

Network North – Highway Maintenance Funding

On 4 October 2023, the government announced £8.3 billion of additional highways maintenance funding over the period 2023 to 2024 and the next 10 years for local road resurfacing and wider maintenance activity on the local highway network.

For Suffolk, this amounts to over £107m additional maintenance funding for the period to 2033/34.

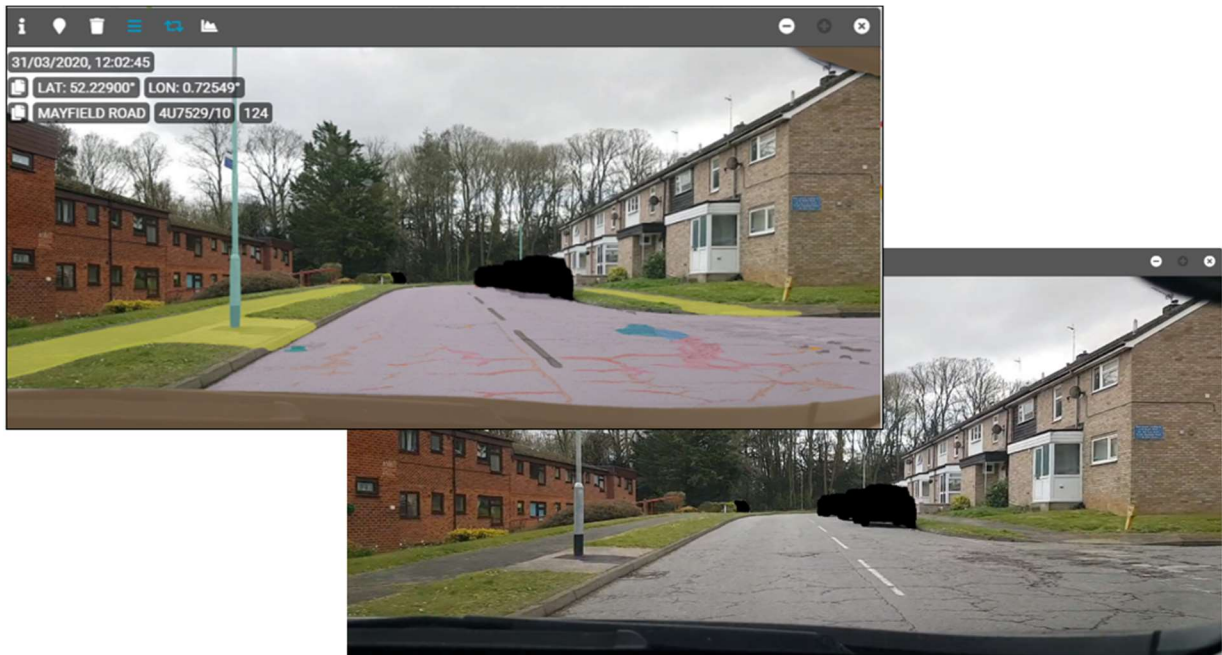
£3.436m is available in both 2023/24 and 2024/25 with future amounts to be confirmed by the Department for Transport.

In Suffolk, we feel strongly based on our road condition indicators and feedback from our communities that we need to invest some of this £107m into local roads.

How are Suffolk Highways introducing innovation?

In Suffolk, we employ a range of technologies that support us with maintaining highway infrastructure and identifying locations for consideration for maintenance works in support of our embedded asset management approach.

We have trialled a smartphone-based data capture tool that, coupled with Artificial Intelligence software analysis tools that take the captured visual information and transforms it into road condition data.

