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ALARM SURVEY 2023

More than £14bn needed to fix local roads backlog

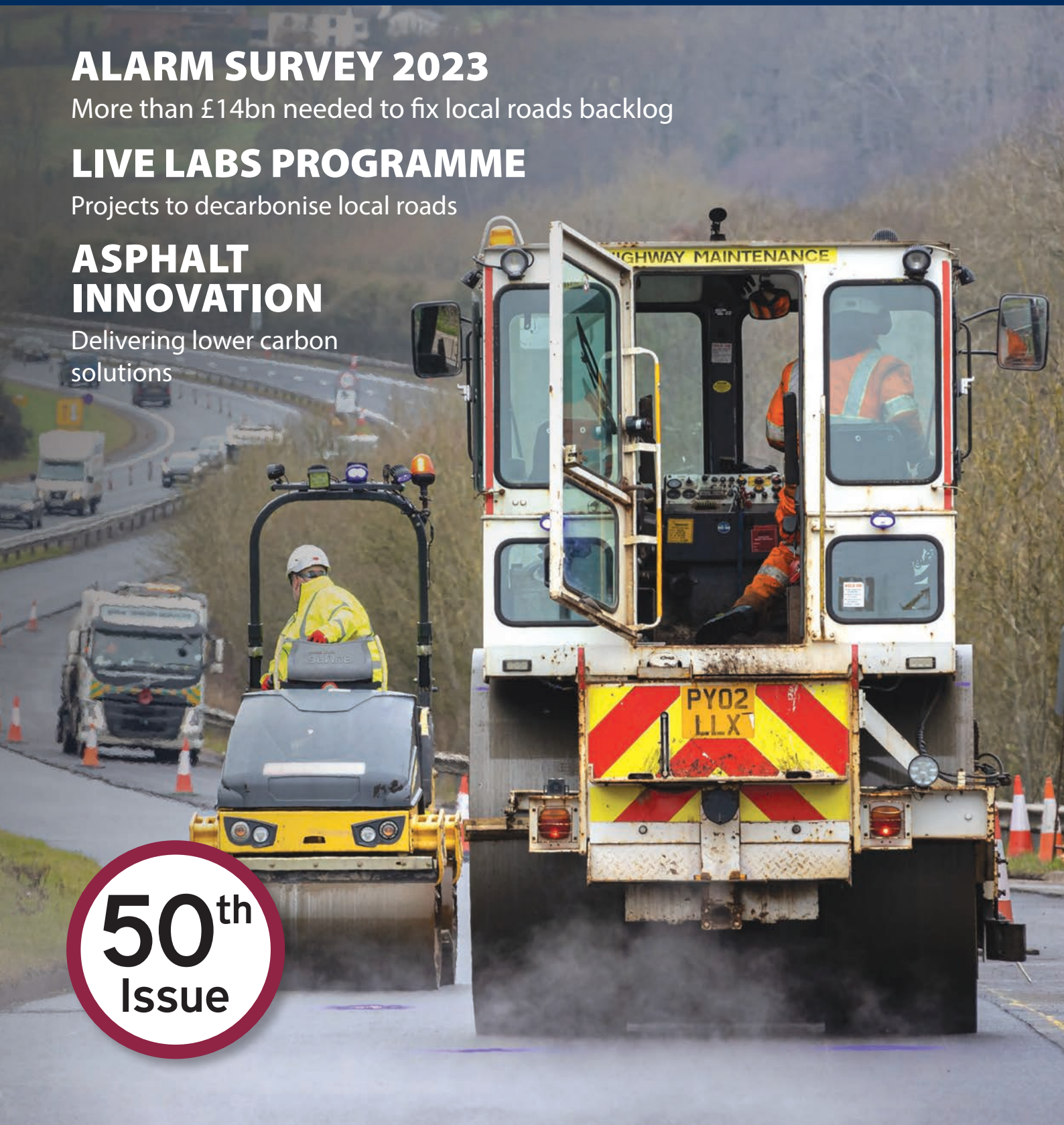
LIVE LABS PROGRAMME

Projects to decarbonise local roads

ASPHALT INNOVATION

Delivering lower carbon
solutions

50th
Issue





A WORSENING PICTURE FOR LOCAL ROADS

Not all the records broken in the 28th year of the ALARM survey are welcome ones

£14 billion. That's how much is needed to tackle the backlog of carriageway repairs on our local roads in England and Wales according to this year's Annual Local Authority Road Maintenance (ALARM) survey. It's a huge figure and one that only seems set to increase as average carriageway maintenance budgets fall.

