



**NORTH AYRSHIRE
COUNCIL**

INFRASTRUCTURE & DESIGN SERVICES

WINTER SERVICE and WEATHER EMERGENCIES PROCEDURES & RESOURCES

2009 – 2010

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1. INTRODUCTION

North Ayrshire Council has a statutory obligation, under Section 34 of the Roads (Scotland) Act 1984, to take such steps as it considers reasonable to prevent snow and ice endangering the safe passage of pedestrians and vehicles over public roads which by definition includes carriageways, footways, footpaths, pedestrian precincts, etc.

It is therefore the aim of North Ayrshire Council in respect of its winter service and weather emergencies to:-

- (i) provide a standard of service on public roads which will permit safe movement of vehicular and pedestrian traffic appropriate to the prevailing weather conditions;
- (ii) establish a pattern of working which will keep delays, diversions or road closures to a minimum during adverse weather conditions;
- (iii) conduct operations having regard to the requirements of the Health & Safety at Work Act 1974 and any other relevant enactments.

North Ayrshire Council has no responsibility for the treatment of trunk roads. From 1st April 2001, the contract for management and maintenance of the trunk roads in Scotland has been awarded by the Scottish Executive Development Department to the private sector. The successful contractor for the South West of Scotland is Amey Infrastructure Services and the roads involved in North Ayrshire are as follows:-

A78 full length from Meadowhead roundabout, Dundonald to Inverclyde boundary at Skelmorlie;

A737 Dalry Road, Kilwinning to Renfrewshire boundary;

A738 Byres Road, Kilwinning to Pennyburn roundabout.

All winter gritting and snow clearing operations on these roads will be the responsibility of Amey Infrastructure Services. North Ayrshire Infrastructure and Design Services and Amey Infrastructure Services will liaise on a regular basis during periods of adverse weather in order to provide the best possible service to the travelling public.

North Ayrshire Council are also responsible for the management and operation of the coastal flood prevention schemes at Largs and Saltcoats. It is the aim of the Council to close the flood gates on the promenade and erect the flood barriers at Largs Pier in advance of predicted severe weather with minimum disruption to promenade users and the Largs to Cumbrae ferry. Coastal flooding can occur at any time and, accordingly, it is the aim of the Council to provide this service throughout the year.

2. POLICY ON TREATMENT PRIORITIES

North Ayrshire Council has defined the priorities for carriageway and footway/footpath treatment as follows:

2.1 Carriageway Priorities

- Priority 1: All 'A' and 'B' routes
- Priority 2: Access to main hospitals, police and fire stations as well as main bus routes where considered appropriate in consultation with Strathclyde Passenger Transport;
- Priority 3: Some 'C' class roads, access routes to the main gate of primary and secondary schools during term time;
- Priority 4: Local concentrations of employment, such as industrial estates;
- Priority 5: Access to isolated villages;
- Priority 6: Other 'C' class and unclassified public roads (minor rural and minor residential);
- Priority 7: Prospectively maintainable and private roads.

Fixed gritting routes are pre-planned to ensure that during "routine" winter conditions, priorities 1 to 3 plus some priority 4 to 6 will be treated. However, under more extreme conditions (heavy snowfalls or freeze/rain/freeze cycles) gritters may have to concentrate on the higher priority roads until attention can be safely transferred to other roads. The lowest categories (minor rural and minor residential roads etc.,) will be treated using available gritters if conditions persist and all other routes are clear where instructed by the Head of Infrastructure and Design. Resources may not permit the treatment of all lower category roads (particularly cul-de-sacs). Priority 7 roads will only be treated if the Head of Infrastructure and Design considers the public network is satisfactory or that an emergency situation has arisen.

2.1.1 Cumbrae

Infrastructure and Design Services have no Roads Operatives based on the Isle of Cumbrae, however arrangements have been made with Cleansing and Ground Maintenance to carry out gritting operations. Treatment on Cumbrae is reactionary and is determined by the Island Officer based on the weather forecast and conditions encountered.

2.2 Footway/Footpath Priorities

With limited resources available footways and footpaths will only be treated when the Head of Infrastructure and Design Services considers this to be absolutely necessary (e.g. heavy snowfall or extensive icing). They will normally only be treated during normal working hours. It is unlikely that they will be treated during public holidays.

