



Sandwell
Metropolitan Borough Council

Local Highways Maintenance Transparency Report - Technical Annex 2026-27

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B1 - Highways maintenance funding and spending figures

B1.1 – Capital funding allocation sources

Financial year	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27 (projected)
Highways maintenance capital funding allocated through DfT	£5,250,300	£8,436,590	£6,522,832
Other DfT capital funding utilised by local authority for highways maintenance	£9,848	£88,375	£0
Other Government capital funding allocated by local authority to Highways Maintenance	£ 0	£ 0	£ 0
Other capital funding allocated to highways maintenance	£2,694,000	£5,475,000	£4,475,000
Total Capital funding allocated to highways maintenance	£7,954,148	£13,999,965	£10,997,832

B1.1.2 - Additional information on funding figures

As a member of the West Midlands Combined Authority, Sandwell receives its baseline highways maintenance funding allocation from Central Government via the Combined Authority (CA). The funding is part of the City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement (CRSTS). In addition, government funding has been received for each of the past three financial years through various funds, such as the Network North Fund, Incentive Fund and through reallocation of local transport funding.

Alongside our baseline allocation for each of the past three financial years, the Council has allocated additional funding to meet the gap between the funding received from Central Government and the funding required to maintain the highway network in a steady state condition. This additional Council funded maintenance investment demonstrates how highway maintenance a priority for the authority.

Sandwell is also part of the DfT Live Labs 2 Project and the Carbon Leadership Programme, which looks to measure carbon emissions associated with the highways service and trial new materials or repair methods. The authority has received small amounts of funding through these projects, to trial innovative preservation treatments and pothole repair materials.



B1.2 - Spending

B1.2.1 – Total spending –

The questions in this section (B1.2.1) relate to the spending condition set out in the 2026–27 [local highways maintenance incentive funding requirements](#). Completion of this section forms part of the evidence required to meet this incentive funding condition.

Please confirm that you understand the answers provided in this section (B1.2.1) relate to your compliance under the 2026-27 local highways maintenance incentive funding requirements, as set out to your authority via letter to your chief executive in April and as published online .	Yes
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Financial year	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27 (projected)
Total highways maintenance capital spend	£7,954,148	£13,999,965	£10,997,832
Total highways maintenance revenue spend	£6,538,719	£5,173,617	£6,667,492
Total spend	£14,492,867	£19,173,582	£17,665,324

B1.2.2 - Additional information on total spending figures

Sandwell use a combination of both capital and revenue funding to maintain its highway network. Capital funding is used on planned structural and preventative maintenance activities, such as resurfacing, structural maintenance, drainage improvements, and other works to extend asset life. Revenue funding mainly used to cover day-to-day activity required to maintain the network in a safe and serviceable condition, including activities such as defect repairs, routine maintenance, and gully cleansing. However, some revenue funding is also allocated to planned and preventative maintenance activities, supporting our 'prevention is better than cure approach.'



B1.2.3 Spending on carriageways by type of spend in financial year 2025-26 and 2026-27 (projected)

Carriageway spend related maintenance type	Capital 2025-26	Revenue 2025-26	Capital 2026-27 (projected)	Revenue 2026-27 (projected)
Planned maintenance				
Preventative carriageway maintenance	£4,420,105	£354,482	£4,354,526	£364,227
Structural carriageway maintenance	£3,540,043	£2,989,493	£3,487,521	£2,945,139
Reactive carriageway maintenance				
Reactive carriageway repairs / patching (total)	£0	£435,523	£0	£450,000
Other carriageway-related spend	£364,707	£0	£355,937	£0
Total	£8,324,855	£3,779,498	£8,197,984	£3,759,366

B1.2.4 - Additional information on spending on carriageways by type of spend.

The preventative carriageway maintenance spend includes expenditure on preventative carriageway treatments and preparatory patching, along with spend on routine drainage and gully cleansing. Structural carriageway maintenance spend includes the cost of planned structural treatments, such as resurfacing, reconstruction and planned patching.

The reactive carriageway repairs and patching spend is not routinely split by temporary and permanent repairs, a total figure has been provided which covers both permanent and temporary reactive repairs and patching.

Other carriageway-related spend includes the expenditure on carriageway condition surveys and associated analysis, along with winter maintenance expenditure.



B2 – Highway Maintenance Activity (Surface Treatments and Repairs)

B2.1 – Road resurfacing and surface treatments –

Financial year	Road receiving preventative road surface treatments (length, km)	Road receiving planned structural maintenance (length, km)	Area receiving planned repair / patching programmes	Area receiving reactive repair / patching (permanent methods)	Area receiving reactive repairs/ patching (temporary methods)
2025-26	46.41 km	20.86km	7183m ²	Not recorded m ²	Not recorded m ²
2026-27 projected	46km	19km	6270 m ²	n/a	n/a

B2.1.1 – additional information on surface treatments and repairs

Does table B2.1 reflect all your carriageway-related road surface treatments & repair activities (for example, including pothole repairs)? If no , please add further information on any other types of treatments (planned to be) delivered and their extent in the table below.	Yes
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B2.1.2 – Further information and context

The lengths and areas provided for the 2025-26 financial year are based on Sandwell's 2026-27 DfT carriageway work done returns. Each year we report the length and area of treatments carried out in the previous financial year to the DfT as part of our statutory returns.

