



# Community Preparedness

## Winter Gritting Pack



Although Suffolk County Council has responsibilities for snow clearance and gritting - alongside Highways England (which is responsible for motorways and trunk roads such as the A14), it does not have unlimited resources and is unable to provide clearance of snow on every pavement or road in Suffolk.

Suffolk roads, pavements and cycle tracks are salted and snow cleared according to a system of priorities. Pavements and cycle tracks are only normally treated in the event of snow (See Annexes E and F for further detail).

The County Council's position is that sensible self-help is to be encouraged. There is also a public misconception that getting involved with snow clearance can leave individuals accountable if someone slips on an area they have cleared. However, if volunteers have registered with their district, parish or town council they will be covered under County Council insurance – see Annex B. The Government also takes this view and has issued a “Snow Code” to advise people on what steps to take.

[Clearing snow and ice from pavements yourself \(Annexe E\)](#)

### **How can local communities create winter gritting groups?**

- A town, parish council, or local community snow clearing volunteer group work out a list of vulnerable areas.
- The town, parish council prioritise and co-ordinate locations for local gritting schemes.
- Identify a local ‘champion’ to promote and drive messages across the local community. Ideally this is a person whose role or profile leads them to being out and about, and engaged with the local community.
- Create / develop a local plan to aid co-ordination and activation of snow clearance. This means Including and maintaining lists of registered volunteers along with contact details/ local co-ordinators for activation of volunteers



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- Identify additional resources to purchase such as high visibility jackets, gloves, snow shovels, grit bins etc. Bulk purchasing schemes with other community groups should be considered.
- Engage with the media and identify mechanisms for including local businesses 'good news stories' when seeking / promoting sponsorship / donations
- The town or parish council or community group asks for volunteers using notice boards, parish magazines, approaching local clubs and organisations, holding local recruitment drives etc. etc.
- For the purposes of insurance, ensure all volunteers are registered with the town / parish council and have received an appropriate health and safety brief. (See advisory brief Annexe A)
- Make sure grit boxes are in place and full at the start of the winter (town and parish councils need to supply their own grit boxes and agree their locations with Suffolk County Council). The County Council currently fills and replenishes these free of charge.

**Note:** only grit bins/heaps associated with town / parish council for use on the public highways will be supported by the County Council.

- Identify storage points and routine for volunteer access to equipment.
- Activating gritting teams can be determined by noting when snow or ice has formed, County Council gritting vehicles are predicted to be operating on the highways <http://www.suffolk.gov.uk/roads-and-transport/roads-pavements-and-verges/salting-gritting-and-clearing-snow/> or using local weather forecasts for predicted ice (see link below).

[East of England weather forecast - Met Office](#)

[http://www.metoffice.gov.uk/weather/uk/ee/ee\\_forecast\\_weather.html](http://www.metoffice.gov.uk/weather/uk/ee/ee_forecast_weather.html)

- The co-ordinator mobilises and directs the volunteer group who work through their priority areas.
- Support, acknowledge and praise volunteers when activated,
- Suffolk County Council does not purchase the bins; these must be provided by the town or parish council or other self-help group.



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### Notes:

- Grit bin costs range between £70 - £450, dependent on size, supplier and bulk purchasing considerations
- Borough and district councils may co-ordinate bulk buying on behalf of local communities. For further details, please contact your local council.
- Prior to purchase it is advised that the Parish or Town Council makes contact with Suffolk Highways to establish if the location proposed is appropriate and will therefore be supported for re-filling. This can be done through Customer Services 0345 606 6171
- Grit bins and protective equipment may be purchased by any town/parish ensuring that the correct standards are met.
- Information on grit bin filling can be found at <https://www.suffolk.gov.uk/roads-and-transport/check-which-roads-are-gritted/#tab3>
- You can also register and gain further information on the Suffolk Community Resilience website <http://www.getpreparednow.co.uk/>.



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### Volunteer Health and Safety Brief

### Annexe A

**All snow clearing volunteers should take note and receive a copy of the following advice from Suffolk County Council when clearing snow from the highway.**

Anyone clearing snow on behalf of the town or parish council would be covered under the terms of the County Council's insurance for public liabilities **providing** *volunteers have registered with their town or parish council, read and understood the following health and safety points:*

Anyone clearing snow from outside their own property or someone else's property would only be liable for an accident if their efforts actually made the pavement less safe than it was with the snow and ice undisturbed and, as a result, somebody is injured.

