

Highway Maintenance Hierarchy Recategorisation.

There are a number of external factors that have created the need for revision of the County's highway maintenance hierarchy.

Reductions in the level of funding both in revenue and capital budgets dictate that the levels of service of highway maintenance delivered historically are no longer sustainable. "Changing Lanes" sets out the County's strategy for managing demand by reducing levels of service provided by the County on selected parts of the network to enable resource to be concentrated on the higher priority roads. The recent deep dive review challenged the quantity of the road network identified at the current DCC maintenance category 9 and suggested that some or many of them could be recategorised to require reduced levels of service with associated financial saving.

In parallel with the resource issues strategically addressed by Changing Lanes and the deep dive review the existing Codes of Practice for maintenance of highways; structures and lighting has been undertaken and these will shortly be replaced by a single Code of Practice (CoP) "Well Managed Highway Infrastructure" that will address the management of all highway asset groups.

A fundamental change in approach promoted by the new code is that risk-based approaches are to be used to develop service standards, Consequently the new code (which has been circulated in draft) is not prescriptive but promotes risk based mechanisms to establish local levels of service to align with local needs, priorities and affordability.

The draft code promotes collaborative working across highway authority boundaries to support the risk based approach to setting levels of service. The South West Highway Alliance (SWHA) has through a collaborative process devised a regional highway network maintenance hierarchy that could support risk based policy development in the south west. Using a common highway hierarchy enable pooling of and joint analysis of data to robustly inform the process and provide a platform for service benchmarking

It is therefore proposed the SWHA hierarchy will be adopted for the development of policies for future management of Devon's highway network so as to ensure an approach consistent with other highway authorities in the region.

Given that these drivers for change are occurring simultaneously it is proposed that the County adopts the SWHA hierarchy in conjunction with undertaking a detailed review of existing maintenance hierarchy to address elements of demand management as indicated in Changing Lanes

Adoption of the new hierarchy will necessitate a review of levels of service for each hierarchy category.

Implementation of new hierarchy

Currently the SWHA hierarchy has been roughly attributed to the Devon networks as an additional field carrying the new hierarchy identifier. This attribution needs to be refined. Where there is a need to split components of an existing maintenance category between two new SWHA categories each section of road will need to be reviewed and allocated appropriately. This action is needed on SWHA maintenance categories 7,8 & 9 which equate to current DCC categories 8 (rural), 9,10& 11.

Review of new hierarchy categorisation will be carried out in conjunction with identification of candidate roads for downgrading. It is intended that the initial evaluation will be undertaken as a map based exercise which will then be ratified in consultation with the local neighbourhood team and local communities/parish councils

Impact on Levels of Service

The established levels of service adopted by the authority will need to be reviewed to conform to the new hierarchy.

Impact Safety Inspection

The length of highway inspected will increase by approximately 200km annually if the inspection frequencies indicated in table 1 (based on current DCC frequency) are adopted. This is approximately 0.6% of the current inspection length shown in table 2 below.

Table 1 SWHA Regional Categories

This table identifies the re-allocation of current DCC maintenance categories when SWHA hierarchy is adopted – Indicative inspection frequencies based on the current regime have been included also assumptions have been made as to the level of split between new maintenance categories.

General Description	
2 – WMH Category 2 – Strategic Route (DCC M/C 3&4) (IF 1Month)	
Trunk and some Principal 'A' roads between Primary Destinations	Routes for traffic travelling long distances, often with little frontage access or pedestrian traffic. Speed limits are usually in excess of 40 mph and there are few junctions. Pedestrian crossings are either segregated or controlled and parked vehicles are often prohibited. Not always National Speed Limit
3 – WMH Category 3a – Main Distributor (DCC M/C 5) (IF 1Month)	
Major Urban Network and Inter Primary Links. Short – medium distance traffic	Routes between Strategic Routes and linking urban centres to the strategic network often with limited frontage access. In urban areas speed limits are usually 40 mph or less, parking is often restricted at peak times and there are positive measures for pedestrian safety.
4 – WMH Category 3b – Secondary Distributor (DCC M/C 6) (IF 6Month)	
Classified Road (B and C class) and unclassified urban bus routes carrying local traffic with frontage access and frequent junctions	In rural areas these roads link the larger villages, industrial sites and commercial sites to the Strategic and Main Distributor Network. In urban areas these roads usually have 30 mph speed limits and very high levels of pedestrian activity with some crossing facilities including zebra crossings.
5 – WMH Category 4a – Link Road (DCC M/C 7 & 8 urban) (IF 6Month)	
Roads linking between the Main and Secondary Distributor Network with frontage access and frequent junctions	Roads interconnecting the Secondary Distributor Network with Collector Roads and Local Access Roads with frontage access and frequent junctions. In rural areas these roads link the smaller villages to the distributor roads. In urban areas these form residential, industrial and public transport interconnecting roads, usually with 30 mph speed limits and pedestrian movements.