The projected lengths and areas provided for 2026-27 are based on the lengths of maintenance works carried out so far, plus an estimate of the proposed lengths and areas we plan or expect to complete before the end of the financial year and represents around 8% of the carriageway network receiving planned maintenance.

Sandwell's reactive maintenance works do not record measurement of the area of carriageway receiving treatment, so this information is unavailable and as it is demand led it cannot be reliably estimated.

The carriageway lengths have been calculated using the methodology used to complete the DfT carriageway work done returns.



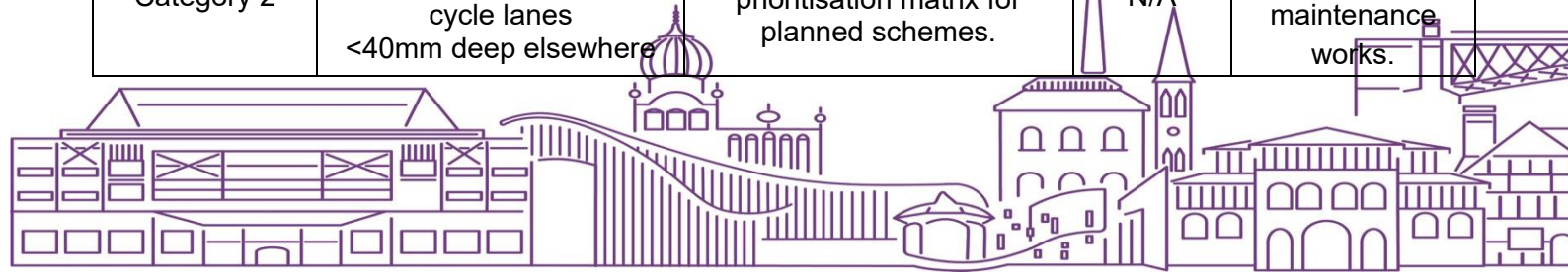
B3 – Pothole repairs

This section sets out how authorities identify and repair potholes and other defects in carriageways, and how this activity fits within their wider maintenance approach. The Department is clear that prevention is better than cure: planned, preventative maintenance should be the foundation of a well-managed network, reducing the need for repeated reactive interventions.

B3.1 – Pothole/Defect intervention criteria

Sandwell categorise defects or deterioration into one of three categories using a risk-based approach. The approach uses investigatory levels as part of the assessment, whilst also taking into consideration other risk and contextual factors. The table below outlines the different categories of defects, response times, and examples of what factors we take into consideration.

Pothole/Defect category name (as used by your authority)	Minimum investigatory or definitional threshold (e.g. depth, area, width – include units)	Additional risk or contextual factors considered (e.g. road hierarchy, traffic levels, location in carriageway)	Target response time – make safe	Target response time – permanent repair
Category 1 – Immediate Hazard	>20mm deep within pedestrian crossings and cycle lanes >40mm elsewhere and/or Defect presents immediate hazard to highway users i.e. missing covers/gully grating or extreme carriageway failure.	A risk-based approach is applied based on likelihood and consequence of failure. This takes into consideration factors such as carriageway hierarchy, traffic volume, speed limit, location in carriageway and presence of cycling or pedestrian crossing infrastructure.	2 hours	Sandwell aims to complete permanent repairs at the earliest opportunity, with 6 months representing the maximum period.
Category 1 – Imminent Hazard	>20mm deep within pedestrian crossings and cycle lanes >40mm elsewhere	A risk-based approach is applied based on likelihood and consequence of failure. This takes into consideration factors such as carriageway hierarchy, traffic volume, speed limit, location in carriageway and presence of cycling or pedestrian crossing infrastructure.	5 Days	Sandwell aims to complete permanent repairs at the earliest opportunity, with 6 months representing the maximum period.
Category 2	<20mm deep within pedestrian crossings and cycle lanes <40mm deep elsewhere	Prioritised using risk prioritisation matrix for planned schemes.	N/A	Passed for planned maintenance works.



B3.2 – Number of potholes filled.

B3.2.1 - Number of potholes filled in 2025-26 (estimate)	1,703
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B3.2.2 - Of these how many do you estimate were resolved using each of the following approaches?

Planned repair / patching programmes	Planned structural maintenance programmes	Reactive repair using temporary repair methods	Reactive repair using permanent repair methods
142	190	Not recorded	1371

B3.2.3 - Additional information on numbers of potholes resolved, by treatment type.

Sandwell aim to apply a permanent repair to all actionable reactive maintenance defects identified, however in some instances we may, due to operational or safety considerations, carry out a temporarily repair before returning to complete a permanent repair.

The number of potholes filled through planned structural or patching repairs is not routinely recorded. Therefore, an estimate based on the number of sub-sections which contain 'pothole' as a defect type in our condition survey data and have then subsequently been treated as part of our 2025-26 planned maintenance programmes has been provided.