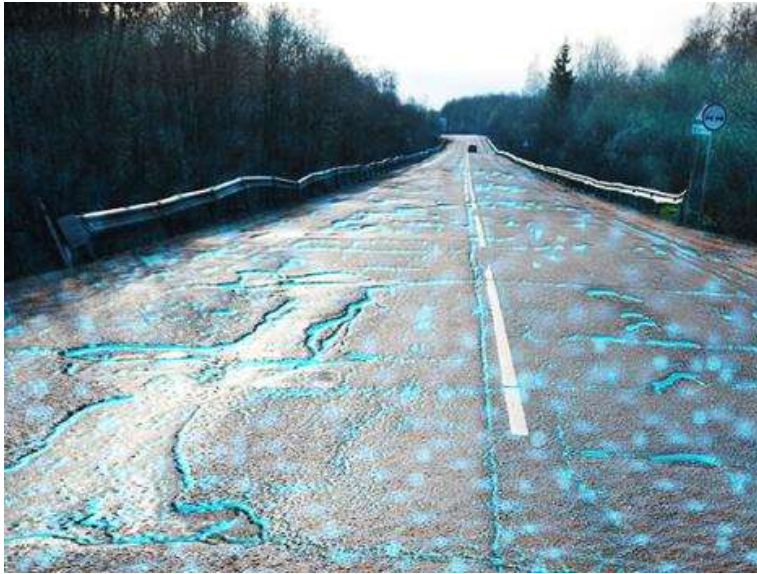




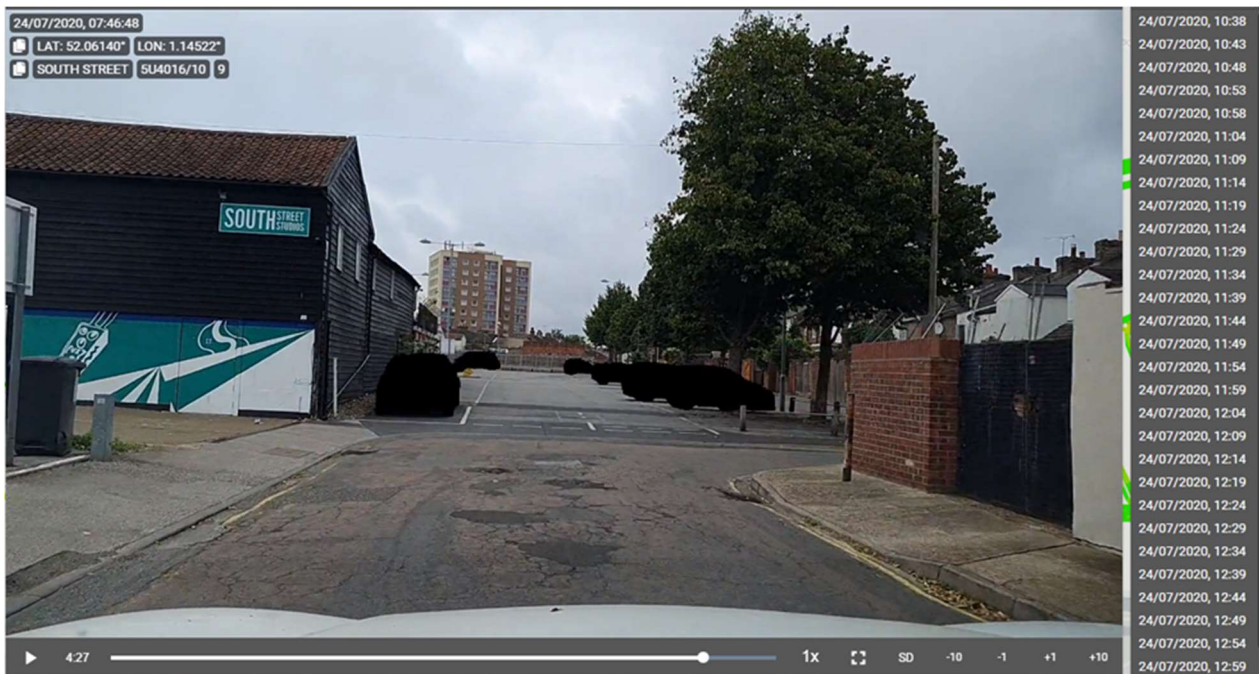
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The trial has successfully shown that data harvested using this technique is comparable in terms of condition data output but with a substantially lower cost. We will use this system on all our safety inspection fleet from April 2024 allowing us to capture more regular data which will support at a greater frequency area of deterioration and as well as improved modelling of network condition and performance of resurfacing materials.



This year we have also trailed the use of a Dragon Patcher across rural parts of our network, this has provided us with a greater output of road repairs as well as improved environmental benefits when compared to conventional repair gangs. This has led to a change in specification on our contract to permanently include this type of treatment to be used to support our approach to road maintenance.



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For the urban areas we have commenced a trial using RoadMender Elastomac Patching. Elastomac works on both asphalt and concrete roads and is designed for repairs to cracks, joints, potholes, patching, surrounds to iron work, fretting, wheel rutting, kerb channels and speed ramps. This trial commenced in Mid-March 2024 and will be reviewed after the first month, if successful this will become another product available to us to support our network.



How do we ensure that resurfacing works are not undermined by repeated digging up of the same road by utility companies?

For many years, Suffolk Highways have applied a restriction on digging up roads following resurfacing works.

We do this through early dialogue with utility companies prior to placing a restriction on the road by way of a **Section 58 notice**.