This year is the 28th ALARM survey and was a year of records: a record number of responses from local authorities; record levels of media interest in the launch; and record shortfall and one-time catch-up costs reported.

We are continually grateful to all those highways teams that take the time to complete the survey. The response rate demonstrates ALARM's continued importance providing us with robust data that supports our ongoing campaign to

keep the issues of local roads funding and maintenance top of mind.

This year's findings show a worsening picture in the overall condition of our local roads and the means to improve them (pages 6 and 7) so it is unsurprising that both the RAC and AA have reported increases in pothole-related incidents (page 4).

Treasury Select Committee member and MP for South Cambridgeshire, Anthony Browne, recently commented that potholes and road conditions were of more importance to the electorate than relations with China or the possible impact of artificial intelligence (AI). Even the Government recognised what the Chancellor referred to as 'the curse of potholes' in the Spring Budget and made an additional £200 million available for highways maintenance in England this year (page 11). While welcome, it's a fraction

of what's needed. Without a visible long-term investment plan for local roads, conditions can't – and won't – improve.

Elsewhere in this issue we look at materials innovation (pages 8-10), which is continuing apace, focused predominantly on how we can help local authorities meet their carbon reduction targets while improving network resilience.

Updated data on the RoadFile online hub shows that traffic on local roads is returning to pre-Covid levels faster than on either the strategic road network or railways (see below). It is yet another demonstration of the reliance we place on our local road network and is further evidence that local authorities should receive a fairer deal when it comes to funding.

Rick Green

Chair, Asphalt Industry Alliance

UPDATED USAGE DATA HIGHLIGHTS RELIANCE ON LOCAL ROAD NETWORK

■ **Traffic on** local roads is returning to pre-pandemic levels faster than on either the strategic road network or railways.

That's just one of the trends highlighted on **RoadFile**, the online hub of road-related statistics delivered by the Asphalt Industry Alliance (AIA). It presents key information in an easy-to-use format with options to download the data to facilitate further analysis.

The latest collated data forms part of a comprehensive update of publicly available information for the UK and Europe from sources such as the Department for Transport (DfT) and Eurostat and covers a broad range of topics such as road network, usage, funding, environment and safety.

Car and taxi traffic

It shows that road-traffic (vehicle miles) in Great Britain was, unsurprisingly, significantly lower in 2020 and 2021 due to Covid-19 related restrictions. A 21% decline in all road traffic is reported in 2020 compared to 2019, with buses and coaches seeing a 33% drop. Car and taxi traffic fell by 25% in the same period, while HGV traffic fell by just 6%.

Traffic levels in Great Britain dropped by 25% in 2020 due to the pandemic but had returned to 83% of pre-pandemic levels a year later. In contrast, rail passenger levels in 2021 represented less than 60% of pre-pandemic levels.

Funding statistics also show that for every pound from the public purse spent on the UK's railways in 2022, less than half of that amount (45 pence) was spent on roads.

RoadFile



CHECKS TO IMPROVE UTILITIES' STREET WORKS

■ **New Government** regulations, *Code of Practice for Street Works Inspections*, come into force for the inspection of utility company street works and assessment of their road reinstatement. They will ensure they are carried out to the best possible standard.

Only around a third of utility companies' street works are inspected currently, regardless of how well those works are carried out. Under the new rules, the best performing utility companies will be inspected less than those performing badly.

Financial penalties

As a result, companies that leave behind roads in poor condition could see all their street works inspected and, with the highway authorities now charging in the region of £50 per defect inspection and a further £120 for follow-up inspections, companies are incentivised to perform better to avoid higher financial penalties.

The Department for Transport's inspection-based regime will focus on telecom companies, which is the worst performing sector – responsible for nearly 13% of poor

The... inspection-based regime will focus on telecom companies, which is the worst performing sector – responsible for nearly 13% of poor street work repairs.

street work repairs. The measures will ensure these companies are checked more regularly until they can bring about noticeable improvements and leave roads in the condition that all road users deserve.

RAC Head of Roads Policy, Nicholas Lyes, said: "Utility companies have a responsibility

to ensure roads are properly reinstated after carrying out their essential maintenance, but unfortunately far too many roads are left in a substandard condition. Introducing new regulations to encourage this to be done to a higher standard first time around will benefit all road users."



COMPETITION AIMS TO ACCELERATE INNOVATION

■ **A competition** is underway to develop innovative solutions that could help road construction and maintenance activities reach net zero carbon.

