

# Highway Safety Inspection Policy



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## 1.0 Introduction

Section 41 of the Highways Act 1980 places a statutory duty on all highway authorities (HAs) to maintain highway maintainable at public expense, usually referred to as adopted highway.

HAs must prove that the authority has taken such care as in all the circumstances was reasonably required to secure that the adopted highway was not dangerous for traffic. This is usually proven by the HA having a reasonable system of routine scheduled highway safety inspections in place, having regard to the various factors set out within section 58 of the Highways Act 1980.

Guidance for a reasonable system of safety inspections is set out in Well-managed Highway Infrastructure: A Code of Practice (COP) published by the UK Roads Liaison Group: the COP has been used to prepare this policy. Adoption of the recommendations outlined in the COP is a matter for each HA based on the authority's interpretation, risks, needs and priorities.

### 1.1 Collaboration

This document has been collaboratively developed with neighbouring local authorities with regards to road network hierarchies, repair investigatory levels, frequency of inspections and response times for repairs.

This document has been collaboratively developed with the following authorities:

- North Tyneside
- South Tyneside
- Newcastle
- Sunderland

and in consultation with

- Durham
- Northumberland.

## 2.0 Highway Safety Inspections

Highway safety inspections are carried out considering local asset bases and factors affecting the network. In addition to these factors network hierarchy and inspection frequencies have been developed based upon local knowledge and experience of the highway network.

Gateshead Council (GC) has carried out a review of its hierarchy and inspection frequencies against the recommendations set out in the COP. The resulting hierarchies and inspection frequencies are consistent with the previous GC inspection policy which has previously delivered an acceptable level of risk.

Highway safety inspections are derived from two sources:

- planned cyclic safety inspections to identify defects which meet repair investigatory levels;
- reactive safety inspections following enquiries in respect of the condition of the highway.

Records of inspections are maintained on a purpose designed computer database.

### 3.0 Hierarchy

All the adopted highway has been assigned a carriageway, footway and cycleway hierarchy. Table 1 details the factors for determining hierarchy.

Factor	Feature
Road classification	Strategic routes, road classification (A, B, C, unclassified), resilient network
Traffic use	Speed limits, heavy goods vehicle generators, seasonal events, bus routes
Characteristics of street and adjoining network	Schools, shops, hospitals, fire stations, airports, national sporting events, sport stadia, business areas/estates, transport hubs
Wider policy or operational considerations	Enquiries and complaints data

**Table 1 Network Hierarchy Factors**

GC's frequency of cyclic inspections is based on the functionality (or usage) of the highway and the hierarchy.

Site specific factors may merit a decision to temporarily or permanently increase or reduce the frequency in a specific location (for example a new school or a health centre). Table 2a, Table 2b and Table 2c show the inspection hierarchy category for carriageways, footways and cycleways.

<b>Category</b>	<b>Feature</b>	<b>Type</b>	<b>Description</b>
CW1	Carriageway	Motorway & trunk*	A1 and A194(M)
CW2	Carriageway	Strategic route	Main high volume high speed routes
CW3a	Carriageway	Main distributor	Other main radial routes
CW3b	Carriageway	Secondary distributor	Other classified roads and unclassified bus routes
CW4a	Carriageway	Link road	Other roads providing a degree of connection between areas and routes through an area
CW4b	Carriageway	Local access road	All other roads - housing estate roads and minor rural routes

\* Inspections not carried out by GC on the trunk road network

**Table 2a Inspection Category – Carriageways**

<b>Category</b>	<b>Feature</b>	<b>Type</b>	<b>Description</b>
CP1	Cycleway/ cycle path	Cycleway	Part of a carriageway
CP2	Cycleway/ cycle path	Cycleway	Shared cycle/footway
CP3	Cycleway/ cycle path	Cycleway	Cycle route not part of a footpath or carriageway

**Table 2b Inspection Category – Cycleways**

Category	Feature	Type	Description
FW1a	Footway/ footpath	Prestige walking zones	Tyne riverside
FW1	Footway/ footpath	Primary walking routes	Main pedestrian routes in Gateshead town centre
FW2	Footway/ footpath	Secondary walking routes	Main pedestrian routes in local shopping centres, schools with 500 or more pupils
FW3	Footway/ footpath	Link footways	Other footways alongside roads with carriageway categories 2, 3a, 3b and 4a
FW4	Footway/ footpath	Local access footways	Footways alongside local access roads (carriageway category 4b) and footpaths within estates

**Table 2c Inspection Category – Footways**

## 4.0 Method & Frequency of Inspections

Highway safety inspections are carried out to the frequencies listed in Table 3. Where frequencies are greater than annual these will be carried out at approximately even intervals throughout the year, except where local circumstances indicate otherwise. On occasions there may be unforeseen events (such as severe weather) which affect the frequency or scheduling of inspections. During the inspection, defects which are identified using the investigatory levels outlined within this policy will be recorded and processed for repair.

### 4.1 Walked Inspections

All footways will have a walked inspection at the assigned frequency determined by the hierarchy: the adjacent carriageway will also be inspected during the walked inspections.

The inspector will position himself/herself in a safe location on the footway, in such a position that it enables him/her to view the full width of the footway, to view the carriageway (up to the centre line of the carriageway) and to view the kerb/channel area.

When the inspector encounters parked motor vehicles he/she will take reasonable steps to view the area obstructed by the vehicles.

An inspector will proceed along the footway identifying defects that meet the investigatory levels set out in Table 4: any actionable defects will be processed for repair. If no actionable defects are identified on a street this will be recorded. On completing the inspection of one side of the street an inspector will apply the same process to the opposite side of the street.

#### 4.2 Driven Inspections

In accordance with the network hierarchy or in the absence of a footway, carriageway inspections will be carried out by means of a driven inspection.

An inspector will proceed along the carriageway identifying defects that meet the investigatory levels set out in Table 4: any actionable defects will be processed for repair. If no actionable defects are identified on a street this will be recorded.

Driven carriageway inspections will be carried out using a driver and a highway inspector. The driver will be responsible for driving only and the highway inspector will be responsible for carrying out the safety inspection.

Frequency	Category	Method
12 per year	Carriageway CW2, CW3a, CW3b	Driven
12 per year	Footway FW1a, FW1 Cycleway CP2	Walked
4 per year	Carriageway CW4a	Driven
4 per year	Footway FW2 Cycleway CP2	Walked
2 per year	Footway FW3 Carriageway CW2, CW3a, CW3b, Cycleway CP1, CP2	Walked
1 per year	Footway FW4 Carriageway CW4b Cycleway CP1, CP2, CP3	Walked

**Table 3 Inspection Methods & Frequency**

## 5.0 Defect Investigatory Levels

Table 4 sets out the defect investigatory levels for footways and carriageways.

Feature	Defect
Footway investigatory level	20mm
Carriageway investigatory level	40mm
Carriageway investigatory level at all crossing points	20mm

**Table 4 Investigatory Levels**

## 6.0 Repair Response Times

Safety inspection defects that meet the investigatory levels will be processed for appropriate action.

Response times are listed in Table 5:

Priority	Repair
R0	2 hours: make safe or temporary repair or permanent repair
R1	24 hours: make safe or temporary repair or permanent repair
R2	14 days: temporary repair or permanent repair
R3	Low risk defect to review after 12 months

**Table 5 Response Times**



## **7.0 Training**

Highway inspectors and claims officers will be trained to the highway safety inspection qualification accredited by LANTRA qualifying for entry on the IHE National Register of Highway Inspectors.