The figures provided only relate to potholes, the authority also repaired 598 other carriageway defects through reactive operations during 2025-26. Along with other defective areas of carriageway through planned maintenance programmes.

CAUTION FOR READERS – Authorities have different criteria for identifying potholes and different methodologies for counting how many they have filled or resolved. Summing the figures in the above table across authorities will therefore not provide a reliable estimate of the total number of potholes filled across England.



B3.3 - Prices of pothole interventions

Unit/average cost of a permanent pothole repair on your network (reactive)	£68.45	Unit/average cost of a temporary pothole repair on your network (reactive)	£58.67
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B3.3.1 - Additional information on pothole prices

The average cost of a permanent and temporary pothole repair in Sandwell is based on the cost of labour, materials and machinery used for each type of repair. Generally small defects are permanently or temporarily repaired using handheld machinery, whereas larger areas of localised deterioration are repaired using our MultiHog planer.

The authority aims to carry out a permanent first-time repair to carriageway defects, however in some instances, due to operational or safety considerations, a temporary repair is completed to make the defect safe, before we can return to complete a permanent repair.

Sandwell has also recently procured an in-house asphalt recycler to re-use planings from our maintenance works. This has significantly reduced material costs associated with these works, whilst also reducing associated carbon emissions and the use of virgin aggregates.

B3.4 - Defect repair quality

ID	Question	
3.4.1	Do you set requirements to those delivering repairs about the longevity of both a) planned repairs/patching and b) reactive repairs using permanent methods?	Yes
3.4.2	If yes, do you base your material and process specifications on these longevity requirements?	Yes
3.4.3	Do you regularly monitor the appropriateness of the carriageway interventions chosen by your workforce or contractor and the quality of work delivered?	Yes
3.4.4	If yes, do you systematically record information about expected and delivered longevity of repairs?	No

B3.4.5 - Evidence Summary

Although Sandwell does not record the service life of each individual reactive or planned maintenance repair carried out on its carriageway network. The authority sets standards through training of our workforce and regularly monitor the quality of the works carried out to ensure they are completed to a high standard. This in turn ensures repairs are durable and long lasting. Planned works by contractors are supported by guarantee periods, with remedial works carried out to rectify any issues which arise. Condition of the network is monitored through inspections, supervision, and annual condition surveys, enabling the early identification of any issues with quality.

Material specifications are developed for planned maintenance schemes based on ensuring the longevity of treatments, with examples such as using different binders that provide greater resilience to higher temperatures.



B3.4.6 - Additional information

Sandwell deliver reactive maintenance works as a direct labour organisation. This enables us to continually monitor firsthand the quality of the repairs being carried out by our workforce and is supported by routine and refresher training where required.

Planned maintenance is delivered by external contractors and all works have a guarantee period of two years. This requires contractors to carry out remedial works if treatments fail within the specified period. The works are also supervised during construction and monitored following completion, ensuring a high standard of work is delivered and that any remedial works are carried out promptly, where issues arise.

B3.5 - Public reporting system for defects and other issues

ID	Question	Answer
3.5.1	Are defect reports from the public routinely used as an input into maintenance planning and inspection regimes?	Yes
3.5.2	Do you inform users about the outcomes from their feedback, including when no action is to be taken?	Yes

B3.5.3 - Evidence Summary

Sandwell utilise reactive maintenance location data collected through our routine and ad-hoc highway safety inspections, alongside other risk factors, to prioritise our planned maintenance programmes. This is outlined in our scheme prioritisation matrix, which is used to rank the schemes identified from our carriageway condition data each year. This process ensures public reports contribute to risk-based prioritisation and forward programme development.

When a customer reports a defect or other issue to the authority, the issue is inspected and if contact details have been provided, the customer is informed of the outcome, including where no action is to be taken.

B3.5.4 - Tools used for reporting.

Sandwell uses a web-based reporting platform to enable stakeholders to report highway defects, which is available through our website. The tool captures information such as location, description, and images, and integrates each report through an API into the authority's asset management system for assessment and action.

<https://www.sandwell.gov.uk/potholes>

Stakeholders have the opportunity to sign up to MySandwell, which allows them to track their requests and see the current status.

Alongside this, we offer several other methods of reporting highway defects, using both traditional and digital forms.



B4 – Maintenance of highway structures

Please set out information about other highway structures and assets

B4.1 Highway Structures

ID	Question	Answer
4.1.1	Number of highway structures on your highway network	738
4.1.2	Number of highway structures with interim measures in accordance with CS470 applied?	0
4.1.3	Number of structures due a General Inspection in 2025-26 in accordance with CS450	48
4.1.4	Number of General Inspections carried out in 2025-26	48
4.1.5	Number of structures due a Principal Inspection in 2025-26 in accordance with CS450	30
4.1.6	Number of Principal Inspections carried out in 2025-26	30

B4.1.1 - Additional Information

Sandwell has an inventory of 114 bridges, 31 culverts, 4 tunnels, 579 retaining walls and 10 subways. The programme of general and principal structural inspections carried out relate to bridges, culverts, tunnels, and subways only.

