

Guidelines for Statutory Highway Inspections



South Tyneside Council

Document Control

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Foreword

Framework for Highway Safety Inspections

Introduction

Section 41 of the Highways Act 1980 places a statutory duty on all Highway Authorities (HAs) to maintain highways maintainable at public expense.

Adoption of the recommendations outlined in the Well-managed Highway Infrastructure, A Code of Practice 2016 (WmHI), is a matter for each highway authority based on their own interpretation, risks, needs and priorities.

Highway Authorities (HAs) need to prove that they have taken such care as in all the circumstances was reasonably required to secure that the part of the highway to which any action relates was not dangerous for traffic. This is usually proven by the Council having a reasonable system of routine scheduled highway safety inspections in place having regard to various factors set out within section 58 of the Highways Act 1980.

Collaboration

This framework document has been collaboratively developed with a number of Tyne & Wear authorities and demonstrates insofar as is reasonable, given the differing demographics of the collaboration, a consistent approach with regards to the consideration of maintenance hierarchies, investigatory levels, frequency of inspections and response times to repairs.

This document has been collaboratively developed by the following authorities

- North Tyneside
- South Tyneside
- Gateshead
- Newcastle
- Sunderland

in consultation with

- Durham
- Northumberland

Highway Safety Inspection Guidance

How the highway safety inspections are carried out is set out within this document which takes into account local asset bases and factors affecting the network use.

In addition to these factors, each Authority's maintenance hierarchy and inspection frequencies have been developed based upon local knowledge and experience of their highway network.

South Tyneside Council has assessed risk within a review of maintenance hierarchy and inspection frequencies. The resulting new hierarchies and

inspection frequencies are broadly in line with previous versions which have proven to deliver an acceptable risk for the authority and reasonable protection for highway users. Thereafter the intervention criteria for defects were reviewed. The intervention criteria historically applied by the authority have proved effective in defending claims and pass the reasonable test within existing resources. This along with the claim history and the successful repudiation rate over the past five years has informed the development of this Highway Safety Inspection Guidance document.

Against this backdrop the recommendations set out in the national guidance document, Well-managed Highway Infrastructure, A Code of Practice 2016 have been considered and applied.

1. Introduction

The Council, as Highways Authority has a duty under Section 41 of the Highways Act 1980 to maintain highways maintainable at public expense.

The “Engineering service” section is responsible for managing works within the Borough for the Council in order to comply with the “duty to maintain”.

The Highways Inspection system is of fundamental importance in this process and the Authority must be able to demonstrate that it operates a reasonable and adequate system for maintenance and repair. Such a system must consider:

- a. The current code of practice;
- b. Frequency and quality of inspections;
- c. The manner in which complaints and accidents are dealt with;
- d. The efficiency of carrying out repairs;
- e. The defect investigatory levels;
- f. An adequate system of documentation.

The purpose of the guidelines is to formally set out the regime for undertaking statutory highway inspections and the procedures to be followed to ensure that the Authority complies with its statutory duty.

These guidelines have been prepared with reference to Well managed Highway Infrastructure 2016. It has been used by South Tyneside Council to form the structure of the inspection regime and gives guidance on the activities to be undertaken. This guidance includes information on investigatory levels and processes.

2. Network Hierarchy

A network hierarchy is the foundation of a coherent, consistent and auditable maintenance strategy. It is important that the hierarchy adopted reflects the needs and priorities of each road in the network. These may be determined by importance, (i.e. a route leading to a major hospital), or environmental, (i.e. rural, urban, busy shopping streets etc.), or non-vehicular traffic factors (i.e. pedestrian usage). Footway priorities may sometimes conflict with carriageway priorities and as a consequence it is necessary to have separate carriageway and footway hierarchies, For clarity we have limited the number of defined hierarchies for both roads and footways to the number of inspection frequencies.

The following tables have been developed by South Tyneside Council in line with the recommendations of Well managed Highway Infrastructure 2016.

It should be noted that the routine programmed inspections have been realigned to correspond with events held in the borough.

