

From mountain to sea

Road Inspection Summary

When do we inspect roads?

Our road network has programmed inspection times. Our network is categorised to determine the frequency that routes are inspected. For example, roads which are main and secondary distributors are inspected monthly, link roads are inspected quarterly, and local access roads are inspected annually.

In addition to our scheduled inspections, we also inspect defects which have been raised through our website by members of the public. The category of road that the reported defect is on, will affect the timescale in which it is inspected, e.g. main distributor roads will take priority over local access roads. It can take up to 5 working days for a defect reported to be inspected. Upon inspection, we will score and categorise the defect into one of the categories shown in Table 1 below.

How do we score defects?

Aberdeenshire Council has implemented a risk-based approach to defect inspections. This means that we look at the risk of injury a defect poses and score it on severity as well as likelihood of it causing injury to the public. We do this using a scoring matrix, allowing us to categorise the defect (Table 1) and prioritise defect repairs.

The following example shows some of the factors which are taken into consideration when scoring a pothole defect.

Volume of traffic – Is this on a busy A class road or in a residential cul-de-sac? A high traffic volume that may be exposed to the defect will increase the likelihood of injury therefore a defect on an A class road will score higher than one in a residential cul-de-sac.

Location on road – Is the pothole in the way of the wheel track of a vehicle? If the pothole is in a location where a tyre is likely to drive over it, this increases the risk and therefore increases the score.

Size – What is the width and depth of the pothole? As the size increases, the score also increases.

Speed Limit – Hitting the pothole at 60mph vs 30mph poses a greater risk, therefore the defect on a high speed road would score higher than if that same defect was on a lower speed road.

By scoring our defects using this type of process, it allows us to prioritise our resources and programme our repair works to tackle those defects which have a greater risk of injuring the public.

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How do we categories defects?

Once defects are inspected, the score will determine which of the following categories it falls into, ultimately determining the repair time.

Table 1. Safety Defect Priority & Response Time

Defect	Priority 5	Priority 4	Priority 3	Priority 2	Priority 1
Response Time	12 months	6 months	60 Days	5 Days	24 Hours
Score	201-300	301-400	401-600	601-800	>801

Priority 1: Immediate Action

Represents a critical risk to road users and **should be corrected or made safe at the time of inspection, if reasonably practicable**. In this context, making safe may constitute displaying warning signs or/and coning off to protect the public from the defect. If it is not possible to correct or make safe the defect at the time of inspection, **emergency repairs to make safe should be carried out within 24 hours**. Where practicable, safety defects of this category should not be left unattended until a temporary or permanent repair has been carried out.

Priority 2: Repair within 5 working days.

This allows a more proactive approach to be adopted for those defects that represent a medium risk to road users or because there is a risk of short-term structural deterioration.

Priority 3: Repair within 60 working days.

Defects that require attention because they represent a low risk to road users.

Priority 4: Programme within 6 months.

Defects of a low risk to road users and their repair is not urgent. This allows defects of this nature to be included onto longer planned programmes of work.



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Priority 5: Programme within 12 months.

Defects of a low risk to road users and their repair is not urgent and lesser than priority 4 defects. This allows defects of this nature to be included onto longer planned programmes of work.

Priority 6: No Action Required

Based on an assessment of the risk of deterioration at next inspection. Defects in category 6 are not classed as safety defects as they score less than 201.