The retaining walls and other structures assets are monitored as part of our routine highway safety inspections, with any safety concerns raised with the structures engineer for further investigation.



B5 – Asset Management

This section focuses on asset management practices that underpin how the authority plans, prioritises, and delivers highways maintenance. It is intended to provide confidence that decisions are evidence led, risk based and aligned to whole life value, in line with the Code of Practice for Well Managed Highways Infrastructure.

B5.1 - Asset Management Strategy and Policy

The questions in this section (B5.1) relate to the asset management condition set out in the 2026–27 [local highways maintenance incentive funding requirements](#).

Completion of this section forms part of the evidence required to meet this incentive funding condition.

5.1.1	Please confirm that you understand the answers provided in this section (B5.1) relate to your compliance under the 2026-27 local highways maintenance incentive funding requirements, as set out to your authority via letter to your chief executive in April and as published online.	Yes
5.1.2	Please provide a link to your authority's published highways asset management policy and strategy.	
	Asset Management Plan Sandwell Council	
5.1.3	Please provide the date it was last reviewed or updated	May 2025
5.1.4	Please provide proof of the review or update.	
	Link to Cabinet Approval - sandwell.moderngov.co.uk/ieDecisionDetails.aspx?AllId=7824	
5.1.5	If your asset management policy or strategy has not been reviewed or updated since 1 August 2024, please confirm that it will be reviewed or updated by 30 September 2027 and provide a brief timetable for doing so.	
	N/A	

B5.1.6 - Further context

Sandwell updated and approved its latest Highway Asset Management Policy and Plan in May 2025. A further review is anticipated following release of the updated 'Well-Managed Highway Infrastructure' Code of Practice. This will ensure the policy and plans align with any changes to the guidance and recommendations.



Key aspects of highways asset management approach

B5.2 - Asset data

Asset type	Asset inventory held (None / partial / full)	Condition data held (None / Partial / Full)
Carriageways	Full	Full
Footways and cycleways	Full	Full
Structures	Partial	Partial
Drainage assets	Partial	Partial
Street lighting	Full	Full
Traffic signals	Full	Full

5.2.1 - Further context

Sandwell has a full inventory and condition data for bridges, tunnels, culverts, and subways, with partial inventory and condition data for retaining walls.

The authority holds a full inventory of drainage gullies with condition of the assets assessed as part of our routine programme of cleansing. Alongside this we hold a partial inventory and condition of the associated carrier drains, pipework, and outfalls. New, amended, or re-surveyed drainage assets are captured and added to our inventory through CCTV surveys, improvement schemes, and third-party works.

B5.3 – Asset data integration and management

B5.3.1 – Asset data integration

How is asset inventory and condition data for your key highway assets primarily managed?

Discrete spreadsheets or documents held by individual teams	
Multiple digital platforms with limited integration	
A single digital platform or a set of connected platforms used across the highways service	X
Other (please set out in further context)	

B5.3.2 - Further context

The authority has a central asset management system, which maintains the inventory and condition data for the majority of assets. Alongside this, there are several digital platforms that help us to maintain specific assets, such as drainage and street lighting.

The authority is in the process of transitioning to a new asset management system which will integrate the majority of platforms into one highways asset management platform. Whilst still retaining a limited number of platforms required to manage specific assets.



B5.4 – Lifecycle planning and investment decision-making.

This section focuses on whether the authority uses **lifecycle planning** to inform maintenance investment decisions, rather than relying solely on reactive demand or short-term pressures.

ID	Question	Yes / No
5.4.1	Do you use lifecycle plans for carriageways to support maintenance investment decisions?	Yes
5.4.2	Do you use lifecycle plans for footways to support maintenance investment decisions?	Yes
5.4.3	Do you use lifecycle plans for structures to support investment decisions?	Yes

B5.4.4 - Evidence Summary

Sandwell has well developed lifecycle plans for both carriageway and footway assets, based on up-to-date asset condition data. They enable us to identifying whole-life costs of different maintenance strategies, supporting long-term financial planning and investment decisions, whilst also identifying the optimum balance of preventative, renewal and reactive treatments that result in optimum performance of the network.

The lifecycle modelling outputs define the asset deterioration profile, assess different intervention strategies and timings of maintenance and renewal activities across the asset's life. They form a core component of Sandwell's risk-based asset management approach, enabling the authority to optimise outcomes for network condition, safety, carbon emissions, and value for money over the longer term.

A lifecycle model for our structures assets has also been developed utilising the SAVI toolkit. This enables the authority to develop short- and long-term asset management plans, whilst also modelling the impacts of different funding allocations and intervention strategies, enabling an optimised strategic asset management plan to secure appropriate levels of funding and identify the optimal maintenance strategy.



B5.5 – Performance monitoring and continuous improvement

This section focuses on whether the authority monitors the effectiveness of its asset management approach and uses performance information to inform ongoing investment and prioritisation decisions.