Otherwise the following priorities will apply:-

- i. Urban shopping centres and precincts;
- ii. Steep hills in housing areas and in the vicinity of old people's homes;
- iii. Other areas of high pedestrian concentration.

Infrastructure and Design Services has insufficient manpower resources to treat footways and arrangements have been made with the Council's Ground Maintenance Section to assist with treatment of footways during normal working hours.

3. ORGANISATION

The Head of Infrastructure and Design Services is responsible for specifying the level of winter service required, whilst the Network Manager is responsible for implementing this service.

4. NORTH AYRSHIRE COUNCIL RESOURCES (ROADS)

4.1 General

It is the responsibility of the Head of Infrastructure and Design Services to define the level of service to be provided within his sphere of operations and to issue appropriate works orders to the Network Manager to provide the necessary labour and plant for winter operations.

The Network Manager shall thereafter be responsible for advising the Head of Infrastructure and Design Services of any matters which may affect his ability to deal with adverse weather conditions e.g. labour disputes, extensive plant breakdowns etc.

Arrangements have been made with Network Management Operations to provide labour resources for the Winter Service and Weather Emergencies for the period 29th October 2009 to 15th April 2010. This period may be extended beyond the given dates if conditions warrant such action. These arrangements include home stand-by which is activated by the designated Winter Supervisor when instructed by the Winter Controller or as the result of hazardous road conditions being reported.

4.2 Labour

A proportion of the roads labour force will be on stand-by for winter service operations out of normal working hours, with the remainder on call out if necessary. This allows evening and early morning precautionary salting to be carried out to treat dangerous roads before the morning rush hour.

In determining the labour resources required for the winter service, cognisance is taken of the objective to treat all main roads before the commencement of the morning peak period.

4.3 Vehicle Plant and Equipment

Prior to commencement of winter service operations, the Network Manager will ensure that all equipment for salting roads and snow clearing is in working order and,

where appropriate, that ancillary items can be fitted to vehicles without difficulty, e.g. ploughs set up on blocks to facilitate assembly. The above procedure should also be applied to vehicles and plant available under contract for the winter service.

The Network Manager will ensure that all vehicles engaged in the winter service are equipped with radios or other appropriate communication devices to allow contact to be maintained between the depot and operators. Superintendents have mobile telephones. There is also a vehicle tracking system fitted and operational in all vehicles.

A summary of vehicles, plant and equipment available for the winter service work is detailed in Appendix C.

Prior to the commencement of the winter service the Supervisory Engineer, Flooding and Structural Design, will organise a trial closure of the flood gates and erection of the de-mountable barriers at the Largs and Saltcoats Flood Prevention Schemes. This is to ensure that the gates and barriers remain in full working order and that all staff are familiar with the process.

4.4 Salt

Salt is purchased through an annual purchase contract (currently let by South Ayrshire Council and servicing several other local authorities). Mainland salt deliveries are stored in the salt barn within the Goldcraigs Depot.

During the season, the Head of Infrastructure and Design will arrange for a weekly check to be made on the amount of salt used and for stocks to be augmented as necessary.

At Goldcraigs Depot, small quantities of salt are available for issue free of charge to the public, subject to their supplying a suitable container.

The anticipated salt stock level at commencement of winter is given in Appendix B.

5. OTHER RESOURCES

During adverse weather conditions, the Network Manager, (after consultation with the Head of Infrastructure and Design Services), shall, if necessary, augment his resources by the use of personnel from other departments of North Ayrshire Council and contractors at rates agreed prior to engagement. The Head of Infrastructure and Design Services should be advised, as soon as practicable, of external resources engaged as a result of decisions made outwith normal working hours.

The Head of Infrastructure and Design Services will provide a supply of salt to the Council's Ground Maintenance Section to permit the treatment of agreed footways/footpaths.

6. WEATHER FORECASTING

North Ayrshire Council has appointed MeteoGroup UK Ltd as their weather forecast provider. During the winter service period MeteoGroup UK Ltd will provide a weather forecasting service to monitor road and weather conditions. MeteoGroup UK Ltd receive, monitor and interpret, climatic, ice prediction and weather radar information on a continuous basis and provide detailed weather forecasts on a daily basis from 1st October 2009 until 15th May 2010.