A **Section 58 notice** is a legal notice issued under the **New Roads and Street Works Act 1991**.

Here's what it entails:

Purpose: The notice aims to prevent utility companies from digging up the road for a specified period after substantial roadworks, carried out by the highway authority, have been completed.

Applicability: It applies to all statutory undertakers (such as utility companies) who perform work in a specific road.

Duration: The restriction can be in place for **up to five years**, depending on the type of work that has taken place.

Investment in highway maintenance in Suffolk

Below is a table that sets out how much money has been spend on highway maintenance in Suffolk.

Capital Expenditure (£m)	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
Roads (Carriageways)	£ 20.464	£ 21.409	£ 15.430	£ 11.851	£ 18.901	£ 14.438
Pavements (Footways)	£ 1.253	£ 1.222	£ 1.119	£ 1.582	£ 3.112	£ 5.759
Bridges & Structures (inc. significant PRow bridges)	£ 2.046	£ 1.872	£ 3.408	£ 2.577	£ 2.236	£ 3.903
Drainage	£ 1.771	£ 2.845	£ 2.183	£ 4.600	£ 6.256	£ 4.692
Street Lighting	£ 1.654	£ 2.427	£ 1.665	£ 3.206	£ 1.498	£ 2.316
ITS (Traffic Signals)	£ 0.159	£ 0.460	£ 0.381	£ 0.306	£ 0.595	£ 0.444
Road Markings	£ 0.502	£ 0.058	£ -	£ 0.028	£ -	£ 0.133
Signs and Barriers	£ 0.050	£ 0.058	£ 0.124	£ 0.032	£ 0.158	£ 0.631
Planned Reactive Repairs	£ 5.277	£ 6.166	£ 6.665	£ 11.084	£ 7.515	£ 8.045
Community Self-Help	£ -	£ 0.021	£ 0.006	£ 0.001	£ 0.009	£ 0.111
Total Works	£ 33.176	£ 36.540	£ 30.981	£ 35.268	£ 40.279	£ 40.472

The majority of capital funding comes from the Department for Transport.

DfT Maintenance Grant (£m)	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023/24
Highway Maintenance*	£ 32.167	£ 22.474	£ 21.218	£ 21.218	£ 27.238	£ 27.238

*please note that the grant is not always spent in the year it is received.

In support of this funding, Suffolk County Council has made additional investments as set out below:

£21m over the period of 2017 to 2021 to support the resurfacing of 1,000 miles of Suffolk's road network.

£21m over the period 2021 to 2024 to support drainage, footway and road sign maintenance and improvement works.

If you would like to find out more on highway maintenance funding, you can visit our Quick Guide page that can be found here:

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

The table below sets out the expected funding allocation for highway maintenance in Suffolk.

Highways Capital Programme Capital Programme	Actual Spend to 2022-23 (£million)	2023-24 Forecast (£million)	2024-25 Budget (£million)	2025-26 Budget (£million)	2026-27 Budget (£million)	2027-28 Budget (£million)	2028-29 Budget (£million)	2024-29 Budget (£million)	Total (including actual and forecast spend) (£million)
Scheme									
Highways Maintenance		29.363	27.013	34.801	37.929	38.429	38.429	176.601	205.964
Highways Property Investment	0.013	0.800	0.770	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.770	1.583
Highways Electrical Vehicle Charging	0.008	1.500	0.927	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.927	2.435
Footways and Drainage Improvements	5.527	6.360	8.113	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	8.113	20.000
Additional Highways Investment	0.004	0.246	0.750	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.750	1.000
Local Highways Budgets	0.872	1.140	0.700	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.700	2.712
Street Lighting LED upgrades	8.923	0.899	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	9.822
Live Labs Innovation Street Lighting	2.737	0.426	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	3.163
Highways - Privately Funded Projects	0.000	0.002	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.002
Highways Investment	0.000	0.000	10.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	10.000	10.000
Highways Total	18.084	40.736	48.273	34.801	37.929	38.429	38.429	197.861	256.681

Whilst specific allocations for maintenance works have yet to be finalised for 2024/25, it is expected that the proportional split against highway assets will be broadly in line with average allocations from previous years, as set out overleaf:



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Capital Expenditure	Average (%)
Roads (Carriageways)	52.5%
Pavements (Footways)	3.7%
Bridges & Structures (inc. significant PRow bridges)	7.8%
Drainage	8.1%
Street Lighting	7.0%
ITS (Traffic Signals)	1.1%
Road Markings	0.4%
Signs and Barriers	0.3%
Planned Reactive Repairs	19.0%
Total Works	100%