

A costly encounter with a pothole

It was not the best start to the New Year for Deborah Hunter who is now £500 out of pocket after driving over a huge pothole on Pennywell Road and breaking the front suspension of her car.

To add insult to injury this is the second time in several months that her vehicle has been out of action due to damage sustained on the same road. The loss of her car has a huge impact on Deborah who runs Little Legs Edinburgh, a dog walking company. Her business is a specialist service and she cares for small dogs, or dogs which have anxiety or separation issues. She said it is just not possible to get the dogs transferred to another dog walking company as the service she offers is a personal one.

The 44 year-old businesswoman told The Edinburgh Reporter she has suffered a loss of earnings of around £200 for the day after having to cancel her dog walking service on Thursday and arrange to get all her charges back home to their owners. You can see how disappointed all the wee dogs are from the photo below.





Deborah Hunter with some of her clients

The car Deborah owns is a four wheel drive and it had to be taken away by the RAC on a trailer rather than simply towed. Deborah explained that she has just changed cars to a hybrid to comply with the new LEZ regulations and so has “spent thousands” on that purchase as well as now having to cover the expense of repairs. She explained potholes are often difficult to avoid as there are just so many on that particular stretch of road.

The cost of repairing the Little Legs car is estimated at just over £300 and it is only as a result of speedy work by her garage that she will be back on the road on Friday, so minimising Deborah’s losses. The garage has said they are inundated with repairs like this.

The RAC which helped Deborah get her car to the garage estimate that in the UK there could be as many as 1.5 million

potholes. The organisation tracks how many of their members break down as a result of potholes recording the incidents on a pothole index.

In Edinburgh an extra £11 million was provided in the city's revenue budget in 2023 to tackle roads and pavements. The council hired a machine dubbed the Pothole Killer for six months and renewed the lease on the £200,000 piece of equipment as it can repair areas of the road more effectively and quickly than with traditional methods.

