

**OXFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL**

**ANNEX A**

**Policy for  
Highway Safety Inspections**

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## Policy Statement

### Introduction

This document sets out the Policy and Standards that are deemed applicable to Oxfordshire's road network for assessing the occurrence of safety defects within the highway boundary.

The Council, as a Highway Authority, is required under Section 58 of the Highway Act 1980<sup>1</sup> to carry out at periodic intervals a safety inspection of the highway network. A statutory defence requires the authority to prove that it operates a reasonable and adequate inspection system for highway repair and maintenance, providing a special defence in action against the authority for damages for non-repair of the highway.

### Network

This policy relates to all classes of carriageway, footway and cycleway and these will be subject to routine monitoring as described in this policy.

The occurrence of defects reported through the Public Enquiry process will also be investigated where it is likely that the safety risk is significantly higher than normal or if information from the Police or members of the public suggests a safety hazard to the highway user.

Motorway and All Purpose Trunk Roads that may pass through the Oxfordshire County Council's geographical boundary are the responsibility of the Highways Agency and their Agents and as such are outside the remit of this policy.

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<sup>1</sup> The UK Statute Law Database - <http://www.statutelaw.gov.uk/>

**Frequency**

The following tables set out the frequency of inspection for different parts of the highway network.

OCC Road Maintenance Hierarchy		Inspection Frequencies	National Code of Practice categories	
1	Motorway	Responsibility of the Highways Agency and their Agents		
2	All Purpose Trunk Road	Responsibility of the Highways Agency and their Agents		
3	National Primary Route	1 month	2	Strategic routes
4	County Primary Route	1 month		
5	Secondary County Route	3 month	3a	Main distributor roads
6	Local Distributor Road	3 month	3b	Secondary distributor roads
7	Collector Road	6 month	4a	Local roads / interconnecting
8	Minor Collector Road	6 month		
9	Service Road	Annual	4b	Local access routes
10	Minor Service Road	Annual		
11	Minor Lane	Not Inspected	No Equivalent	
12	Track	Not Inspected		

**Table 1**

These frequencies have been determined based upon categories within the road maintenance hierarchy with due regard to traffic use, characteristics and trends. Additionally, other Oxfordshire County Council policies and objectives<sup>2</sup> - together with operational considerations - have been considered in the formulation of inspection routes.

Footway Hierarchy		Inspection Frequencies	National Code of Practice categories	
1A	Town Centres	1 month	1(a)	Prestige Area
1	Core Pedestrian Routes	1 month	1	Primary Walking Route
2	Local Pedestrian Routes	3 month	2	Secondary Walking Route
3 & 4	All other footways	Annual	3	Link Footway
			4	Local Access Footway

Cycleway Hierarchy		Inspection Frequencies	National Code of Practice categories	
A	Cycle routes in carriageway	As Carriageway	A	Part of Carriageway
B	Core Cycle Routes	3 month	B / C	Remote from Carriageway Cycle Trails
C	National Cycle Network	6 month		
D	Non-Core Cycle Routes	Annual		

**Table 2**

Note: The footway and cycleway network hierarchies are currently under review.

**Compliance with the frequency of inspection**

The compliance on the inspection cycle is provided in the following table:

Type of Inspection	Tolerance
1 Month Inspections	30 days from date of last inspection + or – 7 calendar days.
3 Month Inspections	90 days from date of last inspection + or – 14 calendar days.
6 Month Inspections	178 days from date of last inspection + or – 14 calendar days.
Annual inspections	1 year from date of last inspection + or – 28 calendar days.

**Table 3**

<sup>2</sup> Transport Asset Management Plan

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## Method of Inspection

### **By foot**

In urban areas where footways are present, the inspections are to be carried out on foot.

### **By vehicle**

In rural areas inspections are generally to be carried out from a conspicuous slow moving vehicle.

Driven inspections require a two person team. One person to drive the vehicle and the other to identify and record the defects found.

A risk assessment is required to highlight any sections of the highway network that demand the use of additional traffic management.

### **By bicycle**

Cycleways remote from the highway edge may be inspected by bicycle where appropriate.

All Safety Inspections must be carried out in accordance with approved Oxfordshire County Council Health and Safety policies and procedures.