Volunteers spreading salt/grit for clearing snow from the highway at times of severe weather should:

- Wear a Class II high visibility long sleeved jacket or vest. Class III jackets should be worn if working on the highway and speed limit is greater than 30 mph or acting as a lookout.
- Wear warm clothing and stout footwear which will provide a good grip. Physical work will warm up the body so be prepared to shed layers, but remember that your body will quickly cool down once you cease working.
- Ensure that someone is aware that you have gone out to carry out this work and how long you intend to be there for. Remember also to advise that person of your return.
- Assess the location before commencing work. Do not attempt to work if you feel conditions would make this unsafe - for example, if visibility is poor, traffic flows are too high or conditions are so severe that you would be placing yourself at risk of falling or extreme cold.
- Always be aware of approaching traffic. Remember the conditions may mean that traffic will have difficulty stopping. Try to work in pairs so that someone can observe the traffic.



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- Clear the snow or ice early in the day. It is easier to move fresh snow rather than hard snow that has packed together from people walking on it. So, if possible, start removing the snow and ice in the morning. If you remove the top layer of snow in the morning, any sunshine during the day will help to melt any ice beneath. You can then cover the path with salt before nightfall to stop it refreezing overnight.
- Use the grit sparingly and thinly (see Annexe H). Spread a small amount on a shovel and sprinkle gently. The material in the grit bins/heaps is a mixture of 1 part salt and 9 parts grit. The salt is there to inhibit freezing of the grit into lumps. The grit is intended to provide grip on the surface of compacted snow or ice.
- When spreading salt/grit on the pavements, it is better to remove most of the snow and then spread the salt/grit mixture.
- Pay extra attention to clear snow and ice from steps and steep pathways - you might need to use more salt on these areas.
- **DO NOT USE HOT WATER!** This will melt the snow, but will replace it with black ice, increasing the risk of injury.
- If shovelling snow, use a shovel with the widest blade available. Make a line down the middle of your path first so you have a safe surface to walk on. Then you can simply shovel the snow from the centre to the sides.
- If salt is not available from the grit bins, consider spreading some ordinary table or dishwasher salt on the area you have cleared to prevent any ice forming (1 tablespoon per square metre). But take care and avoid spreading salt on plants or grass.
- Care should be taken to avoid blocking access points to properties, driveways, paths (especially at pedestrian crossings and drains). The cleared snow should be deposited in the verge or areas that are non-trafficked.
- If you clear snow and ice yourself, be careful - don't make the pathways more dangerous by causing them to refreeze. But don't be put off clearing paths because you're afraid someone will get injured. Remember, people walking on snow and ice have a responsibility to be careful themselves.



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## Annexe B



### **SUFFOLK COUNTY COUNCIL'S 'SELF HELP' GRIT HEAP SCHEME FOR TOWN AND PARISH COUNCILS**

**Local councils will be interested to note the conditions which must be met in order to ensure volunteers are covered by Suffolk County Council's public liability and employer's liability insurance policy**

- 1) Cover will only extend to work within the highway and during times when ice has formed or is predicted to form.
- 2) Volunteers should be at least 18 years old and must act in a reasonable manner at all times.
- 3) The town or parish council will provide all necessary equipment such as grit bins, wheelbarrows, shovels etc.
- 4) Town and parish councils will ensure that all volunteers have the necessary personal protective equipment such as reflective jackets, gloves, safety boots etc.
- 5) On busy roads or potentially dangerous sites, a second volunteer may be needed in order to warn the person spreading grit of approaching vehicles.
- 6) The grit should be spread evenly across the area to be treated. Care must be taken to avoid large deposits being left on the surface which could present a hazard to people using the highway. Town and parish councils should check that the grit has been spread in a safe manner.
- 7) The town or parish council will maintain and update a list of all volunteers engaged to spread grit in accordance with the scheme. In the case of any claim being made against Suffolk County Council's insurance policy, we will need to check the list when processing the claim.



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Winter Gritting Workshop Pack: date.....