Table 1 – Carriageway Hierarchy

Maintenance hierarchy	Category	Characteristics	Frequency
C1	Strategic Local Highway Route	Routes to provide strategic links to the wider region with little frontage access or pedestrian traffic.	12 Times per year driven
C2	Main Distributor	Key arterial routes serving major employment and residential areas within the borough.	12 Times per year driven
C3	Secondary Distributor and Link Roads	Urban routes carrying bus, HGV and local traffic with front access and frequent junctions. All remaining through routes which have not been classified as strategic or main distributor.	12 Times per year driven
C4	Estate and minor roads linking to secondary distributor	Roads which do not fall into the above categories will be captured in this maintenance hierarchy. These are primarily residential roads Where a footway is adjacent to a C4 category, the carriageway inspection regime will default to the footway network category frequency.	Yearly walked

Footway Hierarchy - Footway maintenance hierarchy, as with carriageway hierarchy, will not necessarily be determined by road classification but by usage and character. Local factors such as the proximity of schools or other establishments attracting higher than normal numbers of pedestrians to the area, are taken into account. As a general guide, four maintenance categories recommended for footways are described in the table below, which include South Tyneside street names for illustration:

Table 2 – Footway Hierarchy (which includes inspecting the carriageway surface)

Maintenance Hierarchy	Category	Characteristics	Frequency
F1	Prestige and primary Walking Zone	Busy or very busy areas with high public space and street scene contribution, busy urban shopping areas and main pedestrian routes. e.g. Major shopping areas such as King Street, The nook etc.	12 times per year
F2	Secondary Walking Routes	Fairly busy routes through local areas feeding directly into prestige and primary routes Local shopping centres and larger amenities Routes leading to larger schools	4 times per year
F3	Link Footways	Linking local access footways generally feeding into secondary	2 times per year

		walking routes. Small number of shops and/or local amenities. Routes leading to smaller schools	
F4	Local Access and Minor Footways	Less busy footways, short estate roads to the main routes. May include isolated shops and amenities They are generally residential / estate roads	Yearly

3. Safety Inspections - Frequency

The frequency for safety inspections of individual network sections may take into consideration the following and this list is not exhaustive:

- category within the network hierarchy
- neighbourhood characteristics
- incident and inspection history
- characteristics of adjoining network elements

The parameters which need to be specified for a safety inspection regime are:

- frequency of inspection
- items for inspection
- degree and nature of deficiency
- nature of response
- Investigatory levels are set below the level of danger.

The main factor in determining inspection frequency is the category within the hierarchy. Where there is uncertainty about the category to be used, an onsite-inspection may be undertaken and other factors may be taken into account such as:

- road use might be at the margin of the category but have higher than normal levels of growth. Extensive development may be taking place or planned
- the section might have a higher than normal level of accidents or related incidents which would suggest unusually high levels of risk
- although the number of vehicles on the carriageway might be low, there might be high levels of pedestrians or cyclists

- the route might be the subject of promotion by the authority, for example as a 'Safer Route to School' or access to a railway station. A cycling route may be part of the National Cycle Route Network
- in urban areas, it may be desirable to combine footway and carriageway inspections to mitigate against problems associated with heavy traffic and parked cars

It is generally accepted that the inspection frequencies detailed in the 2005 code of practice provide an acceptable statutory safety inspection regime. Those frequencies have been reviewed and maintained in the revised inspection process.

South Tyneside Council has the inspection frequencies as per tables 1 and 2.

Where carriageway and footway hierarchies intersect, for example at pelican or zebra crossings or other defined crossing points at junctions, the footway hierarchy should always take precedence in the determination of inspection frequencies, defect definition and responses. This principle should also apply to intersections between carriageways and cycle routes and between cycle routes and footways where the higher standard should be adopted.

The policy allows for variation in the frequencies due to unforeseen exceptional factors such as sickness and weather that may impact on the target frequency as it details the number of inspections within a 12 month period. While every endeavour will be made to meet these inspection frequencies occasional minor infractions may occur.

4. Highways Inspections

Highway Inspections may be a walked safety inspection or a monthly driven inspection.

Walked Safety Inspections - (footways and carriageways)

For the purposes of carrying out all walked safety inspections, the Community Area Forums, (now referred to as CAFs) are used loosely to formulate inspection routes. South Tyneside geographical area is divided into five CAFs. (Appendix 1).

Safety Inspections are required to identify all defects likely to create danger or serious inconvenience to users of the network or the wider community. The risk is assessed on site, and the defect identified either as requiring a Category E, 1 or 2 responses.

In general, defects of less than 20mm in size in the footway shall not be repaired. Consideration must be given to the location, overall condition of the surrounding area and the possible rate of further deterioration, which may increase the risk of a defect becoming dangerous should it not be repaired within the appropriate response time.

Areas that are subject to wide spread deterioration shall be reported to the Highways and infrastructure manager for consideration for inclusion within

planned maintenance programmes on the spreadsheets appended to these guidelines as Appendix 2

The inspection schedules are automatically generated using a specialist software system. All inspection and repair information is recorded and held on the system.

