%	18.4%	79.3%
2024	2.4%	19.0%	79.3%
2025	4.9%	42.8%	52.3%

A2.2. B and C roads

Year	Percentage of road in red category	Percentage of road in amber category	Percentage of road in green category
2023	1.8%	15%	83.2%
2024	2.1%	15.9%	82.0%
2025	7.5%	48.4%	44.1%

A2.3. U roads

Year	Percentage of road in red category
2023	13.1%
2024	16.4%
2025	11%

Councils use road condition surveys to assess the state of their roads. The results are grouped into three categories:

- **Green** – the road is in good condition and no further investigation or treatment is required
- **Amber** – the road may need maintenance soon
- **Red** – the road is in poor condition and should be considered for maintenance

The published [official statistics for road condition](#) include more detail about the methodology, timing and coverage of this data.

A2.4. - Additional information on carriageway condition

This year, we have adopted AI-powered carriageway condition survey technology, replacing the previous SCANNER-based approach. This represents a significant step forward in our asset management capability, providing more frequent, detailed and granular condition data across the highway network.

It is important to note that the intelligence generated through the AI survey methodology is significantly more advanced than that available through previous SCANNER surveys and, as a result, the outputs are not directly comparable with data from the last two years. The enhanced level of detail provides a far richer and more accurate picture of network condition, establishing a new baseline from which future performance can be measured and monitored.

The enhanced data enables a much better understanding of asset performance, allowing us to identify deterioration earlier, target interventions more accurately and optimise lifecycle planning. By combining high-resolution image capture with artificial intelligence, we can make more informed, evidence-based investment decisions and prioritise maintenance where it will deliver the greatest long-term benefit for residents and road users.

This transition represents a major advancement in highway asset management and demonstrates Wigan's commitment to embracing innovative technology to support a proactive and preventative maintenance strategy. The improved intelligence allows us to maximise the effectiveness of available funding, ensure investment is directed to the areas of greatest need, improve network resilience and reduce future maintenance liabilities.

The adoption of AI-driven condition assessments positions Wigan at the forefront of modern highways management, providing a robust, data-led foundation for future investment decisions and strengthening our ability to demonstrate that funding is being targeted efficiently, effectively and in a way that delivers the best possible long-term outcomes for the highway network and local communities.

A3 – What we are doing about potholes and other road defects

A3.1. – What is a pothole?

Wigan Council defines a pothole as a localised failure or deterioration of the highway surface where material has broken away, resulting in a

depression or void. Highway Safety Inspections are undertaken in accordance with the Greater Manchester Highway Safety Inspection Framework ([Highways-maintenance-safety-inspection.pdf](#)), which specifies investigatory levels of 40mm for carriageways, 25mm for footways and pedestrian crossing points, and 50mm displacement for kerb defects.

Where a pothole meets or exceeds the relevant investigatory level, inspectors undertake a risk assessment based on the likelihood and consequence of harm using the approved risk matrix. Defects presenting an immediate hazard are classified as Category 1 and are made safe or repaired within 2 or 24 hours, depending on severity. Defects that do not present an immediate risk are classified as Category 2 and programmed for repair within 14 or 28 days. Defects below investigatory levels may also be recorded for planned maintenance or monitored through future inspections.

A3.2. – What we are doing to tackle potholes

Wigan Council manages potholes very proactively through a high performing risk-based highway asset management approach that balances preventative and reactive maintenance. Highway Safety Inspections are undertaken in accordance with the Greater Manchester Highway Safety Inspection Framework, with defects assessed against defined investigatory levels and prioritised using an approved risk assessment matrix to ensure resources are targeted where they deliver the greatest benefit to safety and network resilience.

During 2025/26, Wigan Council estimates that approximately **4,000 potholes** will be repaired across the highway network.

The Council strongly supports the principle that **prevention is better than cure**. Using condition survey data, asset management systems, GIS mapping, historical maintenance records and analytical tools such as Power BI, we identify areas showing early signs of deterioration and target preventative treatments including resurfacing, surface dressing, thermal road repairs and structural patching before potholes form. These interventions extend asset life, improve network condition and provide better long-term value than repeated reactive repairs.

Dedicated capital investment, robust performance monitoring, national benchmarking and collaboration with utility companies support this preventative approach, while reactive maintenance continues to address defects identified through inspections and public reports.