ID	Question	Answer
5.5.1	Do you have a defined set of key performance indicators (KPIs) to monitor the outcomes of your highway's asset management approach?	Yes
5.5.2	Are these KPIs reviewed on a regular basis (at least annually)?	Yes
5.5.3	Are KPI trends used to inform maintenance planning, prioritisation or changes to forward programmes or investment decisions?	Yes
5.5.4	Have you conducted a value for money review or peer review of your service in the last 3 years	Yes

B5.5.5 - Evidence Summary

Sandwell has a performance management framework which contains both operational and corporate key performance indicators (KPI). KPIs are monitored on a regular basis, (at least annually), with some reviewed on a quarterly or monthly basis. Trends are routinely reviewed and used to inform investment decisions and changes to forward programmes of work. A recent example is a business case taken to Cabinet for enhanced funding to focus on maintenance of footways and unclassified roads.

Participation in the NHT CQC Value for Money strand confirms that Sandwell compares well when normalised costs of highway maintenance are compared. Utilisation of regional framework contracts through competitive tendering supports value for money. This sits alongside our regional benchmarking of asset condition indicators and monthly regional pavement management group meetings with other local authorities to share best practice, experiences, and knowledge.



B6 - Maintaining footways and cycleways.

ID	Question	Answer
6.1.1	Do you have a defined footway hierarchy (e.g. based on footway function and usage levels) that underpins a risk-based approach to inspection frequencies and maintenance programmes?	Yes
6.1.2	For 2026-27, please provide the length of footways that you have earmarked for structural maintenance / reconstruction / renewal	5.9 km
6.1.3	For 2026-27, please provide the length of footways that you have earmarked for preventative maintenance treatments	64 km
6.1.4	Are priority footways and cycleways included in your winter service (e.g. gritting or snow clearance), and in a routine programme for keeping them clear of overgrown vegetation and debris (e.g. sweeping, cutting back)?	Yes
6.1.5	For 2026-27, are you planning to deliver structural or preventative maintenance to cycleways which is not yet covered as part of your carriageway maintenance programmes or footway maintenance programmes (e.g. segregated cycleways that are not shared with pedestrians or motorists). If yes, please set out the length of such cycleways that you have earmarked for:	Yes
	a. Structural maintenance / reconstruction (in km)	1.56 km
	b. Preventative maintenance treatments (in km)	0 km

B6.1.6 - Please provide any brief additional information you consider helpful in explaining your approach to maintaining footways and cycleways.

The authority manages the borough's footway network using our Asset Management System, which contains asset inventory records, inspection and maintenance history and condition data. A data-led approach utilising condition data and lifecycle modelling outputs is used to develop programmes of work, maintenance strategies, and support investment decisions each year. A prevention is better than cure approach is used, with a mix of preventative and structural treatments aiming to reduce the occurrence of defects and prolong the life of the asset.

The routine maintenance of footways such as street cleansing and vegetation maintenance is carried out to maintain the street scene, with winter maintenance operations helping to maintain the use of prestige footways and on-carriageway cycleways during winter conditions. With the increase of segregated cycleways through the Active Travel Fund, a review is planned to assess how best to treat these during winter conditions.



B6.1.7 - Evidence Summary

The authorities UKPMS network contains the footway hierarchy for each section of footway, with the hierarchical structure outlined in the authorities Highways Asset Management Plan. Footway hierarchies are based on use and function of a section and are used to set inspection frequencies and prioritise maintenance activities. Footway treatment lengths are based on current planned footway maintenance programmes for the 2026-27 financial year.

The Sandwell MBC Winter Maintenance Operational Plan outlines how we grit priority footways and on-carriageway cycleways during winter conditions. A programme of weed spraying, sweeping and vegetation maintenance is also carried out to maintain footways across the borough.

As part of a scheme associated with the Active Travel Fund, a section of existing segregated cycleway along the A4123, New Birmingham Road, is due to be resurfaced, which is approximately 1.56km in length.



B7 – Drainage

ID	Question	Answer
7.1.1	Please provide an estimate of your drainage maintenance expenditure split (in percentages) between:	
	a) Reactive (incident- or failure-driven) maintenance	47%
	b) Planned maintenance (routine/cyclical and/or risk-based)	53%
7.1.2	Does your authority utilise a digital drainage management platform, covering asset inventory, inspection history, sensor data, and risk scoring?	Yes
7.1.3	Do you maintain a record of locations where drainage issues are known to cause or contribute to carriageway deterioration or surface water ponding?	Yes
7.1.4	Do you utilise smart sensors or other remote monitoring technologies to monitor performance of your drainage assets. If yes, please provide some high-level information in bullet points below	Yes
	Three telemetry systems are installed at our pumping stations. They monitor and send alerts to officers when incidents occur, such as intruder alarms, wet well high and pump tripped.	

B7.1.5 - Evidence Summary

The authority manages highway drainage through KaarbonTech's Gully SMART digital drainage management platform, which contains mapped asset records, inspection and maintenance history, known drainage-related deterioration and drainage locations, and risk-information. Maintenance planning is supported by asset data, inspection findings, operational experience, and engineering judgement, with reactive intervention undertaken where required. Supporting evidence includes Gully SMART asset inventories, inspection and cleansing records, maintenance histories, planned and reactive works records, and maps or reports identifying recurring problem locations.