6 – Local Link Road (Not in WMH) (DCC M/C 9 urban) (IF 12month)	
Roads connecting Link Roads and other Distributor Roads. Local Link Roads usually have frontage access and junctions onto Local Access Roads	These roads are residential interconnecting roads, usually with uncontrolled pedestrian movements. They provide well used vehicular links within the local access roads. <i>This Category does not appear in Well Maintained Highways and is a sub-division of category 4a</i>
7 – WMH Category 4b – Local Access Road (DCC M/C 8 rural, 9(part(0.4say))rural &10 urban) (IF 12month)	
Roads serving limited numbers of properties carrying only access traffic	In rural areas these roads serve small settlements and provide access to a number of properties or land. In urban areas they are often residential streets, cul-de-sacs or small industrial estates.
8 – Minor Road (Not in WMH) (DCC M/C 9 (part(0.6 say)) rural, 10(part(0.5 say)) rural & 11 urban) (IF 12month)	
Local roads serving an extremely limited number of properties or agricultural land.	In rural areas these form minor access roads to houses and farms. In urban areas these form minor side roads and vehicular alleyways <i>This Category does not appear in Well Maintained Highways and is a sub-division of category 4b.</i>
9 – Lanes (Not in WMH) (DCC M/C10(part(0.5 say)) rural & 11 rural) (IF 24month)	
Minor routes and low use tracks that provide access to isolated buildings.	In rural areas these often narrow metalled roads serving isolated agricultural buildings In urban areas are often metalled no through lanes serving garages or the rear of properties. <i>This Category does not appear in Well Maintained Highways and is a sub-division of category 4b.</i>
10 – Green Lanes and Tracks (Not in WMH) (DCC M/C 12) (PROW)	
Lanes and tracks that are unsuitable for vehicular traffic	Lanes and tracks that are unsuitable for vehicular traffic but may be used as a footpath, part of a Cycle Trail, or by horse riders, generally for leisure purposes. <i>This Category does not appear in Well Maintained Highways and is an additional category below 4b.</i>
11 - Disused Tracks (Not in WMH) (Not in DCC M/C)	
Unmetalled tracks that are unrecognisable as a road	Roads that have become unrecognisable as such, having fallen into disuse through regression or agricultural use. <i>This Category does not appear in Well Maintained Highways and is an additional category below 4b.</i>

Table 2 impact of changes to inspection regime based on allocations and Inspection frequencies from Table 1

Maintenance Category	Network length km	Inspection Frequency	Inspection Distance km/yr	% Network length
SWHA2	847	1	10160	7
SWHA3	799	1	9583	6
SWHA4	1,256	6	2512	10
SWHA5	1,878	6	3757	14
SWHA6	1,070	12	1070	8
SWHA7	3,494	12	3494	27
SWHA8	2,605	12	2605	20
SWHA9	439	24	219	3
SWHA10	574			4
Total	12,962		33,400	100
	km			
DCCMC3	373	1	4479	3
DCCMC4	473	1	5681	4
DCCMC5	799	1	9583	6
DCCMC6	1,256	6	2512	10
DCCMC7	1,542	6	3085	12
DCCMC8	2,064	12	2064	16
DCCMC9	4,986	12	4986	38
DCCMC10	684	12	684	5
DCCMC11	211	24	105	2
DCCMC12	574			4
	12,962		33,178	100