National Highways is working with Connected Places Catapult to offer up to 10 small to medium sized businesses a share of the £1.7 million funding.

Phase one of the *National Highways Accelerating Low Carbon Innovation Programme* will see winning UK-based companies awarded up to £30,000 to develop a detailed feasibility study of their idea. Phase two will see further funding of up to £80,000 provided to support a selected number of live trials.

"We want to speed up innovation within our sector and adopt new solutions," said Dr Joanna White, pictured right, National



Highways' Roads Development Director. "The innovation accelerator will help take potential solutions and drive them through the research and testing phases."

Proposals must address at least one of three challenges:


- Development or application of alternative materials and techniques;
- Innovations that can improve asset management decision-making;

- Innovations which can contribute to reusing, redeploying and recycling construction materials and assets.

Maintenance and construction

There is also an open challenge category for other ideas that can contribute to National Highways' target of zero emissions in maintenance and construction by 2040.

Up to five larger tier one organisations will also be selected to develop net zero solutions either on their own or in collaboration with an SME, but will not be eligible for funding as part of the programme.

 The innovation accelerator will help take potential solutions and drive them through the research and testing phases."

Dr Joanna White,

National Highways' Roads Development Director





NEW EUROBITUME PRESIDENT

■ **Dave Foster**, Country Business Manager for Shell's Bitumen business in the UK and Ireland, has been elected President of Eurobitume for the next 12 months.

He is an experienced bitumen and asphalt industry professional and takes over from Repsol's Francisco Lucas.

Dave was previously Vice President of Eurobitume, a former Treasurer of the association and has chaired its local representation in the UK for a number of years. He also represents Eurobitume UK at



the Mineral Products Association (MPA) Asphalt committee and in the Asphalt Industry Alliance (AIA), a partnership between the two UK associations.

During his year-long term as President, Dave's priorities include highlighting bitumen's credentials as a sustainable construction material; ensuring Eurobitume continues to meet the needs of its members and stakeholders; and supporting the delivery of the 8th E&E Congress in Budapest in June 2024.

'POTHOLE PLAGUE' IS NUMBER ONE CONCERN FOR ROAD USERS

■ **The UK's** two largest breakdown organisations have both released figures showing a large increase in the number of pothole-related callouts on our roads.

The AA has reported attending almost 60,000 pothole-related incidents in March 2023 – up by 10,000 on the same month last year and an average of 1,870 every day.

Meanwhile, RAC patrols attended 10,076 pothole-related breakdowns between January and March – a 39% increase on the same period in 2022.

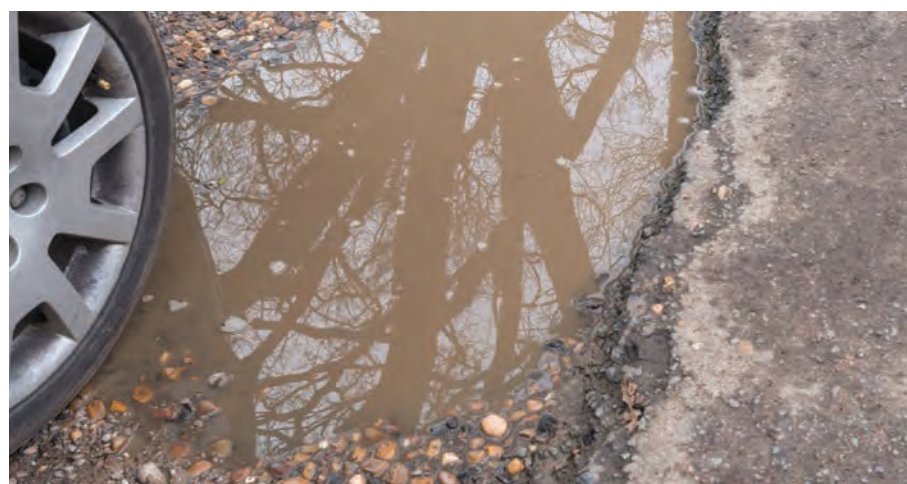
Edmund King, AA President, said: "The current pothole plague firmly puts the UK on the road to despair. The rise in the number of pothole-related incidents is the number one concern for drivers, motorbike riders and cyclists.

"Our patrols attend up to 20% more pothole-related breakdowns in heavy rain,

as many potholes are covered by standing water. If a vehicle strikes a pothole, the cost of wheel, tyre or suspension damage can run into thousands of pounds, placing further strain on already stretched family budgets."