Permanent repairs are always prioritised to minimise repeat visits and reduce future maintenance liabilities. However, emergency response requirements, traffic management constraints, adverse weather may occasionally necessitate temporary repairs before a permanent solution can be delivered however we aim for right first time. This approach ensures the safety of highway users while achieving the best long-term outcomes for the highway network.

A3.3. How members of public can report potholes and other highway defects

Members of the public can report potholes and other highway defects through Wigan Council's online reporting system via the Highway Maintenance webpage. Residents are encouraged to use the **MyAccount** platform, which allows reports to be submitted and tracked online.

Dedicated reporting forms are available for potholes, damaged footways, drainage issues, defective street furniture, manhole covers, and vegetation-related highway issues.

Reporting link:

<https://www.wigan.gov.uk/Resident/Parking-Roads-Travel/Roads/Highway-maintenance.asp>

A3.4. What happens after a pothole is reported

Following receipt of a pothole or highway defect report, the enquiry is triaged and assigned to a qualified Highway Inspector. The defect is inspected and risk assessed in accordance with the Greater Manchester Highway Safety Inspection Framework to determine the appropriate response.

Defects are prioritised and programmed for repair within the relevant response timescale, included within planned maintenance programmes, or monitored through future inspections. Customers receive real-time digital updates throughout the process, including confirmation of receipt, site inspection planned, works order raised and completion of the repair. Residents also have the opportunity to provide feedback on the service received.

A4 – What we spend to maintain the highway network and where the funding is coming from

Finance to support on data

A4.1. – Spending on highways maintenance

	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27 (projected)
Total spend on highways maintenance	£10,939,552	£8,460,426	£11,372,576
Of which spent on:			
Carriageways	£6,133,406	£4,581,263	£6,896,696
Footways	£1,935,860	£1,365,184	£1,595,286
Structures (for example bridges or tunnels)	£1,259,665	£872,502	£1,266,992

Drainage	£508,627	£439,086	£591,109
Street lighting	£1,069,099	£1,169,496	£982,493
Other assets	£32,895	£32,895	£40,000

A4.2 – Where our funding for highways maintenance comes from

Funding sources for highways maintenance	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27 (projected)
Funding received through the Department for Transport / UK Government	£7,613,205	£5,519,785	£8,415,139
[if applicable]: Additional highways maintenance funding provided by the Council or third parties	£3,326,347	£2,940,641	£2,957,437
Total	£10,939,552	£8,460,426	£11,372,576

A5 – Our maintenance plans for this year

A5.1 – Our plans for highways maintenance for 2026-27

We will continue investing in highway maintenance across the network, with a strong focus on carriageways and a planned, asset management approach.

Planned works include road resurfacing, preventative surface treatments to extend asset life, and a range of footway works. Additional maintenance activities will support safety and network resilience.

Details on the areas our network will be benefiting from this maintenance this year is available online via the following link: [Highway maintenance](#)

- We anticipate that the split between planned and reactive maintenance will be around 85%/15% in favour of planned maintenance over reactive maintenance.
- We are planning on carrying out 73 planned maintenance and carriageway resurfacing works in excess of 24 km in 2026/27.

- We are planning on improving at least 42 footways in excess of 13 km 2026/27.
- Details on the structures we plan on maintaining in 2026/27 are available online via the following link : [Highway maintenance](#)
- We estimate that around 4,000 potholes will be filled during 2026/27

A5.2 - Full list of planned carriageway and footway works

Please see link below for all information on our planned carriageway and footway works

[Highway maintenance](#)

A5.3 – How decisions are made on our maintenance plans

We prioritise highways maintenance through a risk-based, evidence-led asset management approach that targets investment where it will deliver the greatest benefit to network users and the long-term condition of our assets. Decisions are informed by highway inspections, condition surveys, asset performance data, customer feedback, safety considerations, resilience requirements and whole-life cost principles.

Our maintenance programmes balance reactive repairs with planned preventative treatments, ensuring we intervene at the optimal point in an asset's lifecycle to maximise value for money and minimise disruption. Schemes are assessed against strategic objectives, including safety, network resilience, customer experience, sustainability and efficiency.

By adopting a preventative maintenance strategy and coordinating works with utility companies and wider Council programmes, we reduce future maintenance liabilities, limit repeat interventions and deliver an efficient, cost-effective service. This approach enables us to make the best use of limited resources while maintaining a safe and reliable highway network.