## Community Snow Clearance Volunteer Registration Form

**Annexe C**

Road / Street / Location:

Name	Address	Contact No	H&S Brief Received	Signature

## Community Snow Clearance Co-ordinators

**Annexe C**





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Grit Location Reference	Road / Location	Local Co-ordinator (s)	Contact No

**Anysuch Village community grit bin / grit heap locations**

**Annexe D**







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Location Reference	Type	Capacity	Area to grit	Grit Storage Details
A	Bin	240 li	School Lane	Entrance to St Johns Primary School, 84 School Lane IP10 - XYZ
B	Heap	240li	Church Road	Opposite Hare and Hounds PH, Bell Lane 1P10 - XYZ
C	Heap	480 li	High Street South	
D	Bin	480 li	High Street North	
E	Bin	480 li	Steep Lane	
Total		<b>1920 li</b>		

Central Storage location for local resupply:

Priority 1 Redistribution Route: E, A, C,

Priority 2 Redistribution Route: D, B

Example Map; gritting areas, priority routes and grit locations by kind permission of Mendlesham Parish Council



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Key: “gb” = grit bin location, priority route 1 = pink roads, priority route 2 = orange roads





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### Road salting and snow clearing

### Annexe E



**Making sure Suffolk's roads are made as safe as possible in wintry conditions by salting the roads and clearing snow.**

At Suffolk County Council, we have a duty to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, that safe passage along a road is not endangered by snow or ice. We are responsible for managing this on all public roads in Suffolk with the following exceptions:

- **All problems on the A11 and A14 and some parts of the A12 are the responsibility of [Highways England](#)**

To comply with our duty as local highway authority for County Council roads, we spread salt and clear snow. There are practical limitations to what can be achieved, and priority is given to areas of highest potential risk. The first priority is the busiest roads. After that, we treat roads, pavements and cycle tracks according to a system of priorities based on usage.

	Roads	Pavements and Cycle Tracks
<b>Priority 1</b>	All A and B class roads, and the busiest bus and commuter routes on other roads. These are treated on any occasion ice or snow is forecast to be a hazard.	Main shopping streets in town centres.
<b>Priority 2</b>	Other significant bus routes and other commuter routes. Treated if snow or ice is forecast to persist for much of the day, or if shorter term conditions are forecast to be severe, e.g. rain turning to ice.	Other town centre pavements and important cycle tracks.
<b>Priority 3</b>	Other classified roads and busier unclassified roads. Only treated in prolonged severe conditions as resources permit.	Pavements and important cycle tracks.
<b>Priority 4</b>	Remaining surfaced unclassified roads. Treated in conditions of severe and prolonged snow, as resources permit.	Residential areas.

For current information on gritting routes, please visit <http://roadworks.org> (See **Annexe F** for further details)





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Spreading salt on the roads helps prevent or remove ice. When snow is more than 50mm deep, it needs to be mechanically removed by ploughing or digging. Salt becomes less effective as temperatures reduce. In exceptionally low temperatures, salt may have little or no effect and it may be necessary to spread grit to give more grip on the ice, rather than trying to melt it.

**Decision to grit:** During the winter months, we receive a detailed local road surface weather forecast every day. Eight roadside weather stations measure road and air temperature, rainfall, wind speed and humidity. We receive a specialised winter weather forecasting service on a daily basis. This predicts the possibility of freezing road temperatures, snow etc, and the time those conditions may occur. Gritting the 1232 miles of Priority 1 routes takes 2.5 hours and costs £10,000. Keeping the county's roads safe is the priority, but we must also make sure the 35 gritters are not sent out needlessly.

**Snow clearing:** Snow can be cleared by ploughing, digging, or the use of specially designed snow blowers. As well as using our own equipment, we can call on over 200 farmers and contractors across the county to help with clearing snow. Payment is only made to farmers and contractors who have a contract with us and are working on our instructions. In severe snow conditions, we will carry out snow ploughing throughout the night to try to keep the most important roads passable. This is normally confined to the busier A class roads.

**Grit heaps:** We provide roadside grit heaps on request from town /parish councils and County Councillors so local people can treat local trouble spots on minor roads, which otherwise would not be treated.

