

Opinion – by The City of Edinburgh Council Transport Convener

Fixing our roads and pavements and making them safer for all.

In my experience as a local politician the overriding issue that comes up time and again on the doorstep is the condition of our roads. This was also reflected earlier this year in [Phase One of our Budget Engagement where over half of respondents](#) flagged roads as a key issue.

This is an area that we have committed increased funding to in successive budgets, with £11million in 2023/24 and £12.5million in 2024/25. I am delighted to say that we are now seeing the results of this investment.

The Scottish Road Maintenance Condition Survey (SRMCS) is an independent survey carried out on behalf of all 32 Scottish local authorities. This survey provides all councils with their Road Condition Indicator (RCI) which signifies the percentage of roads that should be considered for investment.

Edinburgh's latest RCI for 2024 is 29.8% which showed a 4.5% positive shift when compared with 2023's figure of 34.3%. This represents the largest single year improvement on record for our city in the survey's history.

The greatest improvement in road condition came in our unclassified roads network, which are mainly made up of residential streets. The increased funding we have put in place has allowed us to significantly increase preventative

treatments to combat road deterioration. This is in conjunction with record levels of surfacing – and over 400,000 square metres laid down this year.

Alongside residential streets we have also undertaken major resurfacing and placemaking works on London Road, Lasswade Road, Burdiehouse Road at Kaimes, Niddrie Mains Road along with the A1, A8 and A90 carriageways. Patching improvements are another important area of work and we have been using the “Pothole Pro” to great effect. We are also continuing with record investment in pavement renewals, incorporating new prioritisation weightings so that our work is targeted in the areas of the city which need it most.



The council leased the Pothole Pro for an initial six months on a trial basis in 2023

Whilst this improvement in road and pavement condition is welcome news, I am acutely aware that there is still a large percentage of our network that requires attention. We are just getting started with this work and we will continue to invest in improvements across the network.

We are committed to fixing our roads and pavements and making them as safe as possible for all road users. I am glad that the [Transport and Environment Committee](#) approved two reports on Thursday on reducing speed limits for vehicles across the city.

Managing vehicle speeds on our roads is important to make sure our communities are able to travel safely. Speed limits on all of our urban 40mph roads will be reduced to 30mph over the spring and summer next year and Thursday's decision will add over sixty more 20mph streets to the network. The evidence on traffic calming and reducing speeds is clear in terms of reducing collisions, deaths, and serious injuries. Since the roll-out of the original 20mph network in March 2018 to 2022, there was [a reduction of over 30% in both collisions and casualties](#) in the 36 months following the rollout compared to the 36 months before. Every collision avoided is a positive achievement.

As a councillor for one of the more rural wards in our city I am conscious that blanket national speed limit restrictions often do not recognise the nuances of roads in these areas. I am proud that this has been addressed by reducing speed limits in a number of areas. We have consulted with colleagues at Police Scotland on these measures and have their support, as well as with West Lothian Council on the roads which border their local authority. Again, there is an undeniable link between the speed at which incidents and collisions take place and the likelihood of injury or death. I am confident that these measures will have a positive impact in terms of road user safety once they are implemented.

Fundamentally, having a better maintained and safer network creates an environment which supports sustainable travel choices for all. Whether you prefer to walk, wheel, cycle or use public transport, we all stand to benefit from these measures, and this is reflected in the wider evidence around traffic calming and speed reduction. This in turn contributes

to our wider climate goals and obligations which we will continue to take forward.

I am clear that we will continue to do everything within our power to make Edinburgh as safe, sustainable and accessible a city as we can.

Councillor Stephen Jenkinson is a member of the Labour administration and is Transport and Environment Convener at the City of Edinburgh Council.



Cllr Stephen Jenkinson, Transport and Environment Convener