

Mr Scott Whalley
Sent via email
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Email: highwaysdistrictlead@lancashire.gov.uk
Our ref: 85598
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Dear Mr Whalley

Winter Maintenance

Thank you for your email dated 24 January 2025, regarding questions relating to our Winter Maintenance programme. I will address each point in the order raised.

We do everything we can to keep traffic moving on our priority road network during the winter months, between mid-October and early April. We monitor weather conditions throughout this period using a special forecasting service. This provides detailed local information in advance about the likelihood of snow and freezing road temperatures.

When snow or ice is forecast, we aim to spread salt onto the priority road network before any frost forms. This is known as precautionary salting. The salt we spread helps prevent any moisture from freezing, but it does not make snow and ice instantly disappear.

Our priority road network comprises around 1,800 miles of the 4,600 miles of roads that we maintain. It includes any non-trunk motorways and 'A' class roads which form the key routes across the county.

We also treat main urban traffic routes, major bus routes (with at least one bus every ten minutes), and routes serving main emergency service sites. This list is not exhaustive, and you can find out more details online at: [Winter in Lancashire - Lancashire County Council](#).

The minutes provided do not include a date, but we assume they relate to the weather event on 5/6 January 2025, when heavy snowfall hit Lancashire. This snowfall followed a period of heavy rainfall before the New Year, which caused significant flooding and multiple traffic accidents across Lancashire.

We continuously restock Lancashire grit bins and piles during the winter period. However, due to the high number of bins that need filling in East Lancashire (with over 570 bins and piles recorded in the Pendle District alone), the restocking operation can take considerable time to complete. I can confirm that we restocked all the bins in Pendle before the start of the winter season.

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Residents can also report empty bins online which allows us to focus our restricted resources, especially during periods when we have laying snow and are able to identify higher priority bins for restocking. We did respond to reports from the County Councillor for this Division that the bins located in the town centre of Barnoldswick and in the Salterforth area were empty, which were then prioritised for restocking.

Coates Lane School is on one of our primary gritting routes. When our gritters plough laying snow, they can direct snow to the kerbside, which sometimes causes difficulties for footway users or residents with vehicle access points from their drives. We ask for support in these situations, as we usually do not have the ability or resources to follow our gritters and remove the snow we have cleared from the road and ploughed to the roadside. You can find more information on the Met Office Snow Code at [Clearing your path or driveway - the snow code - Met Office](#)

I can confirm that we treated priority footways and have a mutual aid agreement with Pendle Borough Council (PBC) to support and help treat footways during challenging periods. We supply PBC with salt and asked if they could help in the West Craven Area. However, the Officer at PBC informed us that their priority at that time was snow clearance in the town centre car parks. Therefore, we arranged additional support to treat our priority footways.

We do grit Wysick in Earby, which forms part of the A56 as you leave Earby to the County Boundary. As it forms part of our primary gritting routes in Lancashire it received numerous treatments throughout this period. If the Committee would like to know why North Yorkshire County Council (NYCC) enter Lancashire, we would suggest they contact NYCC directly. However, we suspect they enter Lancashire to locate a suitable safe turning point, and have done this for some time, similar to other cross Pennine routes with our neighbouring highway authorities.

Although we cannot grit every road in Lancashire, we have identified some of our second most important roads. We will treat these where practical, but only in daylight hours, during periods of continuous ice and snow, and after we have cleared the higher priority roads. Rainhill Crescent is one of our secondary routes, and we have treated this route during this winter period.

We are investigating reports of flooding in the area to ensure our highway surface drainage systems remain uncompromised. If we find that further remedial work is needed, we will act accordingly. I hope you find this information useful.

Yours sincerely



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