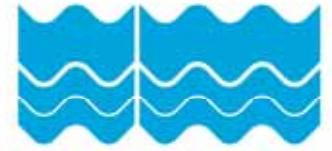


# East Sussex Highways



Fact Sheet | ESH 04

## Winter road maintenance

Each year we spend nearly £1.5 million on roads to prevent snow or ice adversely affecting the travelling public.

### What we do

- Grit priority roads\* when we know there is a risk of ice or snow;
- Clear snow from priority roads, and
- Treat the most important pedestrian areas whenever possible.

\* *Priority roads include all A and B class roads and busy commuter routes.*

### Why do we grit the roads?

Grit is another name for 'rock salt'. It helps to keep our roads safe by reducing the risk of ice. The grit works by lowering the temperature at which water freezes. It relies on the action of vehicle tyres to spread it over the road. It can, however, get too cold for the grit to work and below minus 5°C the effectiveness of grit is reduced and roads may still freeze.

Rain, or snow, can wash the grit away leaving roads prone to re-icing, so gritting should take place after the rain but before the water freezes. The grit has been specifically provided for the treatment of public roads and pavements and should only be used in these areas.

### Which roads do we grit?

We give priority to roads carrying the most traffic and the main routes between populated areas. We grit all A and B roads and main roads in both town and rural areas. During periods of heavy snow, we clear and treat routes in priority order, starting with the A roads. During long periods of bad weather, whenever possible, we will grit other roads and important pedestrian areas. Just over 800 miles of the county's road network is gritted.

We do not grit private roads, offices and car parks as the owners responsible for these must make their own arrangements by buying their own grit or bins through commercially available sources (such as a DIY store or on the internet) although we would be happy to provide assistance and advice.

### When do we put grit down?

Gritting the road at the right time is crucial and we try to provide a high level of service at all times. We use the latest weather forecasting technology to decide what is required to protect the roads and we monitor road surface temperatures to decide where and when to put grit down.

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If the forecast predicts rain in the evening, with a freeze in the morning, we will be out making the road as safe as possible for you to travel. We have officers on standby out of office hours, at weekends and during holiday periods to help keep you safe during periods of cold weather.

Weather forecasts are not 100% accurate, so while we will do our very best, we cannot guarantee that roads will always be totally clear of ice and snow.

### Please remember

- It takes time for grit to become effective after roads have been treated;
- Rain can wash grit off the roads leaving them prone to re-icing;
- Should rain turn to snow during busy travel periods we cannot put down grit as the gritters can be held up due to traffic moving very slowly;
- In severe cold weather (below minus 5°C, grit is less effective).

### Advice for winter driving

- Before setting out, consider whether your journey is really essential.
- Check local radio for travel information, including weather forecasts.
- Drive as safely as the conditions allow – treated roads can still be icy.
- Leave more time for your journey.
- When visibility is poor due to rain, fog or snow, use dipped headlights and rear fog lights.
- Make your signals clear and visible.
- Carefully test your brakes after going through deep water – braking lightly will help them dry out.
- Always be aware of debris on the roads, especially during and after stormy conditions.
- Give snow ploughs and gritting lorries plenty of room – please be patient.

### How to contact us

You can get more information about our services and view our series of Highways fact sheets, by visiting our website, or by contacting our Highways Contact Centre.

Phone: 0345 60 80 193 (calls charged at the local rate)

Fax: 01273 482955

E-mail: [highways@eastsussex.gov.uk](mailto:highways@eastsussex.gov.uk)

Website: [eastsussex.gov.uk](http://eastsussex.gov.uk)

Report a fault on line: [eastsussex.gov.uk/fault](http://eastsussex.gov.uk/fault)

All our fact sheet leaflets are available in large print, Braille, on audio tape, on CD or in other languages. Please let us know if you would like any of these services by calling our East Sussex Highways Contact Centre on 0345 60 80 193. Leaflets are also available in PDF format which you can download from our website at [eastsussex.gov.uk/highways](http://eastsussex.gov.uk/highways)