It is essential that the various documents are clear and that there are no discrepancies or ambiguities and that they are completed in sufficient detail to demonstrate that the inspection has been properly carried out and has not been of a cursory nature.

Where defects are the responsibility of others, e.g. statutory undertakers' apparatus or street furniture, the relevant details will be passed on to the appropriate person(s) for action. This will generally be communicated verbally or by electronic transmission, no later than the following working day after the inspection date.

Monthly Driven Inspections – (carriageway only)

All Principal Class A, Class B and C carriageways, link roads, bus routes and other carriageways on the Resilient Network in South Tyneside, (appendix 4), are included on the monthly driven checklist, (appendix 5), These inspections are solely to identify carriageway defects and are in addition to the normal routine walked inspections.

The monthly driven inspections are carried out as follows: A three person team consisting of an inspector and two operatives carry out the driven inspections. The inspections are carried out from a slow moving repair vehicle. Defects at investigatory levels and defects that are considered likely to deteriorate before the next routine inspection are identified for repair. Such defects are then repaired as encountered (that is an immediate repair completed by the team using the material carried on the vehicle). The inspections and repairs are recorded on to the handheld mobile computer which provides a record of both the inspection and the repairs.

5. Hazards

Inevitably, defects will occur in the highways that may present a danger to either pedestrian or vehicular traffic and may include the matters in the following non-exhaustive list:

- Pavement trips
- Rocking flags
- Dislodged kerbs
- Structural failure of carriageways
- Pot holes
- Defective gullies
- Defective reinstatements
- Defective public utility inspection/defection reinstatement
- Defective street lighting apparatus
- Defective street furniture/signs

- Any general deterioration that could present a danger to highway users.
- Any obstructions in the highway i.e. overhanging bushes, “A” boards and shop displays

Other Hazards

Traffic Signs & Signals

- Potentially dangerous faults should be phoned through to the Traffic Signal Group immediately. Faults relating to lit bollards or signs should be reported to the Street Lighting PFI Contractor, Balfour Beatty.

Faults which may be a danger include, but are not limited to:

- Electrical covers missing or dislodged
- Illuminated bollards or their temporary replacements missing
- Insecurely rooted furniture, including sign posts
- Signal heads or sign lighting units hanging loose

Street Lighting

Potentially dangerous faults should be reported to the Street Lighting Contractor immediately. Faults that can be dangerous include but are not limited to:

- Missing doors from columns
- Severely leaning columns
- Rocking columns
- Hanging lanterns and lantern bowls

Highway Drainage

- Water on the carriageway can cause a danger through vehicles swerving to avoid standing water and through ice formation in the winter. It will also cause annoyance to pedestrians through spray affecting the footways. The most common causes of extensive standing water are blockages to gullies, drainage channels or grips.
- All potentially dangerous situations to be reported to the appropriate highway officer for action to be taken.

Obstruction

- Physical obstruction can be caused by anything deposited on, growing in, or suspended over the highway. The extent of any potential danger can only be judged in each individual circumstance taking into account the nature of the obstruction, site layout and the nature of the highway.
- In the majority of instances the most appropriate first action will be to seek the removal of the obstruction by the person responsible for it. If this results in a rebuff or no action within a reasonable period then the matter shall be reported for enforcement action to be considered.
- In exceptional circumstances direct action by the maintenance contractor to remove the obstruction may be warranted. This should

be discussed with the appropriate Highway Officer before instructing the work.

Verge Maintenance

- Verges may present dangers to highway users through poor surface condition or through overgrowth. Dangerous defects within the surface of the verge to be forwarded to the Grounds Maintenance section to be actioned as appropriate.

Safety Fences & Barriers

- Potentially dangerous faults with safety fences/barriers should be reported to the appropriate Highway Officer to be made safe and to renew as required. Dangers may include;
- Projections which extend into areas, which might reasonably cause injury or damage to pedestrians or vehicles.
- Lengths of missing guard rail which may represent a danger to highway users or others, (i.e., a missing section of a pedestrian guard rail above a vertical drop). This requires an emergency response.

Road Studs

- Loose road studs should be removed from trafficked areas and reported to the appropriate Highway Officer on return to the office, as should any missing Stop or Give Way markings.

Highway Trees

- Trees and shrubs can be the cause of potential danger to highway users through their physical condition. Any tree in the highway verge or footway which appears to be dead or badly diseased should be reported to the Council's Arboriculturalist for further investigation.
- Any necessary repairs to surfaces disturbed by root growth may require prior consultation with the Council's Arboriculturalist before excavating for a permanent repair.

