Woodmancote
PARISH COUNCIL

LOCAL WINTER MANAGEMENT PLAN 2025

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BACKGROUND

The experience of the winter of 2010/11 highlighted the importance of co-operation between the various agencies and the value of the Parish Councils' roles within their communities. The Parish Council does not have a statutory duty to prepare for and deal with snow and ice, but it is in a good position to inform the principal authorities about local needs and the Council wants to do whatever else it can for our community.

This local Winter Management Plan sets out to clarify what the community can expect from the principal authorities and what the Parish Council has put in place so that Woodmancote can be better prepared to help itself.

LEGAL ADVICE

Throughout the country people have been hesitant to clear snow because of fears of litigation if someone should slip on the treated area. This has been raised at numerous forums the consensus appears to be that common sense should prevail. The Ministry of Justice issued a letter during the first half of 2010 which states:
"The prospects of a person who volunteers to clear snow from a pavement being successfully sued for damages by a person who subsequently slips on the cleared area and is injured are very small".
The following statement was taken from Direct.gov, the official UK Government website:

The law on clearing snow and ice from public spaces

There's no law stopping you from clearing snow and ice on the pavement outside your home or from public spaces. It's unlikely you'll be sued or held legally responsible for any injuries on the path if you have cleared it carefully. Follow this advice [The Snow Code] on clearing snow and ice safely.

Tips on how to clear snow and ice from pavements or public spaces

Prevent slips

Pay extra attention to clear snow and ice from steps and steep pathways - you might need to use more salt on these areas.

If you clear snow and ice yourself, be careful - don't make the pathways more dangerous by causing them to refreeze. But don't be put off clearing paths because you're afraid someone will get injured.

Remember, people walking on snow and ice have responsibility to be careful themselves. Follow the advice below to make sure you clear the pathway safely and effectively.

Clear the snow or ice early in the day

It's easier to move fresh, loose snow rather than hard snow that has packed together from people walking on it. So if possible, start removing the snow and ice in the morning. If you remove the top layer of snow in the morning, any sunshine during the day will help melt any ice beneath. You can then cover the path with salt before nightfall to stop it refreezing overnight. **Use salt or sand - not water**

If you use water to melt the snow, it may refreeze and turn to black ice. Black ice increases the risk of injuries, as it is invisible and very slippery. You can prevent black ice by spreading some salt on the area you have cleared. You can use ordinary table or dishwasher salt - a tablespoon for each square metre you clear should work. Don't use the salt found in salting bins - this will be needed to keep the roads clear.

Be careful not to spread salt on plants or grass as it may cause them damage.

If you don't have enough salt, you can also use sand or ash. These won't stop the path icing over as well as salt, but will provide good grip under foot. **Take care where you move the snow**
When you're shovelling snow, take care where you put it so it doesn't block people's paths or drains. Make sure you make a path down the middle of the area to be cleared first, so you have a clear surface to walk on. Then shovel the snow from the centre of the path to the sides. **Offer to clear your neighbours' paths**
If your neighbour will have difficulty getting in and out of their home, offer to clear snow and ice around their property as well. Check that any elderly or disabled neighbours are alright in the cold weather. If you're worried about them, contact your local council.

ROLE OF THE PRINCIPAL AUTHORITIES

West Sussex County Council (WSCC), as the Highway Authority, assumes overall responsibility for snow and ice clearance on the public highway. Their priorities are concentrated on keeping the main roads and routes to essential services open throughout the County.
WSCC's service includes:

- Bulk purchase and storage of salt
- Filling salt bins and delivering 1 tonne bulk bags (Hippo bags) when resources permit
- Issuing farmers with snowploughs
- Pre-treatment of selected roads
- Reactive treatment of roads when resources permit
- Monitoring local weather forecasts
- Issuing a Daily Decision regarding action(s) to be taken
- Providing advice and training

Information regarding the WSCC Winter Service Plan and
Gritting Routes can be found here:-
https://www.westsussex.gov.uk/roads-and-travel/maintaining-roads-verges-and-pavements/road-maintenance/winter-service

Whilst District Councils are not obliged to clear snow or ice from public highways, pavements, precincts and private roads Horsham District Council (HDC) will, in the most extreme circumstances, work with local Town and Parish Councils and assist in clearance of snow and ice, in agreed priority areas. They will, where possible, re-deploy contractors (e.g. grounds maintenance and street cleaning) to undertake snow clearance, as agreed between the contractor, the Council and its local partners.

