

General performance	Excellent				Badly
	5	4	3	2	1
How do you consider Cumbria Highways addressed the following aspects of the winter service?					
Treatment of main roads (first and second priority roads)		• (see Note 1)			
Treatment of lower priority roads - urban			•		
Treatment of minor roads - rural					• (see Note 2)
Treatment of main urban footways				•	
Refilling of salt heaps and bins					• (see Note 3)
How do you consider Cumbria Highways handled the extreme weather event of 2009/10 overall?				•	

Parish scheme	Excellent				Badly
	5	4	3	2	1
For the first time, we offered salt/grit mix to the Parish Councils. Do you consider this to be a good idea?				• (see Note 4)	
How well do you think we delivered this scheme?				• (see Note 4)	
Do you think we should offer this to Parishes in future?	Yes	No (see Note 4)	Delete as appropriate		

Salt supplies					
De-icing salt is supplied from one main supplier. In the last two winters, the demand for road de-icing salt has exceeded supply resulting in severe shortages nationally. Imported salt is considerably more expensive due to shipping costs.					
	Excellent				Badly
	5	4	3	2	1
How do you consider Cumbria Highways dealt with the national salt shortage?				•	

Gritting policy					
Pre-treatment is when we salt roads before frost is forecast to form. This way, ice is prevented from forming on the road. This is done with those roads which are classified as First or Second Priority routes. In the event of prolonged icy conditions we post-treat some lower priority roads to melt the ice which has already formed (third priority roads).					
Currently we pre-treat approximately one third of the 7500 kilometers of road in the County as first and second priority roads.	Far too much	Too much	About right	Too little	Far too little
Do you think that this is				• (see Notes 1 & 2)	
	More	No change	Less		
Do you think we should treat more or less urban footways?					
	Central shopping areas	Feeder routes to and from central urban areas	Steep gradients regardless of location		
If "Yes", which group of footways should be increased?					
Our strategy for dealing with winter conditions are as follows:-					
Short term icy conditions	Treat first and second priority roads				
Longer term icy conditions (over 3 days)	Treat third priority roads once first and second priority roads are secure. (see Note 2)				
Heavy snow	Concentrate on higher priority roads, then progressively reopen the network, aiming to get one road into communities.				
Do you think that we should have a further policy for dealing with prolonged winter conditions (for example over two weeks)	Yes	No	Delete as appropriate		

If yes, should this be	Aim to treat all roads serving inhabited property	Aim to treat all roads serving villages with schools	Other - please describe Ensure salt gets delivered to bins and heaps and replenished regularly. Put in place a scheme that enables payment to local farmers to clear and grit roads from grit at local depot.
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Finance					
The winter service forms a large part of the Highways budget. The budget for 2009/10 was £3.9M, and the actual spend will be well in excess of that figure.					
Do you think that additional funding should be provided to support an enhanced winter service.	Yes	No (see Note 5)	Delete as appropriate		

Please add any other comments which you consider to be appropriate below.

Notes:

1. Priority Routes: The promotion of the C5022 Penny Bridge to Hawkshead road as a 'Priority 2' gritting route last winter was an absolute life-line* as a main route through the centre of our Parish. We regard it as essential that the gritting status of this route be maintained. Without it, nearly the whole Parish (some 20 sq miles) would have been ice-bound and inaccessible for many weeks. * This could have had serious consequences in terms of supplies (there are no shops in the Parish), and access for emergency services. Gritting of the C5022 meant that an emergency ambulance was able to get within 1.5 miles of an elderly resident who was then sledged down the hill to meet it.
2. Third Priority Routes: Despite the policy for gritting of third priority routes, none to our knowledge were gritted in Colton Parish during the entire winter. The gritting lorry was witnessed only once on a third priority route, traveling along the C5025 past Rusland Cross, during heavy snow. However, its snow plough was raised up and no grit was being distributed. Residents were even more angry than they would have been had they not seen it at all.
3. Salt bins and Heaps: These had not been replenished since the previous winter, let alone re-filled. **The lack of any salt at all in the Parish is our main complaint.** After a similar failure the previous winter, we had received many reassurances that the bins and heaps would be replenished in good time. We had also spent valuable (voluntary) time producing a map of bins and heaps for Highways to work with. Unbelievably, once again, there was no salt when we badly needed it. On enquiring why, it seemed to be a simple failure of organisation. This needs addressing urgently. Please understand that we are used to receiving few services in this area and many people will rally round to do the jobs voluntarily, but at the very least, they expect to be supplied with the materials with which to do it.
4. Parish Scheme: This was an emergency measure which we welcomed as a last resort. However, the huge voluntary effort required to distribute the grit means that it is not viable as a regular solution. In addition, it is now difficult to find a

suitable location for a large heap of grit (our local council depot having been sold off). We feel that the only realistic solution is for Highways to re-visit scheme whereby farmers receive payment for clearing roads and bringing in grit from a local depot.

5. Funding: Whilst we understand the pressures that a severe winter puts on limited funds, we believe that the main problem was one of poor organisation and poor communication between the various agencies and contractors concerned with winter maintenance of roads. We feel that the whole system needs stream-lining to be much more efficient and effective. In addition, communication between County and District Councils needs to be improved to coordinate services, e.g. salt distribution and rubbish collection.

Response from Colton Parish Council:

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