

By: Nick Chard- Cabinet Member for Environment, Highways and Waste  
Mike Austerberry- Executive Director Environment, Highways and Waste  
John Burr, Director- Kent Highway Services

To: Cabinet – 12<sup>th</sup> July 2010

Subject: OPERATION FIND AND FIX- WEATHER DAMAGE REPAIRS TO ROADS

Classification: Unrestricted

---

Summary: Operation Find and Fix- Update to Cabinet on the progress with delivering repairs to roads, both with externally tendered contractors and the County's Maintenance Contractor.

---

### **Executive Summary – External find and fix (Non classified roads)**

Completed (up to 22<sup>nd</sup> June) = 57,000m<sup>2</sup>

Cost (up to 22<sup>nd</sup> June) = £2.3m

Estimated total required = 170,000m<sup>2</sup>

Estimated completion date = early autumn 2010

Total estimated budget required = £6.5m

Total estimated costs of arranging, managing and supervising = £320k (5%)

### **Background**

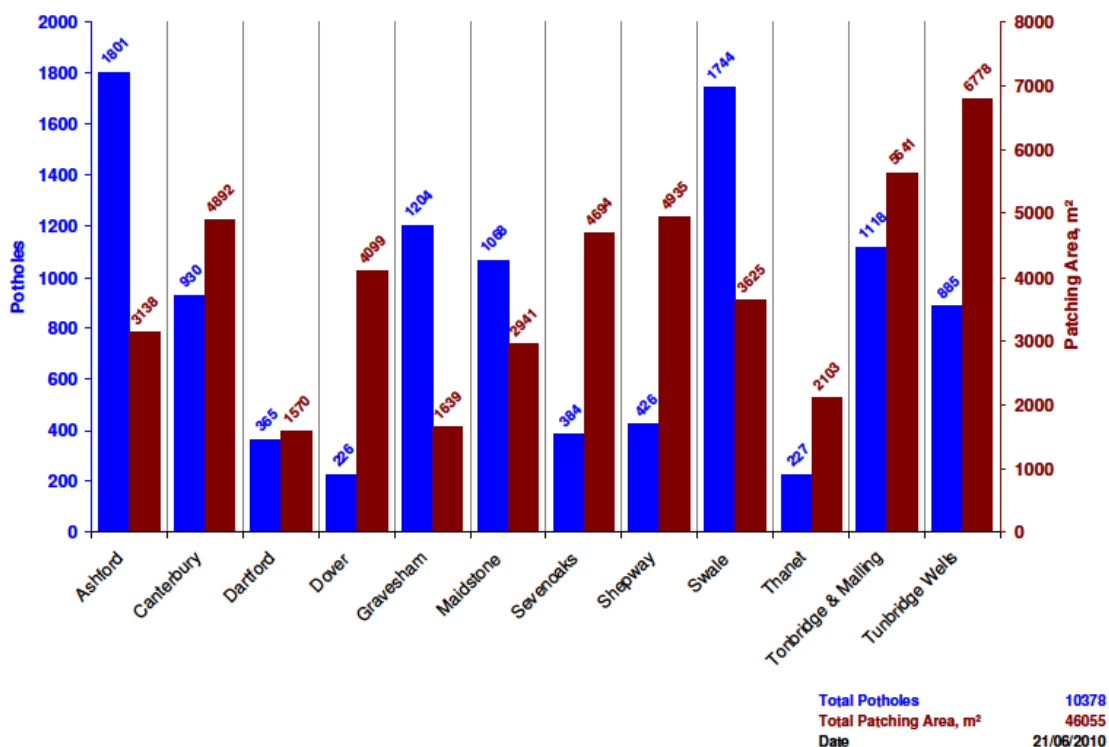
As part of the response to the unprecedented damage to the roads in Kent following the severe winter, KHS has been working to make all the roads in the county safe (in particular with repairs to potholes) and improve the condition of the carriageway surface. Previous cabinet papers have given updates on the delivery of repairs by the seven companies who were awarded contracts on 12<sup>th</sup> April to repair all the potholes, and carry out larger patching maintenance work, in the non-principal road network throughout each district with a first time permanent repair. This report (as requested at the 17<sup>th</sup> May 2010 Cabinet) gives an update on these contracts and also details how other roads are being repaired in relation to the weather damage.