- requests are only accepted from a town or parish council or a County Councillor
- grit heap locations are generally hazardous areas, hills, junctions on minor roads which are lower priority routes for gritting
- Suffolk County Council currently fills and tops up purpose made bins, if a town or parish council wants to provide these
- named (registered with town/parish council) volunteers spreading grit or clearing snow can be insured through the County Council's insurance
- there is no charge for grit for usage on the public highways
- grit heaps will be replenished at the start of the gritting season and afterwards on request. It can take 2 weeks to top up heaps as it is normally uneconomic to top up one heap in isolation
- this grit must only be used on the public highway





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### **Suffolk County Council Contact details - Highways**

Telephone number for Suffolk Highways - 0345 606 6171

[customer.service@suffolk.gov.uk](mailto:customer.service@suffolk.gov.uk)

### **Suffolk County Council Highways Online Services**

<https://www.suffolk.gov.uk/roads-and-transport/>

<https://www.suffolk.gov.uk/roads-and-transport/roads-pavements-and-verges/salting-gritting-and-clearing-snow/>

### **Report an issue to Suffolk County Council Highways;**

<https://highwaysreporting.suffolk.gov.uk/>

<https://www.suffolk.gov.uk/about/online-services/>

### **Links;**

[Twitter @suff\\_highways](https://twitter.com/suff_highways)

<https://www.gov.uk/clear-snow-road-path-cycleway>

<http://www.metoffice.gov.uk/get-ready-for-winter/out-and-about/the-snow-code>





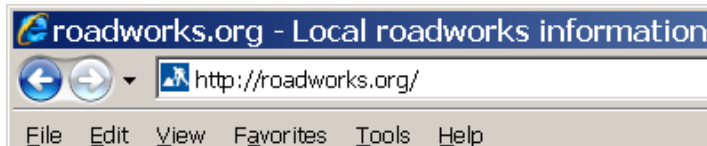
# Community Preparedness Winter Gritting Workshop Pack



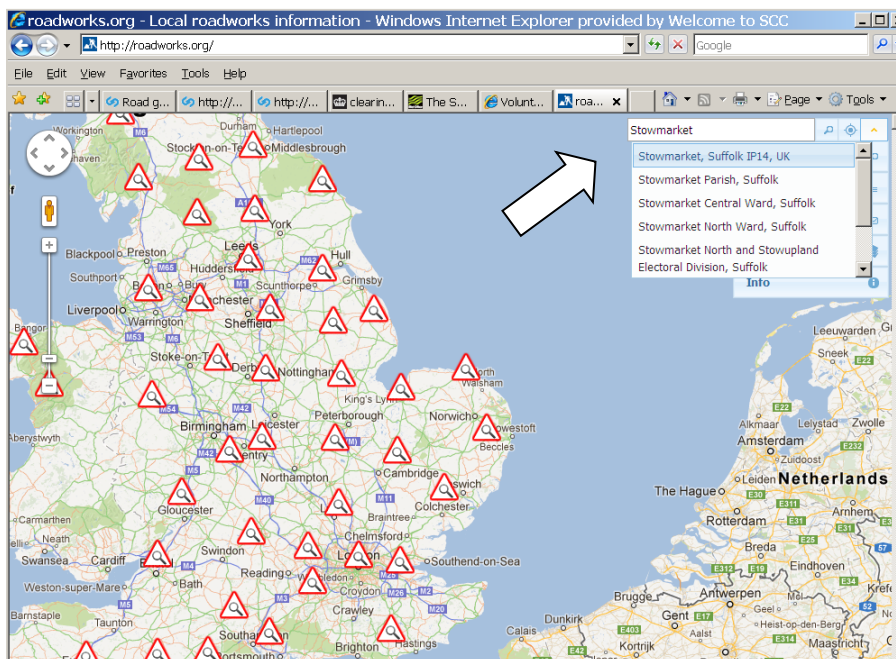
## Suffolk County Council Gritting Routes

## Annexe F

Open an internet browser and type <http://roadworks.org> into the search window.



Type an address into the search window and select as appropriate



Select from the dropdown menu on the right hand side of the menu 'Map layers'