The RAC's long-term Pothole Index, which tracks pothole call-outs from 2006, reveals drivers are now 1.6 times more likely to break down due to the repeated wear caused by potholes than they were 17 years ago.

RAC roads spokesman Simon Williams added: "We implore the Government to think differently to end the pothole plague once and for all. One way could be to ringfence a proportion of fuel duty revenue for the maintenance, repair and improvement of our local roads, because as it stands the £28bn collected from drivers is currently just another form of general taxation."



Over 90 delegates from the UK and across Europe attended Eurobitume's first external training webinar *What is Bitumen?* The free online event included basic information on manufacturing, testing and end applications of bitumen and will soon be available to view via Eurobitume's website. Future educational webinars on *Safe-Handling of Bitumen* and *Bitumen Testing and Specifications* are planned for 06.09.23 and 15.11.23.

Register at www.eurobitume.eu/events



EAPA, the European Asphalt Pavement Association, is celebrating its 50th anniversary during 2023. The organisation works to raise awareness of the asphalt industry across Europe and beyond, highlighting the contribution these materials make to resilience and sustainability.

The first formal celebration event, which took place in Madrid, showcased the history, progress and outputs of EAPA and was attended by over 100 representatives from 14 countries.

The Institute of Asphalt Technology (IAT) has launched a smartphone app for its members and those interested in asphalt and highway maintenance.

It allows users to find technical information easily, access the IAT's asphalt laying guide and see events in their local areas. It can be downloaded from the iPhone App Store and Google Play Store for Android devices.



PROJECTS TO DECARBONISE ROADS

■ **Seven projects** are underway having been selected to take part in the *Live Labs 2: Decarbonising Local Roads* programme.

The three-year, £30 million UK-wide programme has been developed by the Association of Directors of Environment, Economy, Planning and Transport (ADEPT), is funded by the Department for Transport (DfT) and overseen by an Independent Commissioning Board.

Live Labs 2 is focused on tackling the long-term decarbonisation of highways infrastructure and assets across local roads.

Net zero local roads

The final projects were selected after successfully pitching their ideas, *Dragons' Den* style, to a panel of independent highways and transportation experts.

The winning teams all put forward programmes that the panel considered to be ambitious projects that would accelerate decarbonisation across highways' infrastructure and transform local authorities' approach to delivering net zero local roads across the UK.

As with Live Labs 1, recognising the synergies between projects to enable close collaboration is essential, so some projects are working closely together in four interconnected themes developed from the successful applications:

1. A UK centre of excellence for materials – providing a centralised hub for research and innovation for the decarbonisation of local roads materials,

ADEPT

Association of Directors of
Environment, Economy, Planning & Transport

developing a knowledge bank, real-life conditions testing and sharing and learning insights: North Lanarkshire Council and Transport for West Midlands.

2. Corridor and place-based decarbonisation – a suite of corridor and place-based decarbonisation interventions covering urban through to rural applications, trialling, testing and showcasing applications within the circular economy and localism agendas: Wessex partnership (Somerset County Council, Cornwall Council and Hampshire County Council), Devon County Council, and Liverpool City Council.

3. A green carbon laboratory – examining the role that the non-operational highways 'green' asset can play in providing a source of materials and fuels to decarbonise highway operations: South

Gloucestershire Council and West Sussex County Council.

4. A future lighting testbed – a systems-based examination of the future of lighting for local roads to determine what assets are needed for our future networks and how they can be further decarbonised across their lifecycle: East Riding of Yorkshire Council.

Each successful application had to demonstrate that its project was committed to programme-level monitoring and evaluation, a wide-ranging communications programme, effective learning and skills dissemination, enabling behavioural change and organisational analysis as well as providing aggregated carbon assessment and quantification.

A huge ambition

Mark Kemp, President of ADEPT said: "Live Labs 2 has a huge ambition – to fundamentally change how we embed decarbonisation into our decision-making and to share our learning with the wider sector to enable behaviour change. Each project will bring local authority-led innovation and a collaborative approach to create a long-lasting transformation of business as usual. I am looking forward to the opportunity to learn from our successful bidders and taking that into my own organisation."

More information about the seven individual projects can be found at: www.adeptnet.org.uk/livelabs2

Each project
will bring local
authority-led
innovation..."

Mark Kemp,
President of ADEPT





This year's ALARM survey makes bleak reading, with worsening conditions and mounting costs set to spell more misery for road users.

MORE THAN £14 billion is now needed to fix the backlog of carriageway repairs in England and Wales and local authority highway teams only received around two-thirds of what they needed to stop local roads from further deterioration, according to the [2023 Annual Local Authority Road Maintenance \(ALARM\) Survey Report](#).