## External Find and Fix Progress (Non classified roads)

The contractors work on a “find and fix” basis using up to 5 separate gangs (and more in extreme cases) in each district, according to the size of the district. The contractors are able to work up to 7 days a week between 7am and 7pm. Kent Highway Services officers deploy the contractors, giving instructions to ensure the highest priority areas in each district are targeted first, and moving progressively to roads with a lesser volume of repair need. The programme of works is available to all members and members of the public via the KCC website.

The focus is on the county’s non-principal roads, particularly the rural and estate roads which make up 71% of the total of the network. Other work is continuing in parallel, as appropriate and in particular critical safety defects, through the term maintenance contractor, Ringway.

After 10 weeks of the programme (up to 22<sup>nd</sup> June) some 57,000m<sup>2</sup> of repairs (equivalent to almost 46 Olympic size swimming pools) have been completed.



Due to the approach of repairing **all** defects in a road, rather than simply those that are considered most critical to the safe passage of road users, the amount of patching in each road is almost 6 times greater that we would anticipate undertaking against normal “intervention” criteria. This inevitably means that each road takes longer to repair, however from the positive feedback received, this is clearly an approach that people favour.

At the current rate of repair, it is envisaged that the programme will be completed in early autumn.

### **Building on investment**

KHS is planning to increase its programme for surface dressing rural roads over the coming 2 – 3 years, to be financed through re-prioritisation of existing capital maintenance spend. This will ensure that the significant investment made through the find and fix programme is protected over the coming years.

### **A and B Roads**

The A and B roads across the county have continued to be repaired based on safety defects found by inspectors and reported by the public. However, to ensure that we are certain that all potholes are repaired, Ringway embarked in mid-June on a countywide programme to fix all defects on the A and B road network. Additional gangs are taking the same approach to the non-classified roads; that is, to repair all pothole defects in a road from start to finish. The roads have been programmed, and one to two days prior to the works starting an assessment of the road is made. This allows the correct method and machinery to be deployed to ensure efficiency and reduced disruption to the public (bearing in mind that these roads are more heavily trafficked). This process has been planned, with the programme of works available to all Members and members of the public via the KCC website. The works will take approximately 3 months (to early autumn) to complete.

### **Next Steps**

The Cabinet report in May recommended that the budget for the external find and fix, non classified roads should be increased to £3.4m.

The find and fix approach is clearly showing favour with many people, however with the rate of repair significantly higher than normal (due to the high level of winter damage, and increased intervention levels as explained), the cost is greater.

We have continued to repair many of the county's worst roads and although there is still more to do, progress is good. On a find and fix approach it is inherently difficult to estimate the additional sums needed to complete the task. It is expected that the spend per road will start reducing as the project moves away from the worst roads to those with fewer defects. In the smaller sized districts there is already evidence of this. An overall assessment of the remaining work load suggests that we would require £6.5m to complete the programme (£3.1m additional to the already approved £3.4m).

KHS has been able to find approximately £1.5m towards this through efficiencies it has achieved in the market testing of machine surfacing works, and it is

proposed that Cabinet consider making an additional £1.5m available to complete the find and fix task across the county's network.

Beyond the completion of this task, any new safety critical potholes, or further deterioration of the road network not evident when the find and fix teams visited, will still be funded from within the KHS core budget and repaired using the permanent repair crews.

### **Recommendations**

1. Cabinet note the progress on the external find and fix programme (non-classified roads).
2. Cabinet agree to allocate an additional £1.5m to this programme at this stage.
3. Cabinet note and support the approach to A and B road repairs.

Lead Officer: John Burr ext- 4192