Street Cleansing

- Debris, which may cause a danger to pedestrians or by vehicles hitting or throwing up the debris, should be removed to a safe place if possible. If immediate action is required to have debris or fly tipped material removed from the highway, this should be arranged by contacting the appropriate Team or Contact Centre. An accurate description of the material to be removed should be given so that the Contractor can deploy the appropriate resources.
- If it is suspected that the tipped material contains asbestos, this should be reported back to the appropriate Team for further investigation.
- Immediate action will be warranted to remove from the highway, needles and other sharp objects, dead animals, large scale spillage and tipped material if causing obstruction, etc. Under no circumstances should any officer handle needles, syringes or other sharp objects, unless authorised to do so.

- Accumulations of litter, fallen leaves and overflowing litter bins should be reported to the appropriate team.

Street Name Plates

- Damaged signs that are or may become potentially dangerous, (i.e. a sharp edge/insecurely fixed), are to be removed from site by the appropriate highway maintenance operative and arrangements made for a permanent replacement, by the highways technician.

Litter Bins

- Damaged litter bins that are or may become potentially dangerous, (i.e. insecurely fixed) are to be reported to the Cleansing Team.

6. Defect Investigatory Levels

Investigatory levels represent a threshold which an asset is considered to be satisfactory and these are set below the level of danger. Defects that are considered likely to deteriorate before the next routine inspection but are currently below the investigatory level may be repaired.

Location	Investigatory Level
Footway	20mm or above
Carriageway	40mm or above
Carriageway at pedestrian crossing points	20mm or above
Kerb Defects	20mm or above vertical/horizontal displacement
Carriageway at designated segregated cycle lanes	20mm or above

7. Response Time

During highway safety inspections, all observed defects that provide a risk to users should be recorded and the level of response determined on the level of risk. The degree of deficiency in highway elements will be crucial in determining the nature and speed of response. Although some general guidance can be given on the likely risk associated with particular defects, on-site judgement will always need to take account of particular circumstances.

For example the degree of risk from a pothole depends upon not merely its depth but also its surface area and location.

The defects found and the timescales for repairs can be summarised in the table below:

Table 4

Defect Category	Time for Completion	Comments
Emergency	2 hour response	Those that require urgent attention because they may cause death or serious injury will be made safe within 2 hours
CAT1	24 hour response	Those that require prompt attention because they represent an immediate or imminent hazard or because there is a risk of short term structural deterioration will be made safe within 24 hour response
CAT2	10 Working Days	Used for defects which are considered as non-hazardous but which in the opinion of the Inspector warrants a repair within 10 working days.

Emergency Defects may include the following but this is not exhaustive:

Footway

- Missing utility cover

Carriageway

- Missing inspection cover
- Sink hole / Structural collapse
- Obstruction protruding into the live carriageway.

Category 1 Urgent Defects may include the following;

Footway

- Severely rocking flags (equivalent to 25mm)
- Trips of 25mm or greater
- Potholes of at least 25mm depth
- Defective reinstatements - to initiate defective reinstatement procedure, (after performance checking against HAUC specification) to utility companies.

Carriageway

- Severe cracking
- Deep potholes (40mm+)
- Wheel track rutting in excess of 40mm+
- Defective reinstatements – to initiate defective reinstatement procedure (after performance checking against HAUC specification) to utility companies

Kerbing/channelling

- Missing/deteriorated kerbs and channels (>30% missing).
- Trips greater than 25mm in footway, greater than 40mm in carriageway

Gullies/ironware

- Collapses, missing covers
- Trips greater than 25mm in footway, greater than 40mm in carriageway

Guard rails/fences/bollards

- Accident damage/knockdowns
- Excessive General deterioration

Signs

- Accident damage/knockdowns, failed illumination, excessive general deterioration

Road Markings

- Note when more than 70% approx. becomes ineffective or worn away

Street Lighting

- All knockdowns or dangerous situations (e.g. doors off/wires exposed etc.), record and attempt to report immediately.

