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For Immediate Release

Council's starts campaign to explain how potholes are fixed

Swindon Borough Council is running a two week campaign explaining how potholes are fixed and motorists, cyclists and pedestrians are being encouraged to join the hundreds of people already reporting them.

Over recent years potholes have become a major issue for residents, especially following last year's 'Beast from the East' which caused extensive damage to roads across the country, including Swindon.

The Council inspects all the major routes across Swindon regularly, but limited resources mean that residential and rural streets can only be checked twice a year.

Last year the Council repaired over 7,500 potholes with just over 900 of those reported by the public.

National guidelines recommend that for a defect in the road to be technically classed as a pothole, it must be 40mm or deeper. A pothole in the pavement must be 30mm or deeper. Anything not meeting these standards will be monitored for further damage.

Once a pothole is found the Council uses three methods to fix them. The aim is always to make sure that the roads are safe and then to start planning and carrying out permanent repairs:

Temporary repair – This makes the road safe straight away but only lasts a few weeks and residents will see this as a rough patch. If a resident notices a patch like this has failed, they should report it and we will refill it within 24 hours. This method on average costs around £40 per repair and doesn't disrupt traffic. It can be used multiple times until a permanent fix can be arranged.

Patch repair- This kind of repair fixes potholes properly and lasts for years but can cost thousands of pounds to complete meaning work has to be arranged and prioritised. It will often require road closures and licenses which can take months to arrange.

Full reconstruction- This kind of repair, like that which was carried out on Upham Road, will last for decades but can cost hundreds of thousands of pounds and often requires months' worth of closures and disruption to traffic.

Residents are also being encouraged to report potholes as part of the campaign. Once a pothole has been reported, one of the Council's six highways inspectors aim to inspect all reports within four working days and if the pothole is 40mm or deeper, it should be fixed within 24 hours.

Following feedback from last year's campaign, the Council has been working hard to streamline the reporting process and update the information on the website which helps residents to understand how potholes are repaired.

Councillor Maureen Penny, Swindon Borough Council's Cabinet Member for Transport and the Environment, said: "As part of our efforts to improve Swindon's road network last year our highways team fixed 7,592 potholes and damaged patches in roads and footpaths across Swindon's road network which is over 500 miles long.

"Sometimes it may look like our repairs are poor quality but these repairs will be quick fixes to make roads safe while we organise a proper repair. Long term repairs require planning to

minimise disruption to road users which we are always conscious of, and our limited budgets mean we have to prioritise our work and can not fix everything quickly.

“I would urge anyone who knows the location of a pothole on any road, cycle path or footpath within the borough to report it to us through our improved online reporting system so we can get out and repair it.”

ENDS

Residents can report a pothole to the Council by visiting www.swindon.gov.uk/potholes