SEPA operate a coastal flood warning system for the Firth of Clyde. If storm surges and coastal flooding are predicted, SEPA provide advance warning to the Council by fax and e-mail and also through their Floodline service which is available on the web or by phone. This service is available all year round.

7. DECISION MAKING

The Head of Infrastructure and Design Services will appoint suitably trained and experienced personnel as Winter Controller.

During the winter season the Winter Controller will receive the weather forecast around 12.00 hours and decide on the treatment to be carried out. The Winter Controller will check the treatment decision of neighbouring authorities for consistency and reconsider if necessary. The weather forecast provider will provide an evening forecast around 19.00 hours and if this update indicates any change in the forecast the Winter Controller will amend the decision accordingly and advise the Winter Supervisor.

For out of office hours, Saturdays, Sundays and public holidays the Head of Infrastructure and Design Services shall provide the weather forecast provider with contact telephone numbers of the on duty Winter Controller. If the forecast conditions change from good to adverse at any time then the weather forecast provider will phone the Winter Controller either at work or at home as appropriate. Thereafter, it is the responsibility of the Winter Controller to take action including the calling out of stand-by squads to undertake salting/snow clearing.

Winter Controllers have the facility at any time to contact the weather forecast provider for advice or clarification of forecasts.

These arrangements will apply from 15th October 2009 to 15th April 2010.

The Head of Infrastructure and Design Services will appoint suitably trained staff and experienced personnel to manage the coastal flood prevention schemes at Largs and Saltcoats. During the winter season, this will be the Winter Controller.

8. ICE PREDICTION

8.1 In addition to the weather forecast information referred to previously, Infrastructure and Design Services has available further information from sensors which have been installed at the locations listed below:-

- A78 Ardrossan
- A737 Highfield
- A760 Catburn
- A735 Near Dunlop
- B880 Arran, summit of The String

The sensors provide current details of road and air temperatures and indicate the presence of moisture thereby identifying locations that icing has occurred or where there is a risk that icing will occur.

By utilising the data from these sensors the weather forecast provider is able to supplement their forecast by producing site specific forecasts. The above information

is available to the Winter Controller via computer link 24 hours a day throughout the winter period.

9. ROAD CONDITION REPORTS

During periods of adverse weather, the Network Manager shall pass reports on road conditions to the Head of Infrastructure and Design Services by 09.45 hours. These reports should be updated as necessary depending on changing circumstances.

10. STATEMENTS TO THE MEDIA

The Head of Service or the Corporate Director Property Services will deal with statements to the Press, Radio and Television regarding road conditions throughout the area.

11. ROAD CLOSURES

Where it is considered that a road is rendered unsafe due to adverse winter conditions then the Police or persons acting on behalf of the Chief Constable will arrange to have the road closed and advise the on-duty Winter Supervisor as soon as possible of their actions. Appropriate measures will also be taken to re-direct traffic and to ensure that the necessary signs are put in place. When the road affected is a through route the adjoining Councils will be kept informed. Police will advise the other emergency services (Ambulance & Fire) of the closures.

Prior to signing diversionary routes, the capacity of the roads and the headroom and weight restrictions of structures should be checked with the Winter Controller to ensure that they are adequate.

12. LIAISON WITH THE POLICE

Infrastructure and Design Services will ensure liaison with the Police, particularly during periods of severe weather.

Where practicable, the Police will be informed in advance of North Ayrshire Council's proposed operations. Similarly arrangements have been made for exchanging information on proposed actions with neighbouring authorities.

Where necessary Infrastructure and Design Services will request appropriate assistance from the Police when moving equipment, arranging road closures and dealing with abandoned vehicles.

Reports from the Police regarding dangerous road conditions should be acted upon by the Winter Supervisor as soon as practicable, having regard to priorities in this document and the conditions pertaining throughout the area.

13. CROSS BOUNDARY ARRANGEMENTS

Because the Council boundaries do not always coincide with convenient turning points at the end of gritting routes, arrangements have been drawn up with all adjacent authorities for the gritting routes to be continued short distances to appropriate turning points. See (Appendix D).