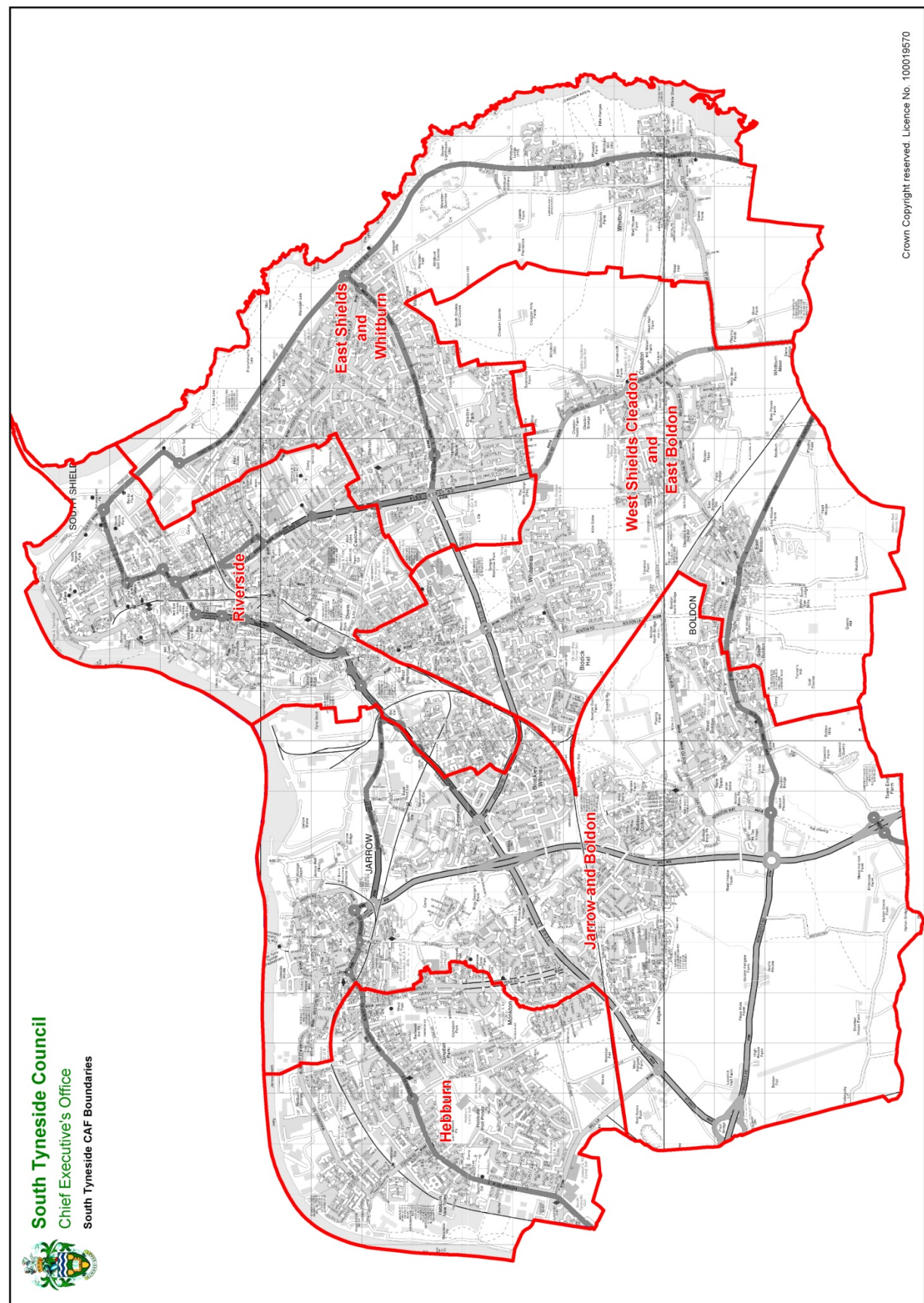
Bus Shelters / Bus Stops

- Record excessive Dangerous vandalism (e.g. broken glass, jagged metal etc.), and report to Nexus or Adshel via Traffic section as soon as possible.

8. Enquiries /Request for Service

All customer contacts are recorded on the Council's CRM System (Appendix 7). This allows for an audit trail to be provided from original contact through inspection, to any action/work generated. If any enquiries are forwarded to the individual Officers verbally or in writing, the recipient will ensure that the Customer Report entry is made.