ALARM reports that local authority highway teams in England and Wales only received around two-thirds of what they needed in the last year to stop our local roads from further deterioration and that more than £14 billion is now needed to fix the backlog of carriageway repairs.

Inflationary pressures

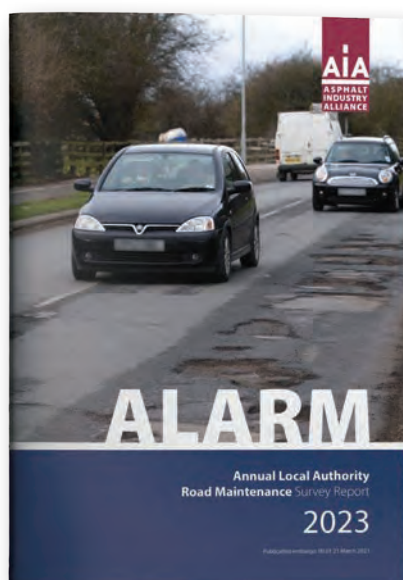
Despite the small increase in overall highway maintenance budgets highlighted, less is being spent on the carriageway itself and rising costs due to inflationary pressures mean engineers have reported being forced to postpone or cancel road schemes to make savings.

The ALARM survey, carried out annually by the Asphalt Industry Alliance (AIA), aims to take a snapshot of the general

A One-time
Catch-up would
take 11 years to
Complete



and Cost
£14.02bn



state of funding for local roads and the resultant condition of the network, based on information provided directly by those responsible for its maintenance.

The data shows that in the last year, the gap between what local authorities received and what they said they would have needed to keep roads to their own target conditions and prevent further decline is now £1.30 billion – a jump of more than 20% on last year's figure and the highest amount reported in 28 years of successive ALARM surveys. And, it would now cost £14.02 billion to tackle the backlog of carriageway repairs and bring the network up to a standard from which it can be maintained efficiently and cost-effectively going forward. This is a further 11% increase

on last year's record figure and would take an average of 11 years to complete.

Rick Green, AIA Chair, said: "Highway engineers can only do so much with the resources they are given and should be applauded for the steps they take to keep roads safe. Potholes and the condition of our local roads remain key issues for the public and the Chancellor went some way to recognising this in his Spring Budget.

"But the additional £200m one-off payment for local roads in England, while welcome, is just not enough. It represents around 20% of the shortfall in English local authorities' 2022-23 budgets and will do little to improve overall structural conditions and stem further decline.

More road user complaints

"We all appreciate that there are difficult choices to make with demands and pressures on the public purse coming from every area, but not investing in local road maintenance only leads to worsening conditions, which impact on other locally provided public services, a rising bill to fix the problem and more road user complaints."

ALARM 2023 received a record number of responses from 75% of local authorities in England and Wales. The findings relate to the 2022/23 financial year and also show that:

- While half (51%) of local roads are

...rising costs due to inflationary pressures mean engineers have reported being forced to postpone or cancel road schemes to make savings.

reported to be in good structural condition, the remainder, more than 100,000 miles, could, without appropriate maintenance measures, continue to deteriorate to the point of needing to be rebuilt within the next 15 years.

- 18% of the network (almost 37,000 miles) is already assessed as having less than 5 years' structural life remaining.
- One pothole is filled the equivalent of every 22 seconds.
- Roads are only resurfaced on average once every 116 years.

Rick Green concluded: "To really improve conditions and create a safe, resilient and sustainable network, what's needed is a longer-term funding horizon from central government with more highway budget ring-fencing. This would help local authority engineers to plan effectively and implement more efficient works to protect and enhance the resilience of the local road network."

Local Government Association Transport spokesperson, Cllr David Renard, agreed: "Councils work tirelessly to repair our local roads, which are the bedrock of our economy – vital for businesses and for ordinary people going about their day-to-day lives.

Increasingly challenging

"It is therefore alarming that, due to soaring inflation and historic funding cuts, councils' repair backlog has grown and this has become increasingly challenging to tackle.

"To improve the condition of our roads, the Government should provide a funding increase for councils, including meeting



new inflationary pressures. This would help councils focus on long-term investment in existing roads, delivering preventative maintenance and reducing the occurrence of potholes in the first place, which are more expensive to repair."

The full ALARM survey will be available to download at: www.asphaltuk.org

Support from others in the sector:



"We've long campaigned for a more sustainable form of funding that allows councils to replace roads that are at the end of their useful lives. This is why the Government's eternal emphasis on filling potholes is so frustrating... As a nation so dependent on road transport, we must not let this go on."

