

Shetland Islands Council Surface Dressing Information

Roadworks are never popular however they are a “fact of life” if we want to have well maintained roads.

All surfaces wear with time and need maintenance to keep them in a safe condition.

Surface dressing provides a simple and cost effective way of improving the surface and preventing further deterioration leading to expensive repair work. This information sheet answers some of the more common questions asked about why we surface dress our roads.



Q. Spreading hot bitumen and loose chips is a very messy method of repairing roads. Why is it still used?

A. Surface dressing is a cost effective treatment that minimises further deterioration of the road surface. It seals the surface and provides good texture to reduce skidding.

Contacts for Surface Dressing Enquiries

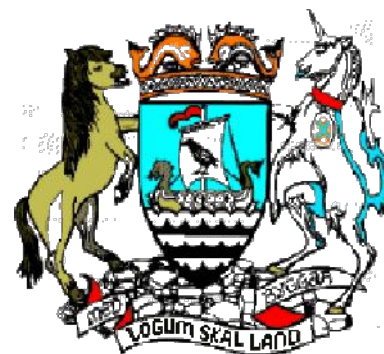
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Roads Maintenance Services

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Surface Dressing Information

Q. What does surface dressing involve?

A. We spray the existing surface with a coating of hot bitumen and cover this with stone chips. The chips are then rolled into the bitumen to provide a water resistant protective layer with improved skidding resistance.

Q. Why not wait until after the summer to do this work?

A. This treatment can only successfully be applied during warm weather. In colder and wetter weather the bitumen fails to bond to the existing road leading to early failure.

Q. Why are so many loose chips left behind?

A. To make sure that the whole surface is covered and we don't end up with bare patches we need to put down more chips than will be needed. We leave the loose chips for a short period to be trafficked after which they are swept clear.

Advisory speed limit signs are left out for a few days until most of the loose chips have been removed. This is both to protect the new dressing and to prevent damage to vehicles. Depending on the weather we may carry out additional sweeping or dusting to minimise the effect on traffic.

Q. What can I do to help?

Motorists can help by driving slowly and observing the slow speed signs particularly during the first few days after application of the treatment. Residents in the area receiving treatment can assist by making sure that their cars are not parked in the area to be treated. In urban areas we will try to advise residents a day or two before treatment. Although we will try to treat your road on the agreed date it must be recognised that the process is weather dependent so treatment may be delayed by adverse conditions. Parents are asked to keep small children away from the area being treated. Heavy plant is dangerous and children's clothes, skin and toys can all get marked with bitumen. Report any concerns immediately to our office 01595 / 744100.