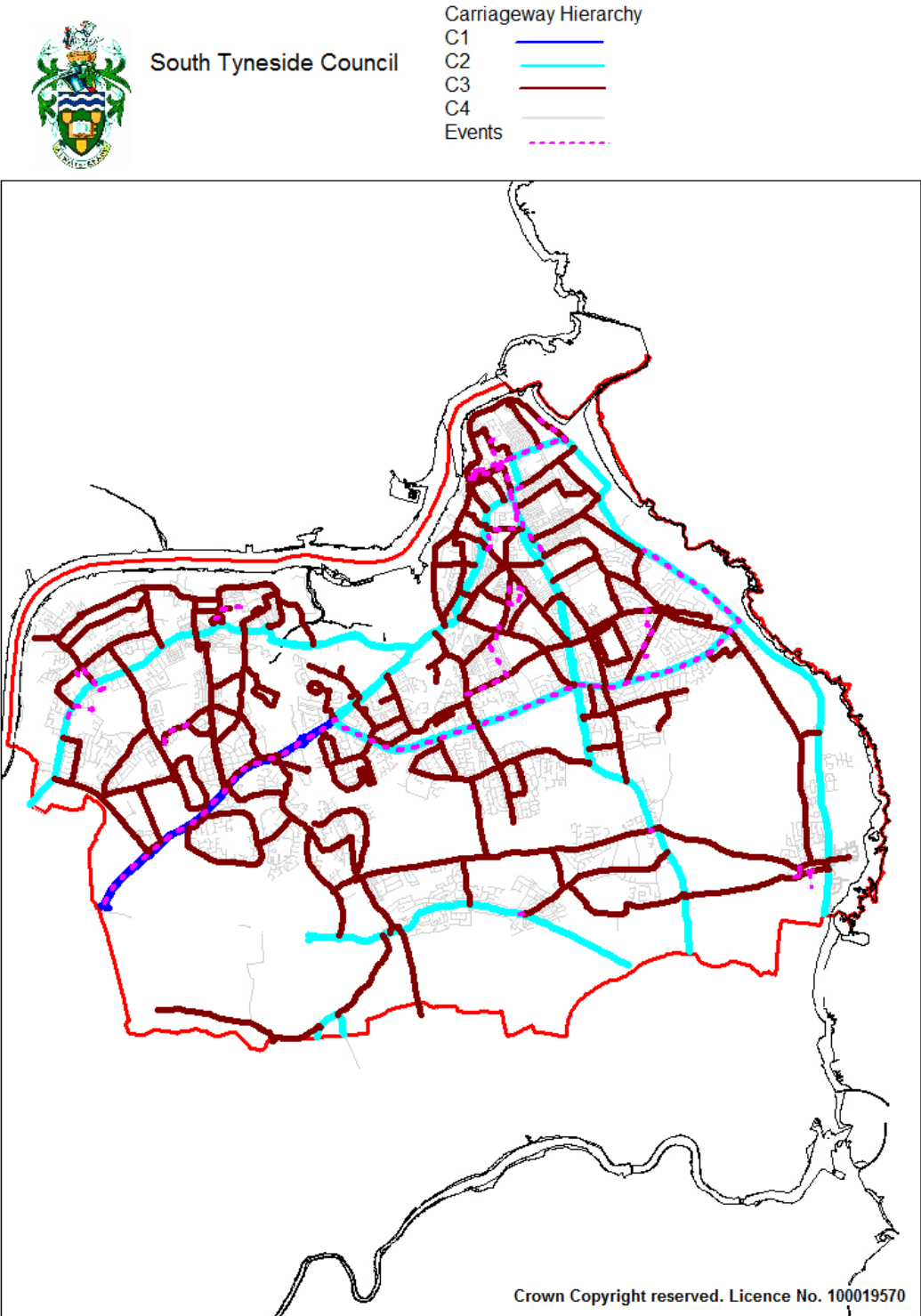
Appendix 1 CAF Boundaries



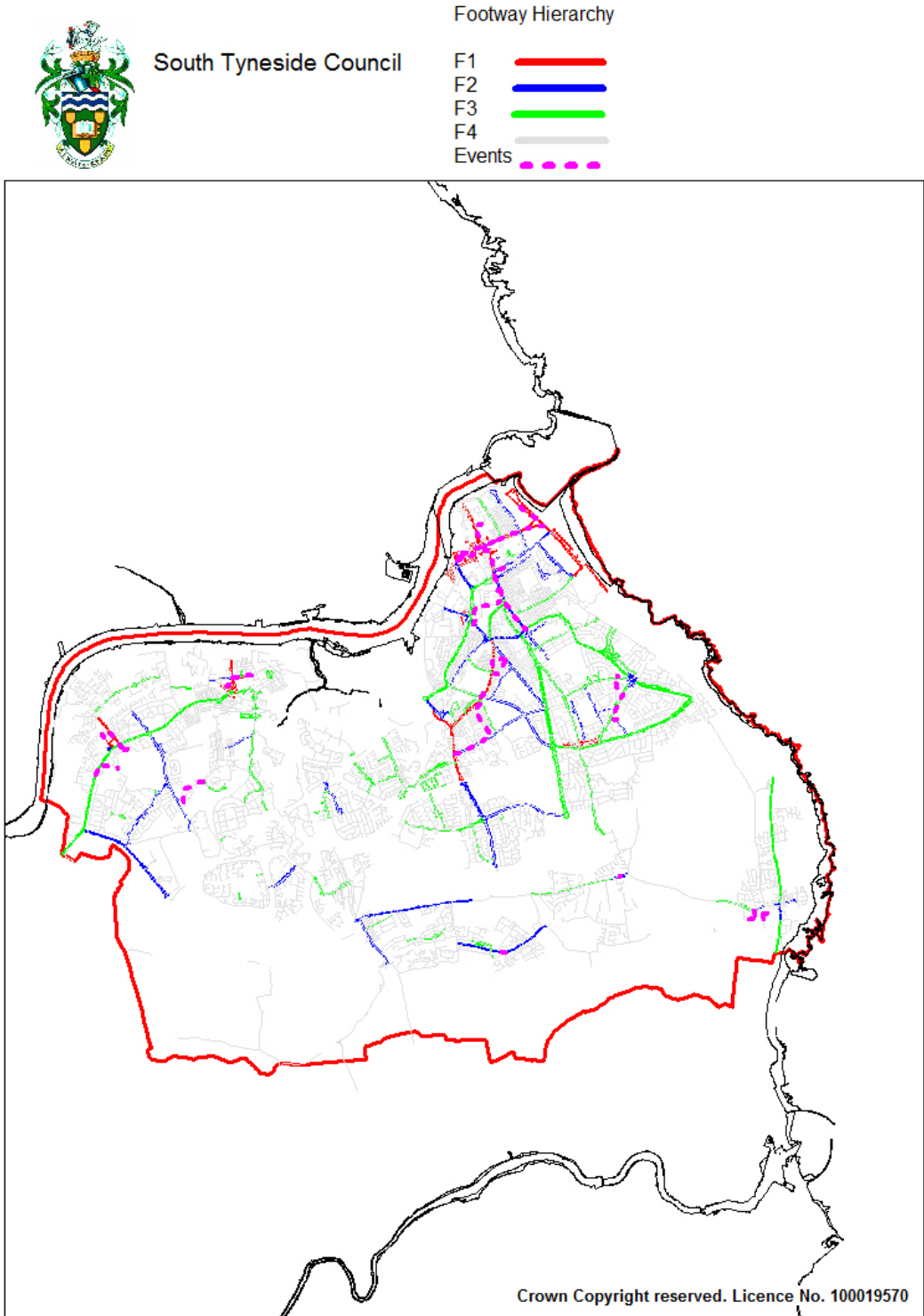
Appendix 2 New Works Requests – footway

STREET NAME	LOCATION/ POSITION	NATURE OF WORKS	WARD	DATE REQUESTED	REQUESTED BY	Enq No
Ashleigh Gdns, Cleadon	no 6/7 and 10/12	renew flexible f/way- v/damage.	XX	10.01.07	XXX	x
Bywell Road, Cleadon	majority	renew flagged f/way- tr roots/veh dam	XX	16.01.07	XXX	
Church St Hebburn	40-Ann St	renew bitmac f/way- tree roots.	XX	31.08.06	XXX	
Lambton Road, Hebburn	all	renew flagged footway veh dam.	XX	24.08.06	XXX	
West Ave Cleadon	18-24	grass verge to bitmac veh dam	XX	18.01.07	XXX	
St Peters Ave SS	Outside 11-17	renew tarmac verge	XX	11.09.06	XXX	
Blagdon Avenue SS	even side/juntion Sunderland Rd	footway sloping. Require renewal	XX	01.05.07	XXX	
Moorhouse Close SS	10	tree root damage to flex f/pth	XX	24.05.07	XXX	
Ashleigh Gdns, Cleadon	8/9/10/11 see 1 above.30mx2.5m	renew bitmac f/way- sunken trench	XX	17.07.07	XXX	
Stirling Avenue SS	127 TO 147 Stirling Avenue	Relay Flagged footpath & lay dished channel	XX	15/06/2007	XXX	
Beatrice Gardens SS	all	change flags to concrete !!!!!	XX	20.08.07	XXX	
Dipe Lane, Boldon	opp Tennis Club to Bridle Path	renew flags	XX	06.09.07	XXX	
Lincoln Court Hebburn	Rear 1-10 Rose Court	renewal of bitmac footpath	XX	25/09.07	XXX	
Westhope Close, So. Shields.	32, vehicle damaged	strengthening of footpath	XX	26.09.07	XXX	
Brunswick St	22-28	redundant tree pits and setts.	XX	10.10.07	XXX	
Chirton Grove So Shields	back 4	displaced kerbstones.	XX	01.11.07	XXX	
Tanfield Gardens	48+	kerblines	XX	01.11.07	XXX	
Winship Close	23+	pin kerbs required	XX	11.09.07	XXX	