## Items for Inspection

The items to be assessed during Highway Safety Inspections will include such assets or components as carriageway, footway, cycleway, verge, ironwork, fencing, signing, structures and other street furniture items.

A detailed list of the items inspected and the defects that may occur is contained within Oxfordshire County Council's current version of the Highway Safety Inspections Guidance Manual.

## Degree of Deficiency and Nature of Response

Whilst conducting safety inspections all observed defects that provide a risk to highway users should be recorded and a risk assessment undertaken to determine the level of response.

Additionally, some defects have also been allocated a minimum size below which they are not classified as safety defects. The authority may use this distinction to support the programming of minor works to protect the asset before a safety related issue arises.

The degree of deficiency in highway components is crucial in determining the nature and speed of response. The particular on-site circumstances need to be considered when making a judgement on the likely risk presented by a particular defect; for example, the degree of risk from a pothole relates not just to it's depth but also to it's area and location.

The Local Authority Code of Good Practice<sup>3</sup> defines defects in two categories;

- Category 1 - those that require prompt action because they represent an immediate or imminent hazard or because there is a risk of short term structural deterioration.
- Category 2 - all other defects

Oxfordshire County Council has adopted this approach but further sub-divided these categories into a hierarchy which reflects the required response times based upon the outcome of a risk assessment:

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<sup>3</sup> "Well- Maintained Highways" – Code of Practice for Highways Maintenance Management – July 2005 + updates

The priority of response that a defect is to be allocated is based upon risk assessment which considers impact against probability (likelihood).

$$\text{Risk Level} = \text{Risk Impact} \times \text{Risk Probability}$$

		PROBABILITY			
		VERY LOW	LOW	MEDIUM	HIGH
IMPACT	NEGLIGIBLE	1	2	3	4
	LOW	2	4	6	8
	NOTICEABLE	3	6	9	12
	HIGH	4	8	12	16

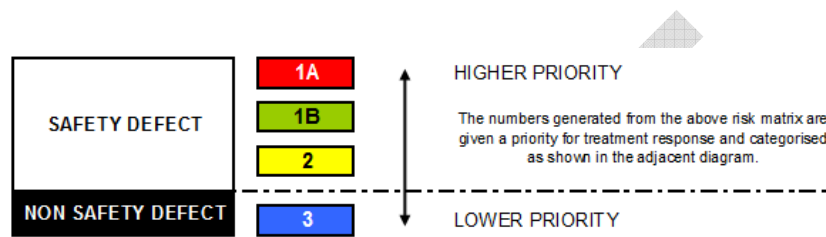


Figure 1

**Response Times**

Defects are categorised according to their risk level as identified from the risk matrix. They will be attended to within the following timescales:

- Category 1A defects: 2 hours
- Category 1B defects: 24 hours
- Category 2 defects: 28 days
- Category 3 defects: Programmed repair or monitor

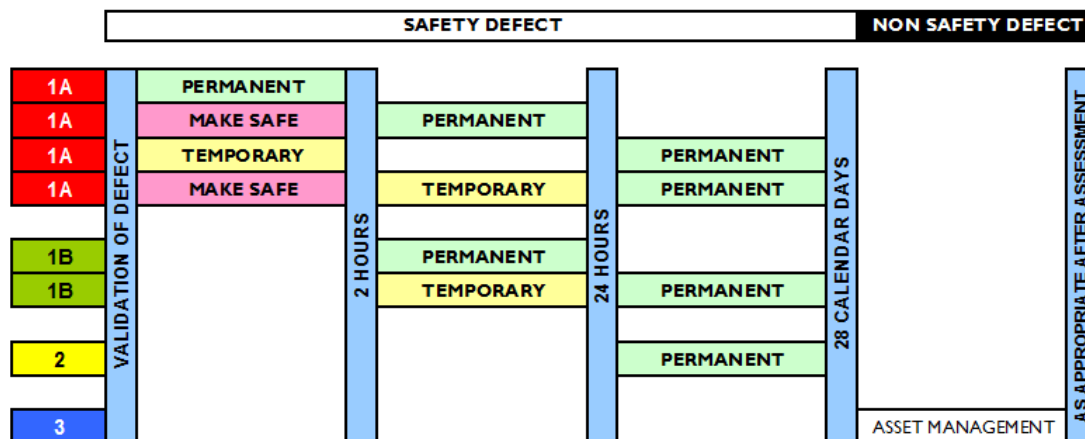


Figure 2

In general a permanent repair is preferred to rectify the defect, but in some instances this will not be possible. If a temporary repair is made, then the timescale allowed for a permanent repair is extended to the next response interval. However it will not be acceptable to leave an urgent defect with signing and guarding (i.e. an immediate “make safe” response) for 28 days without permanent repair.