Nicholas Lyes,
RAC Head of Roads Policy



"Potholes and poor road surfaces are a problem that all road users can unite on, but they are particularly dangerous for people who cycle. The problem demands a proper long-term funding solution. We support the AIA in its annual call... to have our local and rural roads made a national priority for investment."

Nick Chamberlin,
Policy Manager, British Cycling



"The condition of some of our roads is an international embarrassment and it needs a concerted effort and investment to halt the decline. Half of councils have already cut back spending on road maintenance. Astonishingly it now takes more than 100 years to fully resurface the streets and the cash needed to salvage the infrastructure has spiralled to the extreme."

Jack Cousens,
AA Head of Roads Policy



"The findings from this year's ALARM survey continue to lay bare the enormity of the challenge facing councils and the deterioration of their networks. A backlog that continues to increase is a cause of concern not just to councils, but also to the long-term public purse."

Paula Claytonsmith,
Government & Strategy Director, Local Council Roads Innovation Group

TRIALS OF 'BIOGENIC ASPHALTS' GATHER PACE

The specification of low carbon materials can help those responsible for our road networks meet their net zero objectives. Considerable advances have been seen in the development of lower carbon asphalts containing natural biogenic material within the bitumen, seeking to reduce emissions and enhance durability.

Hanson has used its *CarbonLock* product to resurface part of the A30 near Exeter, Devon



TRIALS OF 'biogenic asphalts' are becoming more widespread as the industry looks to offer lower carbon products to help reach the Government's net zero carbon ambitions.

These products contain natural biogenic materials which absorb and store CO₂ throughout their first life. This is then 'locked' within the binder in the asphalt mixture and not released back into the atmosphere, even when the asphalt is recycled.

When Birmingham City Council and its principal contractor, Kier, were looking at ways of reducing carbon emissions as part of scheduled work to resurface the A452 Chester Road, it was the perfect opportunity to trial 'biogenic asphalt'.

Sustainability forums

As part of an alliance framework, monthly sustainability forums were held involving all supply partners, to encourage innovation and more sustainable solutions.

"There was a strong will from all parties to lower the operational carbon footprint," explains Brian Kent, National Technical Director at Tarmac. "Given the high traffic volumes and importance of this route, a key part of the challenge was to reassure the client that the proposed solution

would deliver the same performance as a more conventional asphalt with no compromise in long-term performance."

In all, 530 tonnes of Tarmac's biogenic asphalt was laid as the binder course, saving 6.5kg CO₂e per tonne of asphalt or 3.45 tonnes of CO₂e in total.

National Highways has also formally trialled asphalt containing a polymer modified bitumen (PMB) bio-binder on the strategic network for the first time.

Hanson has used its *CarbonLock* product to resurface the A30 Cuttredge to Alphington eastbound scheme near Exeter, Devon, as part of its pavement category management framework agreement with National Highways.

Two trials were carried out: the first includes Nynas's biogenic binder *Nypol RE* and the second trial uses the same asphalt mixture but includes Shell's new bio-component binder *Cariphalte CarbonSink*.

Both asphalts were produced at Hanson's Hingston Down plant and laid by Hanson Contracting and each trial comprised of a 40mm thickness surface course with 53 PSV aggregates for around 500 metres of both lanes of the eastbound carriageway.

In addition to the biogenic material in it effectively acting as a carbon sink, the

PMB binder used in both trials is expected to enhance durability and further extend the life of the asphalt, thus reducing the frequency of maintenance interventions.

The work was coordinated by Atkins as part of the National Highways SPaTS 2 (Special Professional and Technical Services) research project Future Asphalt Surface Course Linking to NH Net Zero. The performance of the two trial sections will be closely monitored to see how they compare with 'standard' PMB asphalt used elsewhere on the project.

Successful trials

North of the border, Breedon and Nynas have also used asphalt containing biogenic components on the Scottish network for the first time.

The move follows successful trials in England and the product used is part of the *Breedon Balance* range of materials which also contains Nynas's *Nypol RE*. The asphalt complies with the Transport Scotland TS2010 specification, and was laid on the A92 in the north east by Amey, network contractor for the region.

The trial aligns with Transport Scotland's aim of reducing carbon emissions by 75% by 2030.

...a key part of the challenge was to reassure the client that the proposed solution would deliver the same performance as a more conventional asphalt."