ROLE OF THE PARISH COUNCIL

As stated in the opening paragraph, Parish Councils do not have a statutory duty to deal with snow and ice (except the area around their own property) and Woodmancote Parish Council (WPC) does not have the resources to make a commitment to provide a snow clearing service. What it hopes to do therefore is to encourage and facilitate self-help as far as possible and to liaise with other authorities and agencies. To achieve this, it has taken [or will take] the following action:

- Establish and maintain links with key personnel of principle authorities
- Prepare and publish a Winter Management Plan (WMP), to include contact details, location of salt bins and a statement of how salt supplies will be managed
- Inform WSCC of any additional roads that, on the basis of local knowledge, it is considered should be on the treatment route
- Purchase salt bins for agreed locations and arrange to have them filled by WSCC at the beginning of the winter
- Nominate a Co-ordinator
- Receive the Daily Decision from WSCC and liaise with key personnel and local contacts regarding any action to be taken
- Purchase equipment as appropriate
- Liaise with WSCC for replenishment of salt supplies [subject to availability]
- Liaise with HDC for their contractors to treat pavements
- Inform WSCC of any severely affected key roads requiring treatment
- Review the WMP annually or following severe weather events and consider further action

CONTACTS

The Community & Economic Development Principal Community Officer will be the main point of contact, and he/she will provide the Clerk with a contact telephone number.

A pre-snow event statement will be issued by e-mail to all those who have been established as the Community local Winter Maintenance Plan point of contact, to advise when to start implementing the plan and to indicate the likelihood of a prolonged snow event.

The Daily Decision is issued via WSCC gritting on X between 1st October and the 31st April.
https://twitter.com/WSHighways
All other information on the winter service can be found on WSCC's web site:
https://www.westsussex.gov.uk/media/1lnnbyvb/winter_service_plan.pdf

To contact WSCC about pre-winter preparedness please email
acive.communities@westsussex.gov.uk
or write to them at 2nd Floor, East Wing, County Hall, Chichester.

During Winter (1st Nov to 30th April) use the online form through this link https://www.westsussex.gov.uk/roads-and-travel/make-an-enquiry-or-report-a-problem-with-a-road-or-pavement/or phone the contact centre on 01243 642105 and they will pass the information onto the Highways Team to respond.

CO-ORDINATORS

- Takes the lead in co-ordinating local resources during adverse weather
- Receives Daily decisions from WSCC's twitter between the 1st October and the 31st April
- Liaises with other key personnel and local contacts as to any action to be taken

Co-ordinator for Woodmancote Parish Council: Roger Noe/Craig Dixon (or in his absence Mary Batchelor/Wendy Noel)

Woodmancote Parish Council holds a list of 4x4 volunteers.

PRIORITY AREAS FOR ACCESS AS IDENTIFIED BY THE PARISH COUNCIL

TERRY'S CROSS
01273 492821

If you wish to be added to a list of vulnerable people, please contact the Clerk of the Council.

LIST OF ROADS IDENTIFIED BY PARISH COUNCIL AS BEING ON TREATMENT ROUTE IF SIGNIFICANT SNOWFALL EVENT OCCURS AND CAN BE CLEARED BY LOCAL FARMER FOLLOWING WSCC TRIGGER EMAIL BEING RECEIVED

- Blackstone Lane Woodmancote
- Bramlands Lane Woodmancote
- Horn Lane Woodmancote

SALT BINS

The three salt bins are located as follows:

- Bramlands Lane at the 90-degree bend
- A281 next to the bus stop opposite the Parish Hall
- Blackstone Lane by the garages

These bins will be filled by WSCC prior to the start of the winter season.

The locations identified are not on any gritting routes, in a rural location, on tight bends and steep hills and where surface water commonly accumulates.

West Sussex County Council provides the salt for public bins on the understanding that it is kept for use on the public pavements, not on private property. Refilling the bins during the winter season is at the discretion of WSCC and may depend on Government direction. WSCC will not refill the bins if they believe the contents are being misappropriated.

For domestic use, dishwasher or table salt can be used to melt snow and ice. Sand, grit or ash can be used but it will not melt snow or ice, it will simply provide more grip.