With regard to this policy, a permanent repair is a repair that conforms to good practice and is fit for purpose (a service life in excess of 2 years from completion date irrespective of adverse weather and/or traffic).

The process for managing the recording of defects and the programming of their repair is contained within separate documents<sup>4 5 6</sup>.

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4 CM01 – Defect identification and repair – Category 1 & 2 safety defects

5 CM01A – Entry of Defects through CSC

6 CM08 – Management of non-safety defects

## **OXFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL**

### **Policy for Highway Safety Inspections**

#### **ANNEX B**

### **Highway Defect Investigatory Levels**

Activity Code	Inventory Item	Defect	SAFETY DEFECT			INVESTIGATORY LEVEL	Non-SAFETY
			1A	1B	2		
Minor Carriageway	Carriageway	Pothole	1A	1B	2	40mm depth   150mm diameter	3
Minor Carriageway	Carriageway	Multiple Potholes				RISK ASSESSED	3
Minor Carriageway	Carriageway	Flooding	DEALT WITH AS INCIDENT	1B	2	RISK ASSESSED	
Minor Carriageway	Carriageway	Standing Water		1B	2	RISK ASSESSED	
Minor Carriageway	Carriageway	Spillage		1B	2	RISK ASSESSED	
Minor Carriageway	Carriageway	Debris		1B	2	RISK ASSESSED	
Minor Carriageway	Carriageway	Open Joint	1A	1B	2	30mm gap   300mm length	3
Minor Carriageway	Carriageway	Cracking around ironwork			2	RISK ASSESSED	3
Minor Carriageway	Carriageway	Cracking	1A	1B	2	30mm gap   300mm length	3
Minor Carriageway	Carriageway	Crazing	1A	1B	2	RISK ASSESSED	3
Minor Carriageway	Carriageway	Uneven	1A	1B	2	RISK ASSESSED	3
Minor Carriageway	Carriageway	Fatting	1A	1B	2	RISK ASSESSED	3
Minor Carriageway	Carriageway	Loose slab / block	1A	1B	2	RISK ASSESSED	
Minor Carriageway	Carriageway	Missing slab / block	1A	1B	2	RISK ASSESSED	
Minor Carriageway	Carriageway	Rocking slab / block	1A	1B	2	RISK ASSESSED	
Minor Carriageway	Carriageway	Weed Growth			2	RISK ASSESSED	
Minor Carriageway	Carriageway	Obstruction	INCIDENT	1B		RISK ASSESSED	
Minor Carriageway	Carriageway	Edge Deterioration			2	40mm Depth   150mm diameter	3
Minor Carriageway	Carriageway	Difference in Level	1A	1B	2	25mm upstand	3
Minor Carriageway	Carriageway	Worn HFS			2	RISK ASSESSED	3
Minor Carriageway	Carriageway	Rutting			2	40mm depth	3
Minor Carriageway	Carriageway	General minor deterioration				RISK ASSESSED	3
Minor Carriageway	Carriageway	Damaged Coloured surfacing				RISK ASSESSED	3