Brian Kent, National Technical Director, Tarmac



Successful: asphalt containing biogenic components has been laid by Tarmac in the north east on the A92

NEW ROADS FROM RECYCLED TYRES

CEMEX HAS introduced an asphalt that incorporates crumb rubber as part of its focus on the circular economy.

RUBBERMIX ASPHALT (RMA) enables end-of-life tyres to be recycled and incorporated into asphalt mixes for road maintenance and construction. It uses crumb rubber made from shredded waste tyres, preventing the material from going to landfill.

Scott Jones, Director of Asphalt and Paving Solutions for CEMEX UK, said: "The UK generates over 486,000 tonnes of used tyres each year and *RMA* has the potential to recycle up to 500 tyres per kilometre of road.

"By transforming waste materials into valuable solutions, embodied carbon emissions are reduced along with other environmental benefits. *RMA* can also be combined with our range of lower carbon asphalts to further increase the sustainability of a project."

GOING A LONG WAY BEYOND BLACK IN BEDFORD

COLOURED ASPHALT has been used by Bedford Borough Council to resurface the tree-lined promenade that runs alongside the River Great Ouse as part of its *Riverside For All* project.

The promenade renewal was the first phase of a £1.5 million improvement scheme to enhance Bedford's Victorian

Embankment, which is used by many for walking, running and cycling.

Historically the area had a buff-coloured surface treatment, which had eroded away over time, so local contractor DJT Surfacing specified Aggregate Industries' *SuperColour Ultra 6mm* asphalt in buff as a replacement on the embankment to complement its

surroundings and create a calming environment.

Coloured asphalt can transform outdoor spaces, creating attractive areas that are functional and hard wearing and allows clients to enhance safety through colour-coded zones.

Differentiate

SuperColour Ultra uses a combination of clear binders and pigments to create a range of coloured asphalts that can visually differentiate bus lanes, cycleways, pedestrianised areas and private drives. Thomas Edgcumbe, Managing Director for Surfacing Solutions at Aggregate Industries, said: "When people think of asphalt used in public areas, they typically think of the standard black variety.

However, the reality is that asphalt has come a long way in recent years, with an explosion of new variants and colour options designed to transform outdoor spaces, creating attractive areas that remain functional and hard-wearing.

"Customers now have access to a wide range of colourways that can differentiate and enhance a project's potential and/or distinguish important safety features."



Coloured asphalt used beside the River Great Ouse in Bedford

EXTRA MONEY TO HELP TACKLE 'POTHOLE CURSE'

THE CHANCELLOR Jeremy Hunt announced an additional £200 million in 2023/24 to tackle 'the curse of potholes' in England in the Spring Budget.

The money is in addition to the existing highway maintenance funding settlement announced in the October 2021 Spending Review and brings the total in the Potholes Fund allocation to £700 million for this financial year.

Dilapidated local roads

RAC Head of Roads Policy Nicholas Lyes said: "While welcome, another £200m is unlikely to make a big difference to the overall quality of our dilapidated local roads. We need to significantly increase funding for local road maintenance and improvement so councils can resurface roads properly rather than patching them up and hoping for the best.

"Last year the Government spent

£1.125bn on local roads in England which is in stark contrast to the £7bn that went into major roads... despite local roads covering so many more miles."

Rick Green, Chair of the Asphalt Industry Alliance (AIA), agrees: "The Chancellor is right to recognise that potholes on our local roads are a curse, but the key thing is they should not be inevitable, and are the symptom of a network underfunded for many years.

"Unlike other transport networks, there is no visible long-term investment plan for local roads and without one, road users won't see any real improvement in structural conditions on the roads they use every day and on which all other locally provided services

rely." The Department for Transport (DfT) also announced a further £47.5 million to make road safety improvements to 27 of England's most high-risk roads in the third round of its Safer Roads Fund.

The money, in addition to the £100 million already allocated in the first two rounds, means the Government is still to deliver all of the £175 million pledged to enhancing road safety in its 2017 announcement.

...£200m is unlikely to make a big difference to the overall quality of our dilapidated local roads."

Nicholas Lyes,
Head of Roads Policy, RAC



REPORT TO CALL FOR RINGFENCED BUDGETS



THE ALL-PARTY Parliamentary Group (APPG) for Better Roads aims to promote the safety, environmental, economic and social case for a properly maintained and sustainable network.

With more than £14 billion now needed to fix the backlog of carriageway repairs on the local road network in England and Wales (see page 10), the Group's most recent meeting discussed potential ways in which it could further its activity to help deliver sustained funding, to ensure a more cost-effective, longer-term approach to maintaining the network.

