



NEWS RELEASE

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Council's Highways teams repair more potholes as numbers rise across West Sussex

West Sussex County Council is reaffirming [its commitment to improving the county's roads](#) as an unusually high number of potholes have appeared this winter.

The council's Highways teams are carrying out more repairs than this time in previous years, but the number of road defects is also on the rise.

While many roads are in good condition, last month alone, [more than 7,000 potholes were reported](#), more than double the 2,300 in February 2025. At the same time our crews repaired more than 3,700 defects, compared with 2,500 in February last year.

And West Sussex is not alone – the numbers reflect a rise seen across the country as months of persistent rain and rapidly changing temperatures put pressure on road surfaces.

Fixing 'as quickly as possible'

Councillor Joy Dennis is the county council's Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport. She said: "I know how disruptive potholes are and how strongly people feel about them. Our communities expect and deserve safe and reliable roads, and the council is working hard to maintain them.

"By increasing the number of teams and amount of resource we have available, we have been able to repair more potholes than last year. We have 22 crews working across the county throughout the week, including evenings and weekends, so we can fix problems as quickly as possible.

"And we're not just reacting to the problem. Our teams have been out working over the last few months preparing for the forecasted weather clearing drains and gullies to do everything we can to reduce the impact of so much rain."

Focus on safety where the need is greatest

West Sussex County Council is responsible for maintaining 2,500 miles of road.

Cllr Dennis continued: "Some people understandably ask why we can't simply resurface badly affected areas in one go. The reality is that resurfacing the entire network to the standard we all want would require around £400 million for resurfacing alone, which is far beyond the funding any local authority currently receives. We'd

also need to carry out a large amount of other structural and drainage works, especially on the rural roads which don't have the same underlying infrastructure as roads in urban areas do."

"But what we are doing is to prioritise the busiest and fastest roads, those where safety needs are greatest, to make best use of our resources. That does mean some local roads receive more patch repairs than we would like but we are reviewing how to include more of these roads in future programmes."

Innovation and long-term solutions

[The council will invest £60.7 million in maintaining and improving highways in West Sussex over the coming year.](#) More than 70% of the budget is for work designed to limit the number of potholes forming in the first place, such as re-surfacing, large-scale patching and drainage improvements.

We continue to explore new and innovative techniques to make road surfaces more durable. For example, we're trialling the use of biochar, a form of charcoal, within road layers to see if it will help the surface materials last longer as part of the LiveLabs2 Greenprint project funded by the Department for Transport. We've also been testing thermal patching, which reheats and reworks the existing road surface to create a more resilient repair.

Cllr Dennis added: "We will continue to explore every solution that helps us keep West Sussex moving. The scale of the challenge is real, but so is our commitment to dealing with it. We are grateful to residents for reporting issues and for their patience as we work through an exceptionally high volume of repairs."

Further information

7,134 potholes were reported to the council in February 2026 compared with 2,366 in February 2025.

3,701 potholes were repaired in February 2026 compared with 2,533 in February 2025.

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