Activity Code	Inventory Item	Defect	SAFETY DEFECT			INVESTIGATORY LEVEL	Non-SAFETY
			1A	1B	2		
Footways & Cycleways	Footway, Cycleway	Pothole	1A	1B	2	20mm depth   100mm diameter	3
Footways & Cycleways	Footway, Cycleway	Open Joint	1A	1B	2	20mm gap   200mm length	
Footways & Cycleways	Footway, Cycleway	Cracking around ironwork			2	RISK ASSESSED	
Footways & Cycleways	Footway, Cycleway	Difference in Level	1A	1B	2	20mm upstand	
Footways & Cycleways	Footway, Cycleway	Cracking	1A	1B	2	20mm gap   200mm length	3
Footways & Cycleways	Footway, Cycleway	Crazing	1A	1B	2	RISK ASSESSED	3
Footways & Cycleways	Footway, Cycleway	Slippery surface	1A	1B	2	RISK ASSESSED	3
Footways & Cycleways	Footway, Cycleway	Flooding	DEALT WITH AS INCIDENT	1B	2	RISK ASSESSED	
Footways & Cycleways	Footway, Cycleway	Standing Water		1B	2	RISK ASSESSED	
Footways & Cycleways	Footway, Cycleway	Spillage / Debris		1B	2		
Footways & Cycleways	Footway, Cycleway	Loose Slab / Block	1A	1B	2	RISK ASSESSED	
Footways & Cycleways	Footway, Cycleway	Missing Slab / Block	1A	1B	2	RISK ASSESSED	
Footways & Cycleways	Footway, Cycleway	Rocking Slab / Block	1A	1B	2	RISK ASSESSED	
Footways & Cycleways	Footway, Cycleway	Weed Growth			2	RISK ASSESSED	
Footways & Cycleways	Footway, Cycleway	Obstruction	INCIDENT	1B		RISK ASSESSED	



Activity Code	Inventory Item	Defect	SAFETY DEFECT			INVESTIGATORY LEVEL	Non-SAFETY
			1A	1B	2		3
Gullies and Covers	Gully, Ironwork, Manhole	Difference in Level	1A	1B	2	25mm upstand	
Gullies and Covers	Gully, Ironwork, Manhole	Difference in component levels	1A	1B	2	25mm upstand	
Gullies and Covers	Gully, Ironwork, Manhole	Rocking under load	1A	1B	2	RISK ASSESSED	
Gullies and Covers	Gully, Ironwork, Manhole	Missing	1A			RISK ASSESSED	
Gullies and Covers	Gully, Ironwork, Manhole	Parallel grating	1A	1B	2	RISK ASSESSED	
Gullies and Covers	Gully, Ironwork, Manhole	Smooth surface	1A	1B	2	RISK ASSESSED	
Gullies and Covers	Gully, Ironwork, Manhole	Damaged	1A	1B	2	RISK ASSESSED	

Activity Code	Inventory Item	Defect	SAFETY DEFECT			INVESTIGATORY LEVEL	Non-SAFETY
			1A	1B	2		3
Kerbs, Edgings and Channels	Kerb, Dropped Kerb, Channel	Loose / Rocking Module		1B	2	RISK ASSESSED	
Kerbs, Edgings and Channels	Kerb, Dropped Kerb, Channel	Damaged			2	RISK ASSESSED	
Kerbs, Edgings and Channels	Kerb, Dropped Kerb, Channel	Misaligned (single module)			2	25mm upstand	
Kerbs, Edgings and Channels	Kerb, Dropped Kerb, Channel	Uneven (run of modules)			2	25mm upstand	
Kerbs, Edgings and Channels	Kerb, Dropped Kerb, Channel	Missing	1A	1B	2	RISK ASSESSED	

Activity Code	Inventory Item	Defect	SAFETY DEFECT			INVESTIGATORY LEVEL	Non-SAFETY
			1A	1B	2		3
Highway Drainage	Gully, Catchpit, Interceptor, Grip, Ditch, Filter Drain	Blockage		1B	2	RISK ASSESSED	
Highway Drainage	Gully, Catchpit, Interceptor, Grip, Ditch, Filter Drain	Flooding	1A	1B	2	RISK ASSESSED	
Highway Drainage	Gully, Catchpit, Interceptor, Grip, Ditch, Filter Drain	Flood Nuisance to Property	1A	1B	2	RISK ASSESSED	

Activity Code	Inventory Item	Defect	SAFETY DEFECT			INVESTIGATORY LEVEL	Non-SAFETY
			1A	1B	2		3
Street Furniture	Bus Shelter, Bollard	Damaged / Unsafe	1A	1B	2	RISK ASSESSED	