14. VEHICLE ROUTES

From local knowledge and the resources available, routes are drawn up by the Head of Infrastructure and Design Services on the basis of the priorities listed in Paragraph 2.1. However, in order to minimise unproductive mileage some roads in a lower category may be treated out of sequence. This may also occur when conditions vary throughout the area.

A complete set of route cards will be kept in the Head of Infrastructure and Design Services offices, with an appropriate set being held in Goldcraigs Depot.

Treatment of precautionary salting routes should be completed within three hours of planned start time under routine conditions. When the Winter Controller instructs immediate winter service operations, the response time to start treatment should be within one hour.

It should be noted that gritting routes are either at or close to capacity and it is unlikely that any additions to routes could be considered without additional finance and human resources.

15. PRECAUTIONARY SALTING

On receipt, within normal working hours, of a forecast from the weather forecast provider warning of frost, freezing or snow conditions, the Winter Controller in consultation with the Network Manager, shall give consideration to precautionary salting of main roads.

Where such a warning is received outwith normal working hours, the Winter Controller has delegated authority to activate call-out procedures as indicated in paragraph 7.

16. SNOW CLEARANCE

On receipt of a weather warning predicting medium (25 - 100 mm deep) or heavy (over 100 mm deep) snowfalls, the Network Manager where appropriate, will recall to depots such vehicles capable of being equipped with snowploughs.

Where slush is formed, this shall be removed as soon as practicable to avoid the risk of rutting should there be a further significant fall in road temperatures which might result in freezing conditions.

17. GRIT BINS

There are approximately 190 grit bins distributed across North Ayrshire. These are located at areas of particular difficulty e.g. dangerous bends, steep footways etc. These are normally uplifted at the end of the winter, cleaned and refurbished then relocated on site during October. They contain a grit/salt mixture and are re-filled as the winter progresses. They will not normally be placed on existing gritting routes.

As the Roads Authority has a limited budget for providing grit bins and there is an increasing demand from the general public for placements, the following criteria will be used when considering requests for the provision of new grit bins.

- The proposed location will be (or will serve) a public road or footpath.
- The proposed location should not be within a gritting route.
- The proposed location should have a steep gradient or topographical feature, which merits consideration.
- The proposed location must serve and be of benefit to several properties.
- Any location which has historically displayed poor drainage and/or has a history of accidents.
- The proposed location must be accessible for cleaning and filling the grit bin.
- Grit bins will normally only be provided in urban areas.
- The siting of the grit bin will be acceptable to adjacent residents.
- Grit bins shall be sited clear of junction visibility splays and public utility apparatus.
- Normally only one grit bin will be provided in any street.

18. LARGS AND SALTCOATS FLOOD PREVENTION SCHEMES

On receipt of a severe weather warning predicting a combination of strong winds, high tides or tidal surges the Winter Controller will when necessary instruct the closure of the flood gates on the promenade at Largs and/or the erection of the flood barriers at the Largs Pier and/or Saltcoats promenade.

19. PROCEDURE FOR DEPLOYMENT OF SANDBAGS

The deployment of sandbags to prevent or contain floodwaters can be an effective way of mitigating the effect of a flood, however the lead time for filling and deployment can be lengthy, as a large number of bags cannot be filled in advance due to storage problems. Therefore, an early decision must be taken to sandbag, to avoid a subsequent waste of time and effort. The deployment of sandbags will be decided with regard to the following priorities:

1. To prevent loss of life or serious injury
2. Maintenance of access for the emergency services
3. Protection of vital facilities within the community
4. Protection of transportation routes
5. Protection of NAC property
6. Protection of private dwelling houses

The decision to deploy sandbags will be made by the Winter Controller / Supervisor or appropriate officers in Building Services, Cleansing or the Island Officer on Arran in accordance with the Services' callout/emergency procedures.

Notes: 1. Sandbags will not normally be deployed to protect commercial property;
2. Appropriate stocks of empty and filled sandbags will be held by the Services mentioned above, based on previous usage and experience.

The above procedure mainly relates to tidal, fluvial and watercourse flooding. Where flooding occurs as a result of a blocked, damaged or ineffective Council owned drainage systems, sandbags will be deployed as required to mitigate the effects of flooding (and reduce the likelihood of claims against the Council) including the protection of commercial property.

