

Bathgate roads in “appalling” state

The state of roads in Bathgate is worse than it's ever been according to a senior Labour councillor.

Harry Cartmill had asked Gordon Brown, the council's Roads and Transportation Service Manager to attend the monthly local Area committee to grill him on why so many roads were a patchwork of temporary repairs, worse than a “gravel farm road”.

And he was told a lack of money was largely to blame for the state of roads across West Lothian and Scotland, while changing weather patterns are also accelerating the disintegration of road surfaces.

Councillor Cartmill told Mr Brown: “You'll be aware there has been a plethora of complaints about the general degrading of the roads. I know. I've got a 23-year-old car and I feel every bump.

“The roads in Bathgate, quite frankly, in my lifetime I've never seen them so bad. Specifically, two Edinburgh Road and Menzies Road. It is almost to the point that it is undriveable. The roads are just appalling.”

Councillor Cartmill said complaints were all over social media. “Why are the roads depreciating so badly? I'm a cyclist and everywhere I'm watching for potholes.”

Mr Brown replied bluntly: “Finance”.

He explained that West Lothian and other local authorities did

not have the funding to pay for capital expenditure on resurfacing projects and have to rely on temporary repairs and patching up roads.

“In terms of general road surfaces across the county it’s been pretty well publicised, we’re having to use material to make temporary repairs to potholes to make them safe,”: he said. “There are a lot more temporary repairs on the carriageway.”

Wetter summers and winters also play a part in degrading temporary repairs to roadways with overnight freezing and daytime thaws breaking up tarmac.

Mr Brown said that full resurfacing contracts would be issued for Edinburgh Road and Menzies Road in this financial year, and he would report back to the next meeting of the Bathgate Local Area Committee on starting dates for the work.

Mr Brown also described successful trials with the “Pothole Pro” road patching equipment which the council hopes to use more in the coming year.

He stressed that all potholes were filled in with 24 hours of being reported and that inspectors were out checking roads regularly and prioritising repairs projects.

“It boils down to finance. If there was more capital made available, then we could target more resurfacing schemes.” Mr Brown told the councillors.

“We are proactively dealing with the problem. It’s just that there are more potholes.”

By Stuart Sommerville, Local Democracy Reporter