Activity Code	Inventory Item	Defect	SAFETY DEFECT			INVESTIGATORY LEVEL	Non-SAFETY
			1A	1B	2		3
Grassed Areas	Verge, Visibility Splay, Embankment, Cutting	Inadequate Visibility	1A	1B	2	RISK ASSESSED	
Grassed Areas	Verge, Visibility Splay, Embankment, Cutting	Injurious weeds		1B	2	RISK ASSESSED	
Grassed Areas	Verge, Visibility Splay, Embankment, Cutting	Wheelrut		1B	2	RISK ASSESSED	

Activity Code	Inventory Item	Defect	SAFETY DEFECT			INVESTIGATORY LEVEL	Non-SAFETY 3
			1A	1B	2		
Trees	Tree	Unstable	DEALT WITH AS INCIDENT		2	RISK ASSESSED	
Trees	Tree	Dead Tree			2	RISK ASSESSED	
Trees	Tree	Dying / dead branch			2	RISK ASSESSED	
Trees	Tree	Overhanging branch			2	RISK ASSESSED	
Trees	Tree	Fallen branch			2	RISK ASSESSED	

Activity Code	Inventory Item	Defect	SAFETY DEFECT			INVESTIGATORY LEVEL	Non-SAFETY 3
			1A	1B	2		
Fences and Barriers	Safety Fence, Boundary Fence	Damaged Fence	DEALT WITH AS INCIDENT	1B	2	RISK ASSESSED	
Fences and Barriers	Safety Fence, Boundary Fence	Damaged Post		1B	2	RISK ASSESSED	
Fences and Barriers	Safety Fence, Boundary Fence	Missing		1B	2	RISK ASSESSED	
Fences and Barriers	Safety Fence, Boundary Fence	Accident damage		1B	2	RISK ASSESSED	

Activity Code	Inventory Item	Defect	SAFETY DEFECT			INVESTIGATORY LEVEL	Non-SAFETY 3
			1A	1B	2		
Road Studs	Road Stud	Damaged / Missing Cateye	1A	1B	2	RISK ASSESSED	
Road Studs	Road Stud	Damaged / Missing Stud	1A	1B	2	RISK ASSESSED	
Road Studs	Road Stud	Incorrect colour	1A	1B	2	RISK ASSESSED	

Activity Code	Inventory Item	Defect	SAFETY DEFECT			INVESTIGATORY LEVEL	Non-SAFETY 3
			1A	1B	2		
Road Marking	Longitudinal Line, Hatched Line, Special and Transverse Lines, Road Lettering	Worn			2	RISK ASSESSED	
Road Marking	Longitudinal Line, Hatched Line, Special and Transverse Lines, Road Lettering	Missing	1A	1B	2	RISK ASSESSED	
Road Marking	Longitudinal Line, Hatched Line, Special and Transverse Lines, Road Lettering	Incorrect	1A	1B	2	RISK ASSESSED	

Activity Code	Inventory Item	Defect	SAFETY DEFECT			INVESTIGATORY LEVEL	Non-SAFETY 3
			1A	1B	2		
Traffic Signal	Traffic Signal, Pedestrian Crossing	Damaged	DEALT WITH AS INCIDENT	1B	2	RISK ASSESSED	
Traffic Signal	Traffic Signal, Pedestrian Crossing	Signals obscured		1B	2	RISK ASSESSED	
Traffic Signal	Traffic Signal, Pedestrian Crossing	Signals stuck		1B	2	RISK ASSESSED	
Traffic Signal	Traffic Signal, Pedestrian Crossing	Lamp Failure		1B	2	RISK ASSESSED	