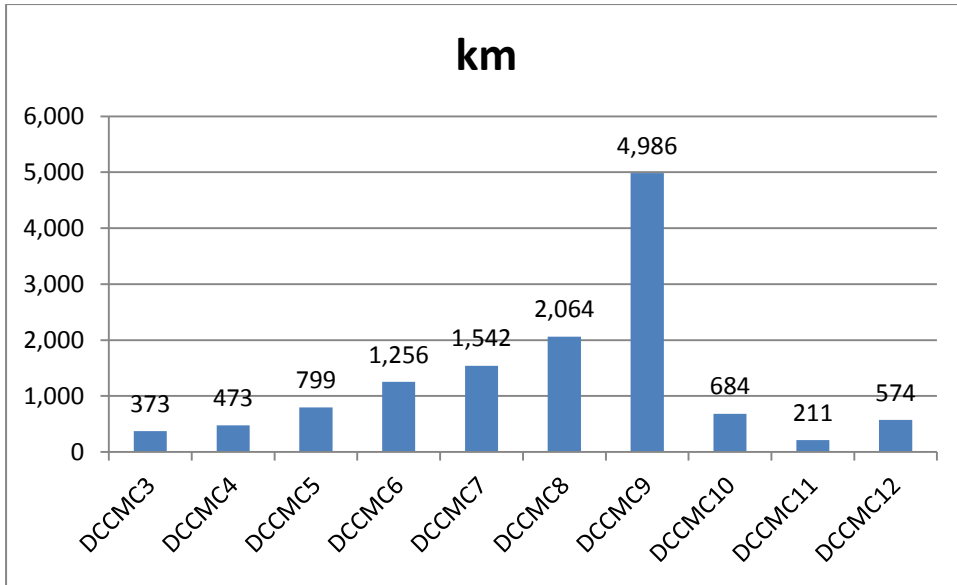


Figure 1 - Total lengths of current DCC maintenance categories

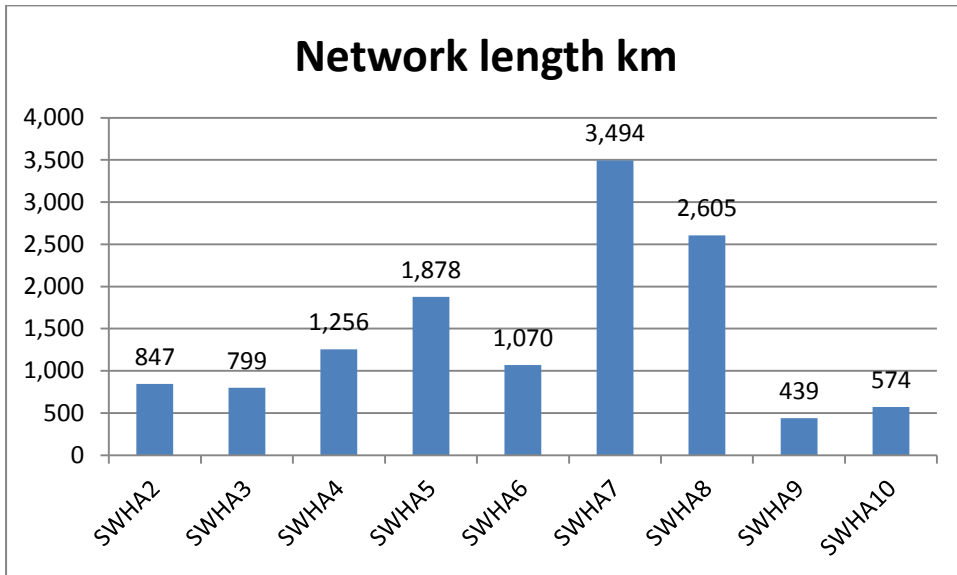


Figure 2 Total lengths of proposed SWHA maintenance categories

Table of Existing DCC Hierarchy

Carriageway Maintenance Hierarchy	Hierarchy Description	Type of Road / General Description
1	Motorway	Maintained by Highways Agency
2a	Primary National - Trunk Road	Maintained by Highways Agency
3	National Primary route	National strategic routes for through and long distance travel (A roads)
4	County Primary route	Main access routes connecting principal settlements.
5	Secondary County route	Main access routes to large settlements and recreational attractions.
6	Local Distributor	Main access routes to smaller settlements and recreational attractions.
7	Collector road	Rural – Access routes to small villages and other significant traffic generators. Urban – Industrial main collector roads & through routes and Residential collector roads. Access to schools, hospitals, facilities for the disabled, main shopping areas, libraries, car parks and tourist attractions. Shared surfaces with heavy pedestrian traffic. Local roads serving limited numbers of properties.
8	Minor Collector road	Rural – Roads serving small hamlets and scattered communities. Urban – Roads serving shopping areas, business premises, industrial estates and residential areas
9	Service road	Rural – Local road serving only a few properties Urban – Narrow collector roads and shared surfaces
10	Minor Service road	Rural – Local road serving only one property Urban – Cul-de-sac serving less than 20 properties.
11	Minor lane	Rural – Serving fields only or duplicating other routes. Urban – Back Lanes
12		Not used by normal vehicular traffic