

Resident Questions for Housing Area Panel

Department	Transport/Highways
Date question raised	5/07/2022
Date of Area Panel	16/08/2022
Area in city	Central
Star rating applied by residents	3 star – city wide issue
Deadline for officer response	25/07/2022
Name of officer responding	Hilary Edgar
Officer job title	Housing Service Operations Manager • Housing
Title of Question:	Making our city safe for pedestrians
Issue:	The pavements in our city are in a very poor state of repair. Urgent improvements are needed to make our city a safe and pleasant place for everyone to walk about in.
Background:	This is a long-term concern of organisations working for equality for people with disabilities, who are particularly restricted by uneven and obstructed pavements. Issues raised at the meeting were: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Pavements are broken and uneven b) Pavements are obstructed by cycles, bins, seating, advertising signage c) Pavements are overgrown with weeds and overhanging bushes
Action requested by residents:	Request for an overall review of the state of the cities pavements to be carried out, working with residents and disability organisations. Creative, ambitious solutions are urgently needed to make our city a safe and pleasant place for all pedestrians.
Officer Response:	Stacey Hollingworth
Officer contact details:	Stacey.hollingworth@brighton-hove.gov.uk
Response:	Whilst I understand the frustration regarding the condition of footways in the city, funding cuts over a number of decades have meant that we are forced to prioritise and make difficult decision. For example, our annual budget for renewing footways in the city is usually between £350k and £400k. This is enough to resurface the footways on approximately 10 roads. Considering we have over 2500 roads in the city, I am sure you can appreciate that this budget does not go far.

To ensure safety on our roads and footways we carry out highway inspections. Every road with Brighton and Hove is walked and driven by Highway Inspectors multiply times a year. The frequency depends on the nature of the road with busy roads being inspected on a monthly basis whilst other quieter roads are inspected every 6 months. This is a risk-based approach based on the level of usage e.g. the more people using a road, the quicker it will deteriorate and the more chance there is of someone being injured. During these inspections any defects will be recorded and fixed within a set time period. A defect is defined as anything over 40mm on the carriageway and 20mm on the footway. Highway Inspectors also raise condition reports on any locations where more than safety maintenance is required and these locations are put forward for scheme consideration as part of the forward programme. We also carry out independent condition surveys for carriageways every year to help prioritise funds to locations where they will offer the most benefit. For carriageway resurfacing programme is primarily focused on the Strategic Network where deteriorate happens at the fastest rate. For footways this is based on 'worst first' with high footfall areas being prioritised where appropriate. Again, this is a risk-based approach.

We are however in the process of reviewing our policies on how we manage all of our highway assets and looking to find ways to increase our funding as well as ways to innovate to make our funds go further. This area of the industry is developing at a rapid rate to keep in line with carbon reduction commitments and so we are hopeful that we can find ways to improve this service going forward.

With regards to the issue with weeds, this is something that we are working with the City Clean/City Parks department to resolve. The weeds have got out of hand since a decision was taken at ETS committee to restrict the use of pesticides to protect the environment. The planned manual removal of weeds has not been as successful as hoped for several reasons, but we are looking to trial an alternative approach, subject to approval from both departments. We do share your frustration in this respect but please rest assured that we are exploring all possible options to get this resolved as soon as possible for the safety of our residents as well as to protect our footway assets from further damage.

Specific Action:

Action:

We plan to take an update policy to Environment, Transport and Sustainability committee in October 2022.

Timeline:

Start date:	On-going
End date:	31/10/2022