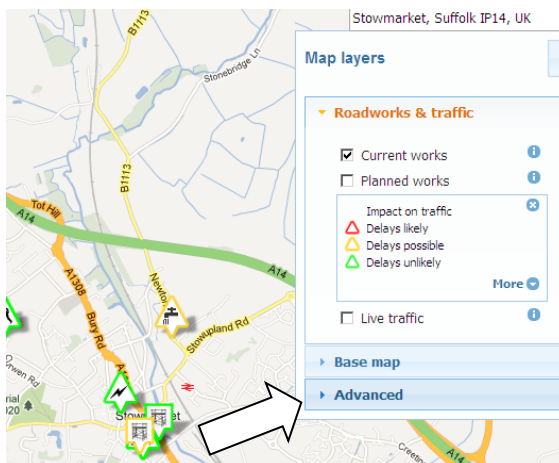


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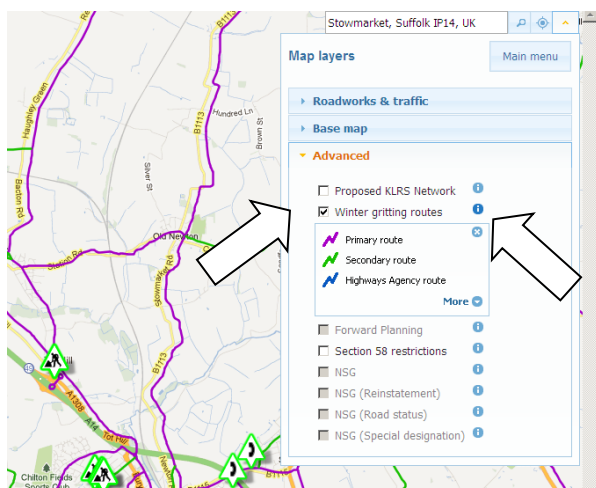


Now select 'Advanced'



'Check' the winter gritting routes option to display the mapped routes,

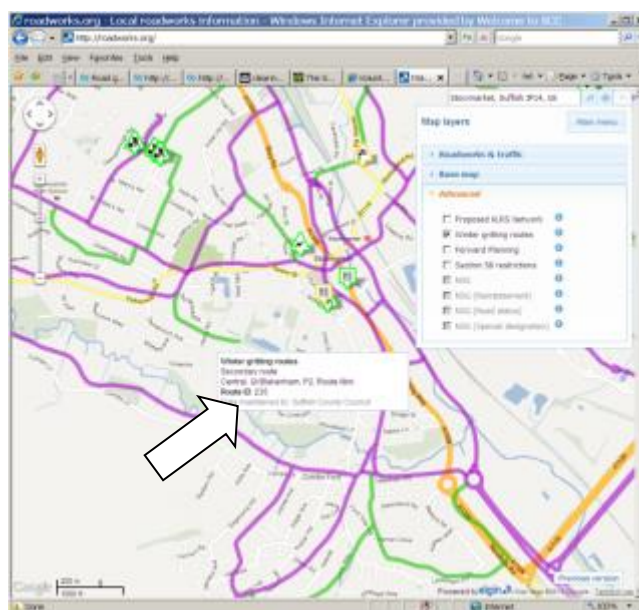
Click on the 'i' for information icon to display the colour coding information for the displayed routes.



By hovering over one of the coloured lines along the route, another box will open giving the route name and the salting priority.

Use the zoom in or out depending on the range of detail you wish to use

Use the hand icon to drag the map to other locations when planning your route, or if you have concerns regarding friends or relatives that may be affected by the weather.





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### Snow clearing guidelines for gritting and laying salt

### Annexe H

Ideally, 'grit' is sharp sand to maximise the assistance to prevention of slipping. Some salt is included with the mix stored in the bin - probably 1 part in 10. This salt mainly inhibits the freezing of the sand whilst in storage so that is free-flowing when deployed on to the highway surface. Its effect on dispersing ice is quite limited and, therefore, salting / favourable weather conditions are relied upon to minimise / reduce the presence of ice.

Table (1) extract from section 6 highways winter maintenance guidance

Activity	Coverage
Precautionary salting prior to the formation of ice and post salting to deal with light frost	10g per sq.m barn-stored salt 15g per sq.m open-stored salt
Salting to clear ice that has already formed and hoar frost.	20g per sq.m

Table (2) extract from section 6 Appendix 1 highways winter maintenance guidance, grams of salt per sq.m to reduce ice to slush

Temperature ° Celsius	Depth of Snow (millimetres)			
	25	50	75	100
0	10	20	30	40
-1	20	40	60	80
-2	30	60	90	120
-3	40	80	120	160

Notes:

- (1) Falls of snow over 50mm deep are not usually removed by the use of salt alone. Snow in excess of 50mm deep is best cleared by ploughing and salting.
- (2) Quantities of salt in shaded area in table above, are likely to need repeat applications as they are beyond the capabilities of most salt spreaders