This followed a summary from AIA Chair, Rick Green on the evidence of positive impacts from the Pothole Action Fund on local road conditions prior to it being changed in 2021, which the group agreed should be the basis for an APPG-backed report calling for enhanced budget ringfencing.

More information on the APPG, which is chaired by Sir Christopher Chope, MP for Christchurch, including minutes from the meetings, can be found at: www.appg-betterroads.org/

WELSH SCHEMES ON HOLD

ALMOST ALL planned major road projects in Wales have been put on hold, based on the findings of the Roads Review Panel and as published in the Welsh Government's National Transport Delivery Plan.

The Roads Review Panel, an independent expert group set up in 2021, was tasked with assessing 59 road building projects such as a third Menai bridge, the expansion of the A55 in Flintshire and improvements to the M4. Based on its findings, any new roads will now only be built in Wales if they meet four criteria:

- Reduce carbon emissions and support a shift to public transport, walking and cycling.
- Improve safety through small-scale change.
- Help the Welsh Government adapt to the impacts of climate change.
- Provide connections to jobs and areas

of economic activity in a way that maximises the use of public transport, walking and cycling.

Plus, the guidance means that, in developing schemes, the focus should be on minimising carbon emissions, not increasing road capacity, increasing emissions through higher vehicle speeds or adversely affecting ecologically valuable sites.

However, despite Deputy Climate Change Minister Lee Waters stating that the Welsh Government is putting climate change at the heart of its approach to roads, the decision has been condemned for its lack of engagement and not seeking the views of the public into account. Members of the Senedd have since voted for a Welsh Parliament motion criticising the review.



INVITATION TO E&E CONGRESS IN HUNGARY

RESILIENCE, SUSTAINABILITY and innovation are the key words of the 8th E&E Congress, which is taking place in Budapest, Hungary, from 19 to 21 June 2024.

The event, jointly organised by the European Asphalt Pavement Association (EAPA) and Eurobitume, is aimed at those that work in the asphalt and bitumen sectors as well as stakeholders including academics, specifiers and road owners/operators.

The three-day programme includes a combination of presentations, workshops and poster sessions. There will also be opportunities for delegates to engage with speakers, sponsor organisations and an extensive range of exhibitors. The main objectives of the congress are to:

- Provide a platform for our industry sectors and stakeholders to demonstrate and learn from new innovations and technologies;



- Offer a unique opportunity for all participants to engage, exchange ideas and network in an effective way;
- Stimulate discussions and debates that will help to steer a common approach to positively manage future challenges;

- Encourage attendance from future leaders to benefit from the unique industry experience and motivate them to be proactive in creating and being part of our future.

More information can be found at: www.eecongress2024.org



REGISTER FOR FREE EVENT

THE DATE has been set for this year's online *Sharing Best Practice* event: Thursday November 2 between 10am and 1pm. The annual event, aimed at local authority highway engineers, is free to attend and is organised by the Asphalt Industry Alliance.

The agenda will be developed to feature speakers covering a range of pertinent

topics including sector innovation, local authority best practice case studies and updates on materials development, with a focus on resilience and decarbonisation.

To register your interest in attending, visit: www.asphaltuk.org/events, where you can also find information about the 2022 event, including links to view the speakers' presentations.

DIARY DATES 2023-24

Some planned dates for your diary (subject to change):

6-8 June: **Traffex Parkex 2023**,
NEC, Birmingham www.traffex.com

3-5 October: **LCRIG Strictly Highways**,
Winter Gardens, Blackpool
www.lcrig.org.uk/events/strictly-highways-2023

18-19 October: **Highways UK**,
Hall 5, NEC, Birmingham
www.terrapinn.com/highwaysUK/aia

2 November:
AIA Sharing Best Practice,
Online
www.asphaltuk.org/events

19-21 June 2024: **8th E&E Congress**,
Budapest, Hungary
www.eecongress2024.org

25-27 June 2024: **Hillhead 2024**,
Hillhead Quarry, Buxton
www.hillhead.com

Highways UK

ROADS FOR A CONNECTED FUTURE
OCTOBER 18 - 19 | NEC BIRMINGHAM

THE MINERAL Products Association (MPA) and Asphalt Industry Alliance (AIA) are Event Partners for **Highways UK**, which brings together all those responsible for planning, developing, managing, maintaining and future-proofing the UK's road networks.

The theme is *Roads for a Connected Future*, and this year's event focuses on the key areas of collaboration, sustainability and collaboration. Registration for the exhibition and all sessions is free.

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