Sensor records and alerts also demonstrate how remote monitoring supports maintenance and operational resilience of our pump stations, using HydroMaster remote monitoring tools to alert officers when issues arise.

B7.1.6 – Further context on approach to drainage asset management

Sandwell adopts a risk-based, evidence-led approach to drainage asset management using KaarbonTech's Gully SMART platform. Recorded asset information, inspection and maintenance history, known problem locations, operational experience, and engineering judgement are used to inform priorities and programme frequencies. Assets with recurring blockage, poor condition or greater potential consequence may receive more frequent inspection and maintenance, while lower-risk assets may be managed at a proportional interval supported by their recorded history. Asset information continues to improve through routine inspections, targeted surveys, capital schemes, and reactive investigations, helping direct available resource towards the locations presenting the greatest identified risk.



B8 – Skills and training

ID	Question	Answer
8.1.1	Do you have an up-to-date training and development plan for those responsible for highways asset management in your authority?	Yes
8.1.2	Do you or your main highways contractors support professional development through a recognised professional training scheme (e.g. Institution of Civil Engineers (ICE) or Institution of Highway Engineers (IHE))?	Yes
8.1.3	Does your authority contribute towards the cost of professional membership or professional development required for relevant highways roles?	Yes
8.1.4	Do you employ a professionally qualified engineer (e.g. Chartered Engineer (CEng) or equivalent competence) with responsibility for the management of highway structures (either in house or through a contracted arrangement)?	Yes
8.1.5	Does your authority define competence requirements for key highways asset management roles and take steps to address any identified gaps (either directly or through contractual arrangements)?	Yes
8.1.6	Do you or your main contractors support early career development in your local area, for example through apprentice schemes, traineeships or pre-apprenticeship programmes, sponsored qualifications (e.g. HNC/HND, degree, MSc), graduate schemes etc	Yes

B8.1.7 - Evidence Summary

Sandwell has an up-to-date competency framework for staff responsible for highways asset management, which defines competency requirements for each role. Each employee also completes regular appraisals with their line manager, to identify any new training required.

The authority currently has two apprentices who have recently completed BEng degrees and are now in the process of completing their applications for IEng accreditation with the Institution of Civil Engineers (ICE). They are supported by an internal professionally accredited ICE mentor, and funding is provided to support attaining professional accreditation through the ICE.

The Group Manager Highways Assets and Permits has overall responsibility for maintenance of highway structures and holds CEng professional accreditation with the ICE.

The authority has several members of staff who have recently completed various levels of funded qualifications either through Council funding or the Apprenticeship Levy. These include qualifications such as ONC, HNC and undergraduate degrees. Alongside this there are also staff who are completing CMI apprenticeship Team Leader Level 3 qualifications and various other training courses, shadowing, and CPD activities.



B8.1.8 – Further context on skills/training

Sandwell supports early careers development through initiatives such as work experience opportunities, apprenticeships, employing young people and offering opportunities for training and development. Several employees have recently completed qualifications to support their early careers development.

Alongside this, the authority also encourages early careers support through procurement, with social value being part of the tender evaluation process for many of the framework contracts we use. This encourages local companies and contractors to provide opportunities to young people in the area. Initiatives have included providing work experience, taking part in mock interviews in schools, employing local people, and supporting local businesses and employment by buying local.

B9 – Adapting roads to withstand climate pressures.

Climate and environmental factors, such as heavy rainfall, prolonged heat, and freeze-thaw cycles, are integral to effective highways asset management, as they influence asset performance, deterioration rates, and long-term resilience. Understanding both the impacts of a changing climate and the carbon implications of maintenance activities supports better decision-making, helping authorities to optimise durability, manage risk and deliver best whole life value from their assets.

ID	Question	Yes/No
9.1.1	Have you updated your asset management policy and strategy to reflect the increased probability of extreme-weather and/or geohazards now and in the future?	Yes
9.1.2	Have you identified your resilient network and agree this with senior decision-makers	Yes
9.1.3	If yes, when did you last update this.	May 2025
9.1.4	Have you identified locations that are repeatedly affected by extreme weather (e.g. flooding, heat damage, storms)?	Yes – known informally.
9.1.5	Which climate-adaptation measures are currently implemented on your network?	
	- Targeted drainage upgrades or maintenance	Yes
	- Natural flood management / SuDS.	Yes
	- targeted slope / ground stability / landslip mitigation	No
	- Heat-resilient materials or surface treatments	Yes
	- Tree planting / shading for heat management	Yes
9.1.6	Have you measured and benchmarked the greenhouse gas emissions from your highways maintenance service using a recognised industry standard? Or do you have arrangements in place to do this, such as by signing up to the DfT funded ADEPT Carbon Leadership Programme.	Yes
9.1.7	Have you formally engaged with the DfT funded ADEPT Live Labs 2 Programme, to understand what lessons your authority can utilise to increase the efficiency of your operations and support decarbonisation efforts?	Yes



B9.1.8 - Evidence Summary

Sandwell employs a range of climate adaptation measures designed to ensure operational resilience of its highway network.

