Our highway network

Network Description

Cumberland Council is a new unitary authority that established in 2023. It covers the former districts of Allerdale, Carlisle and Copeland. Our highway network is a significant asset that connects people and places across Cumberland contributing to the wellbeing of residents, thriving communities and enabling people to access work, learning and business opportunities to fulfil their ambitions. The council will maintain the highway network to the best possible standard within the available resources, while continuing to pursue all the opportunities we can to secure additional funding for the maintenance and improvement of our highways and transport infrastructure. The operation and maintenance of 159km of Cumberland network is maintained by Connect Roads under the CNDR PFI contract.

Type	A Roads	B and C Roads	U Roads	Total Roads	Footways	Cycleways	Public RIghts of Way
Length (km)	323	1,334	1,970	3,627	1,925	676	1,668

Other assets

Cumberland's highway network covers a wide range of important assets, the list below identifies the numbers behind some of our other key assets:
822 Bridges.
630 Culverts.
90 Retaining Walls.
4 Sea Defence Walls.
27,570 Lighting Columns.
2260 Illuminated signs.
131 Traffic Signal Assets.
42,900 Collected Signs.
72,482 Gullies.

Highway maintenance spending figures

Year	Capital Allocated by DfT (£000's)	Capital Spend (£000's)	Revenue Spend (£000's)	% Preventative	% Reactive
2025/26	34,168	26,453	11,337	68%	32%
2024/25	16,783	19,064	8,170	65%	35%
2023/24	21,195	20,602	7,210	69%	31%
2022/23					
2021/22					

Note: 2025/26 are projected budget figures

Additional information on spending

Cumberland Council is a new unitary authority that was formally established on April 1, 2023. For our reactive figures we used the revenue budgets allocation and our preventative figures represents the scheme spend to extend the life of the asset.

Potholes filled

Estimate of number of potholes filled

Year	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
Number filled				8,419	8,271

Condition of local roads

A Roads

Year	Red	Amber	Green
2020	0%	0%	0%
2021	0%	0%	0%
2022	0%	0%	0%
2023	0%	0%	0%
2024	2%	21%	77%

Frequency of A Road data collection

SCANNER annual survey will cover either 50% of the length in both directions or 100% of the length in one direction in each year. The collection in both directions will take 2 years. Cumbria Council also collects Vaisala Condition data for the whole of the A roads network annually.

B & C Roads

Year	Red	Amber	Green
2020	0%	0%	0%
2021	0%	0%	0%
2022	0%	0%	0%
2023	0%	0%	0%
2024	7%	33%	60%

Frequency of B & C Road data collection

SCANNER annual surveys provide for 50% (4 years for full coverage, both directions) of the C class roads in one direction and 100% of the B class roads in one direction each year (2 years for full coverage, both directions). Cumbria Council also collects Vaisala Condition data for the whole of the B and C road network annually.

U Roads

Year	Red	Amber	Green
2020	0%		
2021	0%		
2022	0%	0%	0%
2023	0%	0%	0%
2024	25%	27%	48%

Understanding U Road condition

Vaisala Road AI is an automated road survey method collecting carriageway condition data that can imported into our PMS (Pavement Management System). The data captured is used to generate our U Roads performance figures.

Road condition assessment

Road condition assessments on the local classified road network in England are currently made predominantly using Surface Condition Assessment for the National Network of Roads (SCANNER) laser-based technology.

A number of parameters measured in these surveys are used to produce a road condition indicator which is categorised into three condition categories:

Green No further investigation or treatment required
Amber Maintenance may be required soon
Red Should be considered for maintenance

From 2026/27 a new methodology will be used based on the BSI PAS2161 standard. Local Highway Authorities will be required to use a supplier that has been accredited against PAS2161. This new standard will categorise roads into five categories instead of three to help government gain a more detailed understanding of road condition in England. Further details are available at https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/road condition-statistics-data-tables-rdc#condition-of-local-authority-managed-roads-rdc01

Vaisala Road AI is an automated road survey method that generates pavement condition data that can be converted to UKPMS CVI data and imported into our PMS.

Additional information on condition

Although the RoadAI automated analysis and mapping is based on computer vision algorithms trained together with pavement distress specialists and trained road inspectors, as with traditional visually collected condition data, it appears that although this is a more repeatable process, it is still susceptible to both lighting and environmental conditions.

Plans

Overall strategy

The council will continue with an Asset Management risk based approach to deliver the highways service, in line with the Dfts recommendations, and during this year it will update the Asset Management Strategy together with producing supporting documents.

Best practice, innovation & efficiency

Vaisala Road AI is an automated road survey method detects defects or other defined parameters on the carriageway, it also maps and identifies road assets. Cumberland Council has been working with Vaisala to improve the collection of both condition and sign data.

TRL is working with DfT to introduce the new PAS2161 survey standard. To help with this work suitable test routes were selected for survey accreditation purposes. Real roads were surveyed by highway engineers to provide a reference dataset, that was then surveyed by equipment and software providers to assess their ability to measure condition accurately and compare output. Cumberland Council was one of three authorities who assisted with these trials and routes on our network were selected for this accreditation work.

Specific plans for 2025/26

During 2025/26 the Highways Service will be restructured to enable it to focus on the delivery of schemes but also to adapt to future funding allocations and priorities.
An internal audit of the highways service was carried out in 2024/25 and changes are being made in line with the recommendations of the audit.
As Cumberland Council is a fairly new authority, formed in APRIL 2023, it will continue to develop new strategies, policies and plans and during the summer / autumn it will publish a new Highways Asset Management Plan.
Public transport services will be major focus this year with new subsidised bus routes being launched after an extensive public consultation exercise.
We will continue to inform and update the public via numerous media channels and carry out a survey with public on how we are repairing defects and responding to enquiries.

Streetworks

Cumberland Council employee a Streetworks team which is made up of dedicated permit officers and compliance officers whose roles are to monitor all Street and Road works on the Highway Network. We currently use two key coordination tools, Aurora and one.network. These two systems allow us to accurately assess permit applications based off other works in the surrounding area and other key factors such as any special designations that the works may affect.

Climate change, resilience & adaptation

Our authority recognises that climate change presents both immediate and long-term challenges to the resilience and durability of our transport infrastructure. In response, we have appointed a Corporate De-carbonisation Manager to lead on carbon accounting and help drive down greenhouse gas emissions across our network. We are working with Stabilised Pavements Limited to deliver structural recycling schemes that reuse existing materials in situ, cutting embodied carbon and preserving natural resources.
Trials of Plastic in Roads and recycled tyre patching reflect our commitment to circular economy solutions that reduce waste and extend the life of our highways. To limit unnecessary vehicle travel, weve introduced Road AI dashcam software, allowing staff to remotely review high-quality footage and assess road conditions without needing to visit site. Finally, our asset management approach focuses on early intervention such as preventative maintenance and targeted surface treatments to avoid more carbon-intensive reconstruction and keep our network resilient in a changing climate.
In terms of road lighting we actively trim the lighting hours and dim the lights after midnight, both of which reduce energy usage.
The Council has an approved Electric Vehicle Strategy and has employed a dedicated EV Infrastructure team who are focused on delivering the LEVI project to enable electric vehicle use by the residents of Cumberland.

Additional information on plans