

Joint Area Committee – West – 15th April 2009

## **8. Somerset Highways Maintenance Programme**

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### **Purpose of the Report**

Being the final report for this financial year I aim to give a brief overview of works carried out in Area West this year, and our expectations for next year.

### **Recommendation**

That the report be noted.

### **Report**

As ever budgets have been largely influential in determining the extent of structural maintenance works undertaken this year (08-09). Our resurfacing works in Area West alone cost in the region of £500,000 with successful schemes being completed at;

- A358 Tatworth Road, Chard
- A356 Crewkerne – Holy Tree
- A30 Market Street, Crewkerne
- High Street, Combe St Nicholas
- Perry Street, Tatworth
- Church Street, Donyatt
- Lyme Road, Crewkerne

Each individual resurfacing site undergoes a full drainage survey prior to the laying of the new material. Any defects identified by the survey are repaired before the new surface is laid. The material itself is individually designed for the needs of the site with variations in depth, stone content, skid resistance and durability considered and chosen to achieve the optimum road surface.

Structural Maintenance improvement works have resulted in drainage schemes being undertaken at Forton, Chard, Combe St Nicholas, Misterton, Clapton and Cudworth. Footway works have been completed in Crewkerne, Chard and Tatworth. In total our structural maintenance expenditure has been in the region of £135,000. As with the resurfacing schemes each drainage scheme is designed to ensure an optimum solution is provided. Existing highway drains are being continually subjected to increasing root penetration, structural failure as loadings increase with traffic flows, and the scaling up of pipes due to hard water. Undertaking drainage works can go largely unnoticed by the general public simply because the finished works are hidden from view, however, they are normally highly influential in improving the infrastructure, removing hazards and protecting the longevity of the network.

Further to our structural maintenance schedule we have our routine maintenance work, which includes minor infrastructure improvements that are restricted to costs of less than £3,000. These include works such as the provision of individual gullies and small piping works, minor kerbing and footway works, carriageway patching and such like. As ever, demands on this budget are high and at this time of year demands can exceed resources.

## JAW

As members are aware, bar autumn, each season brings a routine maintenance task whether its grass cutting in spring, surface dressing in the summer, or gritting in the winter. As I'm sure you can appreciate with the severe winter encountered thus far demands on our Winter Maintenance budget have been exceptional. In recent years we have averaged forty six treatments during the winter months (a treatment is a salt run). This year we have already undertaken ninety six treatments. These problems including the provision of salt has been well documented although I am extremely proud of how our workforce has worked during these difficult times and the service that has been provided. We have often had gangs working the maximum number of hours permitted, around the clock, across the region, undertaking very difficult work to the highest standard.

Clearly the aftermath of the storms of 13th December and combination of snow thaw and rain of 9th February, have also left their mark and we are continuing to address flooding and drainage issues as a result.

With regard to the forthcoming new financial year our budgets have yet to be confirmed, however, the following resurfacing, footway and drainage schemes are proposed:

### Principal Resurfacing

<b>Electoral Division</b>	<b>Parish</b>	<b>Road</b>	<b>Draft Start date</b>
Crewkerne	Misterton	A356 Middle Street	26 Oct.
Crewkerne	Crewkerne	A30 Gouldsbrook Terrace/Church Street	20 Sept
Chard North	Chard	A358 Furnham Road	17 Jan.
Crewkerne	Crewkerne	A30 East Street	4 Oct

### Non-Principal Resurfacing

<b>Electoral Division</b>	<b>Parish</b>	<b>Road</b>	<b>Draft Start date</b>
Chard North	Chard	Bonfire Close	27 April
Chard North	Chard	Halcombe	27 April
Crewkerne	Crewkerne	Lang Road	TBC
Crewkerne	Crewkerne	Rose Lane	TBC
Crewkerne	Misterton	Silver Street	TBC
Ilminster	Ilminster	Ditton Street	31 July
Ilminster	Ilminster	Old A303	TBC
Ilminster	Winsham	Bakersfield	TBC
Chard South	Tatworth	Station Road	6 Sept
Chard North	Chard	Glynswood	10 Aug

### Footways

<b>Electoral Division</b>	<b>Parish</b>	<b>Road</b>	<b>Draft Start date</b>
Chard North	Chard	Forton Road	TBC

**Drainage**

<b>Electoral Division</b>	<b>Parish</b>	<b>Road</b>	<b>Draft Start date</b>
Ilminster	Cudworth	Cross Tree Lane	20 July
Chard South	Tatworth	Station Road	TBC
Chard North	Combe St Nicholas	Street Ash	6 July
Chard North	Chard	Green Acres Farm, Crewkerne Road	TBC
Chard South	Tatworth	Loveridge Lane	TBC

All in all I am happy with the way the year has gone but am concerned over the long term condition of the roads and the likelihood that the trend in budget reduction continues. This year we have had a particularly bad winter, which has really highlighted the need to invest in our roads if they are to be maintained to an acceptable standard. The best tool for ensuring the protection of the road structure is surface dressing, a practice that in theory should be undertaken on every road at a frequency of approximately one in five years. At the moment, the resources available to us are such that we can visit each road theoretically once every fifteen years ~ something to think about!

As ever, I am happy to invite suggestions from the members with regard to how we may be able to improve our service and welcome any comments regarding both good and bad practice in the hope that I can influence future work.

**Background Papers:** None.