These include targeted drainage maintenance and upgrades, with more frequent cleansing in known problem areas. Use of natural flood management such as sustainable urban drainage systems in new developments and tree pits in public realm schemes to reduce or slow run-off into drainage systems. The use of premium binders to ensure surfacing materials have greater resilience to extreme heat, along with trials of new innovative materials to assess performance.

A focus on preventative carriageway and footway maintenance aims to reduce water ingress by sealing the surface and providing greater resilience to deterioration from more frequent rainfall events and winter weather.

A tree planting programme to provide shade, reduce urban heating and manage surface water, with over 200 trees planted in 2025/26 and planting of over 15,000 trees planned across the borough by 2030, as outlined in the Sandwell Tree Strategy 2023 – 2028.

B9.1.9 - Further context on your adaptation / resilience activities

Sandwell were one of the first authorities to complete the Carbon Leadership Programmes Carbon Footprint and Best Practice Assessments, we received our final reports and certificate of completion in February 2026. Plans are in place to carry out a reassessment during 2026/27.

Alongside this, Sandwell are also a part of the Live Labs 2 Project in the West Midlands. As part of this project, we have trialled new preventative maintenance and pothole repair materials. The trials are currently being monitored to measure performance and determine whether adoption would improve our maintenance strategy.



B10 – Innovation

ID	Question	Yes / No
10.1.1	Do your procurement and contracting approaches encourage and reward innovative practice?	Yes
10.1.2	Can you demonstrate that innovative materials and practices are regularly reviewed and, where appropriate, integrated into business-as-usual operations?	Yes
10.1.3	If you have conducted innovation trials, have you shared the findings of these publicly or with professional networks?	Yes

10.1.4 - Evidence Summary

Sandwell has incentivised innovation as part of our procurement activities. The authority uses various framework contracts to maintain our assets, which offers greater flexibility and market exposure to innovative materials and practices. An example of where we have incentivised innovation, is in the procurement of LED lanterns for our streetlighting conversion programme. This was achieved by assessing the performance of the lanterns as part of the tender evaluation, which in turn incentivised prospective contractors to assess the options available on the market and identify the highest performing lanterns available.

Another example is the recent procurement of an asphalt recycler for our depot, which is an innovative piece of plant equipment. This shows how Sandwell are always looking at innovative processes that can offer improvements to our highway's maintenance approach, whether that be through financial, emissions, safety, or operational benefits.

Sandwell also regularly explore innovative materials and practices, with examples of ongoing trials and integrated innovations provided in section 10.2.

The authority shares its experiences of new materials and processes through regional working groups and networks, as part of the Live Labs 2 Knowledge Hub and through publishing case studies.

B10.1.5 - Further context on your innovation activities

A selection of case study examples is provided below:

- [Case Study - West Midlands Preserver / Rejuvenator trials phase 2 - Live Labs 2, Decarbonising Local Roads](#)
- [Case Study - West Midlands Pothole Phase 1 - Live Labs 2, Decarbonising Local Roads](#)
- [Case Study - West Midlands Pothole Phase 2 - Live Labs 2, Decarbonising Local Roads](#)
- MHA+ Awards Submission and Presentation - <https://www.mhaplus.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2024/12/December-2024-Newsletter.pdf>
- Carbon Leadership Programme Case Study



10.2 – Examples of innovations that have been adopted

Sandwell regularly review and where appropriate, integrate innovative practices and materials into its highway's maintenance approach. Examples of trials and innovations in Sandwell currently include:

Materials and treatments:

- **KielyLock** – encapsulated surface dressing treatment – reduces chipping loss when compared to conventional surface dressing – used extensively across the borough.
- **KielyPave** – micro-asphalt treatment – used extensively across the borough to seal the surface of the carriageway, prolong the life of the asset, and reduce whole-life costs and carbon emissions.
- **Recycled asphalt** – recycling reactive maintenance planings for re-use – reduces material costs and carbon emissions, whilst also reducing use of virgin aggregates and waste generation.
- **Rejuvophalt** – trialled in 2026-27 on several carriageways with poor accessibility – provides an alternative surface treatment option for sites with poor access - performance is being monitored to assess benefits.

Vehicles Plant and Equipment:

- **Asphalt recycler** – used to recycle reactive maintenance planings for re-use - reduces material costs and carbon emissions, whilst also reducing use of virgin aggregates and waste generation.
- **Automated grit spreading and software** – which uses pre-programmed routes to optimise salt spreading rate and monitor treatment actions – used in our winter maintenance operations for several years – reduces cost and use of salt.
- **LED streetlights** – programme of SON to LED conversion for all streetlights in the borough - has significantly reduced carbon emissions and street lighting energy costs.
- **Streetlighting CMS** system to enable remote dimming and trimming of streetlights – has contributed to reduced energy usage and costs – used across the majority of streetlights in Sandwell.
- **MultiHog** - planer to better equip the service to carry out right first-time repairs to defects and reduce manual handling and hand arm vibration syndrome (HAVS). – used across the network – offering health and safety benefits, reducing material use, and providing a high standard of repair.