Activity Code	Inventory Item	Defect	SAFETY DEFECT			INVESTIGATORY LEVEL	Non-SAFETY
			1A	1B	2		3
Street Lighting / Electrical	Streetlight, illuminated bollard, Internally Illuminated Sign, External illuminated sign.	On during day			2	RISK ASSESSED	
Street Lighting / Electrical	Streetlight, illuminated bollard, Internally Illuminated Sign, External illuminated sign.	Broken lamp		1B	2	RISK ASSESSED	
Street Lighting / Electrical	Streetlight, illuminated bollard, Internally Illuminated Sign, External illuminated sign.	Exposed electrics	1A	1B		RISK ASSESSED	
Street Lighting / Electrical	Streetlight, illuminated bollard, Internally Illuminated Sign, External illuminated sign.	Accident damage	DEALT WITH AS INCIDENT			RISK ASSESSED	
Street Lighting / Electrical	Streetlight, illuminated bollard, Internally Illuminated Sign, External illuminated sign.	Lamp obscured		1B	2	RISK ASSESSED	
Street Lighting / Electrical	Streetlight, illuminated bollard, Internally Illuminated Sign, External illuminated sign.	Poor structural condition	DEALT WITH AS INCIDENT	1B	2	RISK ASSESSED	
Street Lighting / Electrical	Streetlight, illuminated bollard, Internally Illuminated Sign, External illuminated sign.	Missing	1A	1B	2	RISK ASSESSED	
Street Lighting / Electrical	Streetlight, illuminated bollard, Internally Illuminated Sign, External illuminated sign.	Shell damaged/missing	1A	1B	2	RISK ASSESSED	

Activity Code	Inventory Item	Defect	SAFETY DEFECT			INVESTIGATORY LEVEL	Non-SAFETY
			1A	1B	2		3
Utility Defect	N/A	Section 81	1A	1B	2	RISK ASSESSED	
Utility Defect	N/A	Reinstatement	1A	1B	2	RISK ASSESSED	
Utility Defect	N/A	Excavation	1A	1B		RISK ASSESSED	
Utility Defect	N/A	Leak	INCIDENT			RISK ASSESSED	
Utility Defect	N/A	Signing and Guarding	1A	1B		RISK ASSESSED	
Utility Defect	N/A	Other	1A	1B	2	RISK ASSESSED	

Activity Code	Inventory Item	Defect	SAFETY DEFECT			INVESTIGATORY LEVEL	Non-SAFETY
			1A	1B	2		3
Structures	Bridge under, Bridge over, Subway, Embankment / Cutting, Retaining Wall	Bridge Strike	DEALT WITH AS INCIDENT			RISK ASSESSED	
Structures	Bridge under, Bridge over, Subway, Embankment / Cutting, Retaining Wall	Damaged parapet	DEALT WITH AS INCIDENT			2	RISK ASSESSED
Structures	Bridge under, Bridge over, Subway, Embankment / Cutting, Retaining Wall	Abutment settlement			2	RISK ASSESSED	
Structures	Bridge under, Bridge over, Subway, Embankment / Cutting, Retaining Wall	Expansion Joint failure			2	RISK ASSESSED	
Structures	Bridge under, Bridge over, Subway, Embankment / Cutting, Retaining Wall	Crack	DEALT WITH AS INCIDENT			2	RISK ASSESSED
Structures	Bridge under, Bridge over, Subway, Embankment / Cutting	Slip	DEALT WITH AS INCIDENT			2	RISK ASSESSED
Structures	Bridge under, Bridge over, Subway, Embankment / Cutting, Retaining Wall	Bulge	DEALT WITH AS INCIDENT			2	RISK ASSESSED

Activity Code	Inventory Item	Defect	SAFETY DEFECT			INVESTIGATORY LEVEL	Non-SAFETY
			1A	1B	2		3
Signs	non-illuminated sign, markerpost	Faded Sign	1A	1B	2	RISK ASSESSED	
Signs	non-illuminated sign, markerpost	Missing Sign	1A	1B	2	RISK ASSESSED	
Signs	non-illuminated sign, markerpost	Damaged Post	1A	1B	2	RISK ASSESSED	
Signs	non-illuminated sign, markerpost	Damaged Sign	1A	1B	2	RISK ASSESSED	
Signs	non-illuminated sign, markerpost	Obscured Sign	1A	1B	2	RISK ASSESSED	
Signs	non-illuminated sign, markerpost	Accident Damage	1A	1B	2	RISK ASSESSED	
Signs	non-illuminated sign, markerpost	Misaligned	1A	1B	2	RISK ASSESSED	
Signs	non-illuminated sign, markerpost	Unauthorized Sign	1A	1B	2	RISK ASSESSED	
Signs	non-illuminated sign, markerpost	Sign Face Dirty/Graffiti	1A	1B	2	RISK ASSESSED	