NORTH AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

Contact Address & Telephone Numbers

During Normal Working Hours	Outwith Normal Working Hours
<p style="text-align: center;">MAINLAND</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Infrastructure and Design Services Roads Perceon House IRVINE KA11 2AL</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Tel: 01294-225200 Fax: 01294-225244</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">NORTH AYRSHIRE COUNCIL CALL CENTRE</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Road & Lighting Faults</p> <p style="text-align: center;">24 hours, 7 days per week</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Tel: 0845 6030594</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">ARRAN</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Arran Local Office Lamlash Isle of Arran KA27 8JY</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Tel: 01770-600338 Fax: 01770-600028</p>	
<p style="text-align: center;">TRUNK ROADS A78, A737 & A738</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Amey Infrastructure Services</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Tel: 0800 085 7136</p>	

**ANTICIPATED SALT, GRIT & SAND STOCKS
AT COMMENCEMENT OF WINTER**

DEPOT	TONNAGE SALT	TONNAGE GRIT	TONNAGE SAND
Goldcraigs	2700	30	NIL
Arran	800	NIL	300
Cumbræ	20	NIL	NIL

SUMMARY OF WINTER SERVICE VEHICLES & EQUIPMENT

TYPE OF PLANT	GOLDCRAIGS	ARRAN	OTHER NAC	TOTAL
Gritters				
10 Tonne Uni-body	11	3		14
7.5 Tonne Uni-body	3	0		3
Trailer Gritter	0	0	2	2
Footway Gritter	4	1	4	9
Lorries				
10 Tonne Uni-body	11	3		14
7.5 Tonne Uni-body	3	0		3
7.5T tipper	2	0		2
Loading Shovel	1	0		1
JCB	3	1		4
Telehandler	0	1		1
Ploughs				
Fixed V	2	1		3
Small Blade	3	0		3
Large Blade	11	3		14

Note When necessary labour, vehicles, plant and equipment from other Council Departments, farmers, plant hirers and contractors will be used to supplement above resources.

ARRANGEMENTS WITH OTHER AUTHORITIES

ROADS TO BE TREATED BY ADJACENT AUTHORITIES	ROADS TO BE TREATED BY NORTH AYRSHIRE COUNCIL
<p style="text-align: center;">East Ayrshire Council</p> <p>A71 – from boundary westwards to Corsehill roundabout.</p> <p>A735 – that section within North Ayrshire boundary.</p> <p>B769 – from boundary south westwards to Chapelton junction.</p> <p>C129 – that section within North Ayrshire boundary.</p> <p>C20 – that section within North Ayrshire boundary.</p> <p>B706 - from boundary to A736</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">South Ayrshire Council</p> <p>Ayr Road (former A78) from boundary southwards to Hillhouse roundabout.</p>
	<p style="text-align: center;">East Ayrshire Council</p> <p>A736 – from Caldwell Bridge southwards to Lugton.</p> <p>A736 – from B778 junction south eastwards to Torranyard.</p> <p>C24 - from Greenhill Terrace, Knockentiber to boundary at Plann Bridge.</p> <p>Knockentiber Road from boundary near Springside to junction with C24</p>
	<p style="text-align: center;">Renfrewshire Council</p> <p>A760 – from boundary to Kerse Road junction, Kerse Road – from boundary to A760 junction</p>

Note: No Cross Boundary arrangements with East Renfrewshire Council.

DISTRIBUTION LIST

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Director of Educational Services	1
Director of Social Services	1
Head of Environment & Related Services	1
Head of Housing and Building Services	1
Emergency Planning	1
All Members of North Ayrshire Council	30
Strathclyde Police	
Divisional Commander, Kilmarnock	1
Traffic Management, Ayr	1
Strathclyde Passenger Transport	1
Strathclyde Fire Brigade – Divisional Commander	1
Scottish Ambulance Service	1
MeteoGroup UK Ltd	1
Amey Highways	1
East Ayrshire Council – Head of Roads & Transportation	1
South Ayrshire Council – Head of Strategy & Design Services	1
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Inverclyde Council – Head of Transportation & Roads Service	1
Roads and Lighting Faults Centre (RALF)	1
Contact Centre, Building Services, Stevenston	1
Contact Centre, Bridgegate House, Irvine	1