Appendix 3 Carriageway Inspection Hierarchy



Appendix 4 Footway Inspection Hierarchy



Appendix 5 Street Defect Report

Highways Defects - 01/01/2016 to 26/09/2018

26/09/2018

South Tyneside Council

Town		Locality							Report date				
Street Name		VICTORIA ROAD							Total number of Defects found: 8				
Origin	Defect ID	Inspector	Create Date	Inspection date	Status	Location	Description	Notes	Works Order	Priority	Issued	Complete	Description
Scheduled Inspection	000294	IAN	23/05/2018	23/05/2018	Remedied	near carpet right	CIW - Flex -pothole	Defect Notes: pothole near entrance Caller Notes:	00000222	Cat 2	24/05/2018	31/05/2018	'Fill Pothole'
													
Scheduled Inspection	000295	IAN	23/05/2018	23/05/2018	Remedied	90	CIW - Flex -pothole	Defect Notes: pothole Caller Notes:	00000222	Cat 2	24/05/2018	31/05/2018	'Fill Pothole'
													
Scheduled Inspection	001523	IAN	20/07/2018	20/07/2018	Order Raised	opp 101	FW -Flags-uneven/rocking	Defect Notes: renew 2x half at kerb, relay 18 kerbs/renew 3x0.500, 3x0.600, relay 38x0.500, 38x0.600 flags alongside wall off metro track at side of carpark Caller Notes:	00000948	Cat 2	23/07/2018		'relay paving'



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Highways Defects - 01/01/2016 to 26/09/2018

26/09/2018

South Tyneside Council

													
Scheduled inspection	002188	IAN	29/08/2018	29/08/2018	Remedied	155 near carpet right	CW - Flex -pothole	Defect Notes: pothole Caller Notes:	00001325	Cat 2	29/08/2018	11/09/2018	'Fill Pothole'
													
Scheduled inspection	002189	IAN	29/08/2018	29/08/2018	Remedied	gable of 137 to 151	FW -Flags-missing/damaged renew	Defect Notes: renew 3x0.750, 1x0.500 Caller Notes:	00001335	Cat 2	30/08/2018	11/09/2018	'Renew paving'
													
Scheduled inspection	002190	IAN	29/08/2018	29/08/2018	Remedied	opp 104	CW - Flex -pothole	Defect Notes: pothole Caller Notes:	00001325	Cat 2	29/08/2018	11/09/2018	'Fill Pothole'



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Highways Defects - 01/01/2016 to 26/09/2018

26/09/2018

South Tyneside Council

													
Scheduled Inspection	002191	IAN	29/08/2018	29/08/2018	Remedied	90 to 88	FW -Flags-missing/damaged renew	Defect Notes: renew 1x0.600 Caller Notes:	00001335	Cat 2	30/08/2018	11/09/2018	'Renew paving'
													
Scheduled Inspection	002304	IAN	04/09/2018	04/09/2018	Remedied	opp the queen vic pub, footpath alongside carpark	Make Safe Highways	Defect Notes: barrier footpath Caller Notes:	00001389	Emergency	06/09/2018	06/09/2018	'Make Safe - utilities'
													

Appendix 6 Street Inspection Report


South Tyneside Council

Inspection Schedule Report
26/09/2018

001616, VICTORIA ROAD, SOUTH SHIELDS

Date Range: 01/05/2018 to 26/09/2018

SCHEDULE	ROUTE DESCRIPT	TYPE	STATUS	INSPECTOR	START DATE	DEFECTS	COMPLETED	STREET ID	ROUTE	SECTIONID
000088	Area A	Safety Inspec	Completed	IAN	29/08/2018	4	29/08/2018	001616	A_08	





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Appendix 7 CRM Enquiry Form

New Highways Call
X

Title Surname Forename[s]

Address

Town/City

Investigation Action Required Insurance Claim ☐

Received on at

Location >>

Description

Investigation Dates
 Proposed Actual

Action Taken

Description Defect Measure

Date Time Investigated By Initials Defect Type

Comments Utilities

Photo

Status Checked By

For more information about South Tyneside Council:

 www.southtyneside.gov.uk

 0191 427 1717

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