Digital and Data

- **AI road condition surveys** with imagery collection – providing up to date imagery and PAS2161 compliant condition data of carriageways and footways, supporting funding bids and works programming – surveys carried out in each of the past five years.
- **Carriageway and footway lifecycle modelling** - to support maintenance strategy and funding decisions – reducing whole-life costs and providing evidence for a data led asset management approach.
- **Participation in the Carbon Leadership Programme** - to measure carbon emissions associated with the highways service and help to inform emissions reduction options. Initial assessment in 2024-25, with further assessment planned for 2025-26.



Delivery and process innovation:

- **Utilisation of regional and national framework contracts** - to streamline and reduce costs of procurement, such as the MHA+ and RAMS framework contracts.
- **Participation in regional collaborative framework contracts** - to realise economies of scale and reduce procurement costs, such as the West Midlands Structures Frameworks Contract and the Black Country Minor Works Framework Contract.

Workforce and capability

- **Apprenticeship, training and development programmes** - to develop new talent, support succession planning and ensure operational resilience, with several courses ongoing at various qualification levels.

B11 – Working with utility companies to reduce disruption to road users.

ID	Question	Yes / No
11.1.1	Do you routinely monitor and enforce utility works quality as part of your street works management?	Yes
11.1.2	Have you undertaken a senior-endorsed assessment of whether a lane rental scheme would be suitable for your area?	No
11.1.3	Do you seek input from utility companies when determining your highways maintenance programme to help reduce disruption?	Yes
11.1.4	Have you conducted and published a permit scheme evaluation within the last three years?	Yes
11.1.5	Have you conducted a traffic sensitive review in the last three years?	Yes

11.1.6 - Evidence Summary

Sandwell routinely monitor and enforce utility works quality, as per NRSWA the power under Section 72 to inspect, investigate and report on undertakers' works and reinstatements powers under sections 65 and 72 to take such steps as appear necessary to remove dangers these may cause to users of the street.

The Department for Transport (DfT) are not currently accepting new lane rental applications from authorities in Combined Authority areas. Approval powers for lane rental schemes will transfer from the DfT to Mayors of Strategic Authorities later in the year. Future discussions will be held with neighbouring authorities to agree a unified, approach/application process and charging system across the region.

Quarterly coordination meetings are held with all undertakers, and a separate quarterly meeting is held for internal schemes. There are also ad-hoc meetings held with individual utilities when large roll outs/proposed works or upgrades are planned. The permit team confirm the future programme of works at each meeting.



B11.1.7 - Further context

The permit scheme evaluation for year 3 is published on Sandwell MBC website, with year 4-6 currently being completed and due to be published by the end of the year.

<https://www.sandwell.gov.uk/parking-permits/sandwell-permit-scheme-streetworks>

Sandwell's latest traffic sensitivity review was carried out in 2025, with the consultation taking place in July/August and implementation of the new designations being completed in October. Consultation documents and excerpts from implemented review can be provided upon request.

B12 – Managing highways maintenance contracts effectively.

Only answer this sections if you utilise a contractor to deliver any of your **carriageway** maintenance operations, including structural maintenance, planned repairs / patching, or reactive repairs / patching

ID	Question	Yes / No
12.1.1	Does your authority retain in-house technical capability to independently assess maintenance interventions proposed by contractors?	Yes
12.1.2	Do you routinely analyse actual unit costs (for example £/m ² of road surface treatments, or £/pothole repair) for core highways maintenance activities delivered under contract and compare them against benchmarks or historic performance?	Yes
12.1.3	Do you have defined KPIs for your highway's maintenance contract(s), and are they actively monitored by your authority to manage performance?	No
12.1.4	If reactive pothole repairs are delivered by a contractor, do your contracting arrangements incentivise single-visit permanent repairs where it is safe and appropriate to do so?	N/A - DLO

12.1.5 - Evidence Summary

Sandwell retains in-house technical capability to review contractor proposals, costs, and performance. Directly employed engineers have knowledge of maintenance interventions and where best to apply them. The authority work with contractors to assess each site and develop the specification for each maintenance intervention carried out, supported by strong client-contractor relationships. Where required the authority also has access to specialist consultants who can assist in specific situations.

Sandwell maintains a record of unit costs for various planned and reactive road surface treatments and repairs, based on average costs of actual schemes delivered. The authority delivers planned works through collaborative regional contracts, with unit rates adjusted using pre-defined methodologies utilising Building Cost Information Service (BCIS) indices. The collaborative framework contracts generally have multiple contractors, which enables us to compare rates across the sector and ensure value for money for each individual scheme delivered. Treatment rates are also shared regionally as part of benchmarking and for use in business cases.



B12.1.6 - Further context

Framework contracts are used for the majority of our planned maintenance works, whilst they do not contain specific KPI's, they do have measures in place to monitor performance during and following completion of package orders. An example being the West Midlands Framework Contract for Highway Structures, which has a mechanism in place to review contractors' performance following each package of work, with penalties for poor performance.

