



**SUFFOLK
HIGHWAYS**
www.suffolk.gov.uk/highways

Community Self-Help Scheme Quick Guide

Our commitment to helping community volunteers work safely on the highway while carrying out small maintenance tasks that improve their local area.

Introduction

The Community Self-Help Scheme was developed with town and parish councils across Suffolk. It responds to their request to do more to improve their local areas by carrying out small maintenance tasks that Suffolk Highways doesn't have the resources to complete.

Because of budget limits, Suffolk County Council must focus its spending on keeping the road network safe for everyone. This means we can't always do the extra work that councils would like to help make their communities look better.

Our goal is to clearly explain what Suffolk Highways can and can't do, so communities can decide if they want to take part in the Community Self-Help Scheme.

What we will do

We will:

- Organise training for volunteers so they know how to work safely
- Provide public liability insurance to cover volunteers while they're working
- Give volunteers high-visibility safety clothing
- Pay back the initial cost of approved tools and equipment bought by town or parish councils
- Support town and parish councils as required to help them participate in the scheme

What town and parish councils need to do

Each town or parish council must choose one or more volunteer supervisors, who will:

- Plan and organise the work for themselves and other volunteers
- Write and keep a risk assessment for every task they carry out
- Make sure traffic management (e.g. cones or signs) is set up, looked after, and taken down by someone who is properly trained, following the official safety guide known as 'The Red Book'

What kind of maintenance can volunteers do?



Volunteers can carry out small tasks to help keep their local area tidy and safe. These include:

- Cutting grass
- Clearing overgrown plants and bushes
- Removing weeds
- Cleaning signs
- Skirting footways (removing soil and debris from the edges of paths)

Other similar tasks may also be supported as part of the Community Self-Help Scheme.

Important: Volunteers can only work next to roads with a speed limit of 40mph or less.



Helping Nature In Your Community

The Community Self-Help Scheme gives town and parish councils the chance to care for roadside areas where rare and important plants and animals live. These areas are called Roadside Nature Reserves (RNRs). The plants in these reserves are protected because they help keep the environment healthy and balanced.

To learn more, visit the [Suffolk's Roadside Nature Reserves](#) page.



Insurance

When the town or parish council performs works within the scope of the agreement, any accidental damage or injury to third parties is covered by Suffolk County Council's public liability insurance. Any injury to volunteers, rangers, or damage to equipment, are not covered by Suffolk County Council.

Outside the scope of the agreement, the town or parish council will be liable for any third-party injury or damage. They must also maintain at least £5M Public Liability Insurance, and insurance to indemnify Suffolk County Council for any claims made.



Get involved

The Community Self-Help Scheme is a great way for local councils and residents to take pride in their area by helping to keep it clean and well-maintained. All work is done safely, legally, and with full support from Suffolk Highways.

If you're a resident, speak to your [town or parish council](#) to find out if they're part of the scheme and how you can volunteer.

If you're a town/parish council member, and your council isn't yet registered, you can contact Suffolk Highways to learn how to join and start making a difference in your community.

For more information

Visit the [Community Self-Help Scheme](#) page on our website