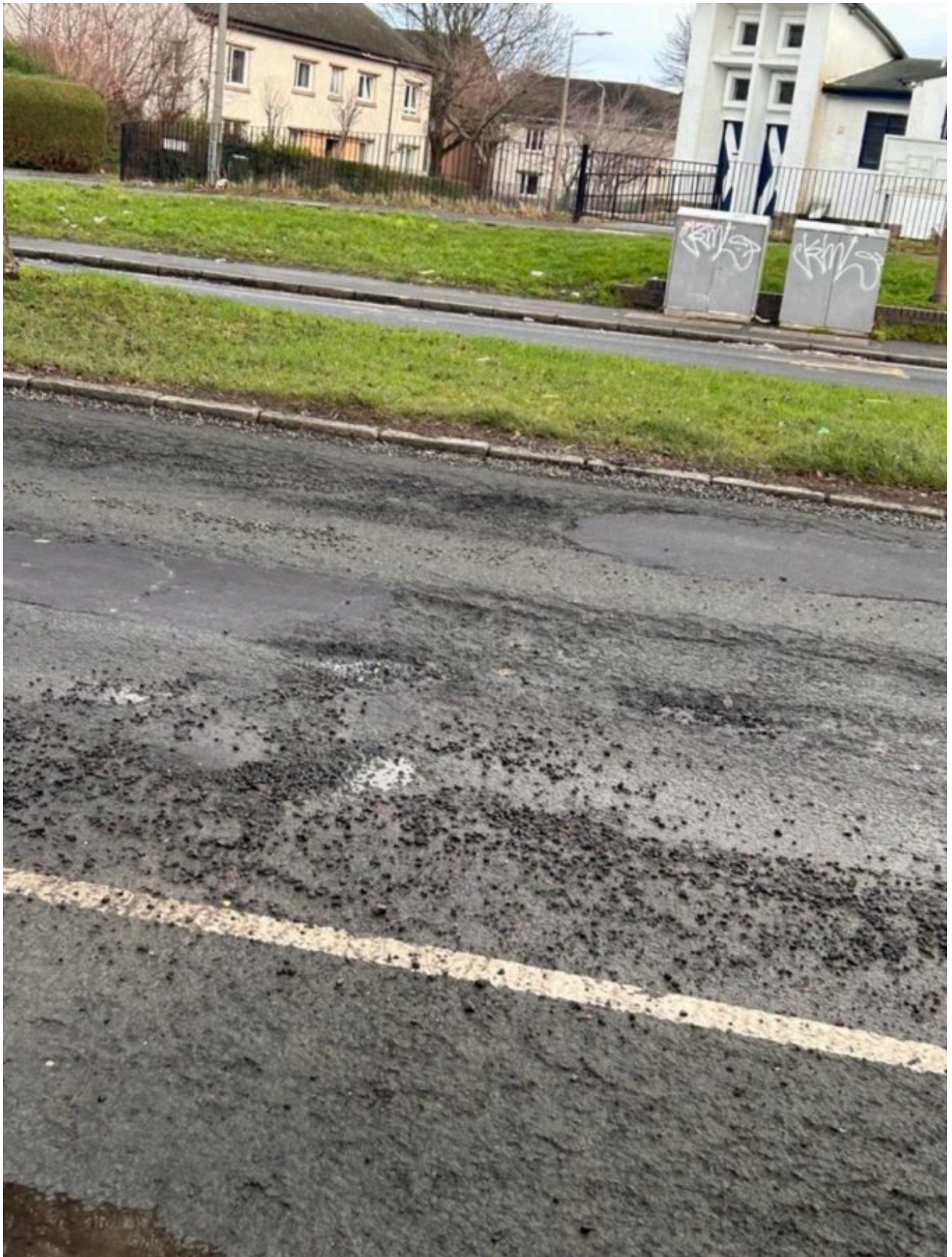


The council has leased a pothole killer to deal with potholes and road repairs more effectively















Pennywell Road was [on the list](#) for resurfacing last year but this work appears to have been delayed by an Active Travel scheme which is planned. In the meantime the council say they

will undertake patching.

Cllr Scott Arthur, Transport and Environment Convener, said: "Having inherited a situation where road and footpath maintenance was underfunded in Edinburgh, we have secured £11m of additional funding for the issue in our capital. We are listening to the public, and will resurface whole streets rather than take a piecemeal approach. In addition to this, we are trialling a state-of-the-art 'Pothole Killer' machine which will help automate repairs. We won't get footpaths and roads back to where we want them to be in one year, but this investment will help halt the decline.

"Nonetheless, I appreciate the frustration road defects like potholes can cause and our roads team work throughout the year to minimise damage to the network. On Pennywell Road we'll soon be carrying out patching repairs to improve the road surface and a temporary repair has been made to the defect in question.

"Anyone who has suffered injury, loss or damage due to a road defect and you feel that the City of Edinburgh Council is responsible, you can contact us online to start the claim process, if appropriate."

A couple of Deborah's clients have been in touch about the effect the pothole damage had on them and their dogs:

Pamela said: "My dog day carer has been forced to cancel her services this morning. Deborah is unable to use her car as the front suspension has collapsed. Being a low to the road car – because the dachshund passengers have short legs – Edinburgh's dreadful pot holes and general bad state of the roads are the cause of this problem to her new car. I have mobility issues and rheumatoid arthritis, I am unable to walk my dog myself. I am dependent on Deborah's care of my dog therefore this has a great impact on both me and my dog."

Colin said: "As a client and someone that's reliant on the dog

care the fact this has happened to Little Legs transport twice is a disgrace.

“We rely on Debs to look after our two dogs. With them being daschunds and having special requirements for care we wouldn’t trust anyone else with them other than family. The inconvenience this causes for all involved is completely unnecessary and the roads need sorted! It’s getting harder and harder for small businesses – this is the last thing that’s needed.”