Bins located in private roads will not be filled by WSCC and residents may wish to make their own arrangements. Bins can be bought from several outlets, which are easily found on the Internet. Salt and grit are available commercially

Over-salting is damaging to the environment and a waste of a limited resource. The recommended spread rate for hand salting is approximately **20 grams of salt / grit per metre square (a tablespoonful)**. Although this seems to be a very small amount, it is said to be enough to protect footways. If it is used at this rate and spread evenly the supply of salt will cover a greater area and last longer.

GUIDANCE ON SNOW CLEARING AND SALT SPREADING

Snow clearers have a duty to take reasonable care so as not to create a new and possibly worse risk, such as piling up a heap of snow that would cause an obstruction or other hazard or leaving the area in such a condition as to make slips more likely.

Snow is easier to clear when it is fresh than when it has become compacted and frozen. Shovels full of snow are quite heavy and snow clearers should take care that they do not injure themselves. Shovels etc must not be left where they could present a safety hazard to members of the public.

We ask that residents respect the Parish Council's responsibility to manage the supply of salt and observe the guidance.

Precautionary salting of dry pavements may not always seem to be an effective use of salt and effort, although when used prior to heavy snowfall it can make compacted snow and ice easier to lift from the pavement.

Do:

- Wear suitable clothing and footwear and take care not to injure or overexert yourself
- Clear snow responsibly so as not to create a new and possibly worse risk.
- Make sure a supply of salt is accessible before attempting to clear snow and ice
- Be aware of other people around you as you work, to avoid injury
- Clear snow in the morning if possible before it gets packed together from being walked on and to allow the sun to melt any ice beneath it
- Pay particular attention to steps and steep slopes
- Make a path down the centre then shovel from there to the sides
- Move snow to a porous surface such as a grass verge or garden
- Treat cleared areas immediately with salt to prevent freezing
- Spread salt/grit evenly and at appropriate spread rates (20 grams or 1 tablespoonful to treat a square metre of ice)
- Use salt only on the public footways and footpaths, not private property
- Avoid applying salt to plants or grass
- Try to keep the salt in the bins dry – clear snow from the lids before opening and close them during use if rain or snow is falling, or there is a risk of thawing snow dripping into the bins
- Return unused salt to the bin. Clear any excess salt or grit remaining once the snow / ice has melted

Don't:

- Use salt from public bins on private paths and drives
- Use water to melt snow and ice, if there is a risk it will refreeze
- Move snow to a location where it will create another risk such as another part of the pavement, road or where people are likely to walk
- Block drives, pathways and drainage channels or pile snow against buildings
- Use excessive salt, grit or other materials so as to create a new or worse risk once the snow / ice has melted.
- Create an obstruction or trip hazard with wheelbarrows and shovels etc where they may be a trip hazard
- Throw shovels of snow where there might be a risk to people, cars or property from hidden stones etc.

WSCC HIGHWAYS COMMITMENT

WSCC Highways undertakes to do the following:

- Monitor the daily forecast provided by our weather forecast provider between October and April and take appropriate actions. Issue a Daily Decision to interested parties via X https://twitter.com/WSHighways sign up here
- Treat the Winter Service Network – 42% of the county's 4,000km road network
- Purchase and store at our five depots at least 8,000 tons of de-icing road salt during the summer months when prices are advantageous
- Liaise with the Government's "Salt Cell" and actively participate in mutual aid with adjacent Highway Authority.
- Maintain a fleet of 20 gritters (bulk spreaders) between October and April
- Issue a pre-snow trigger email in the event of a significant weather event to advise communities when to activate the Local Farmer and Contractor Agreement for WSCC funded activities

WSCC Highways does not undertake any of the following:

- Treat any roads not identified as part of the Winter Service Network
- Hand treat footways / cycleways / precincts as a precautionary exercise
- Treat private, 3rd party or non-highway land
- Refill salt bins or replace Hippo Bags during the winter period free of charge
- Deliver salt bins or hippo bags once winter has started free of charge
- Fund farmers to clear roads that have not been identified in the agreed Local Winter Plan, or clearance has been undertaken without consent to activate from WSCC.

For further information consult WSCC's website at https://www.westsussex.gov.uk/roads-and-travel/maintaining-roads-verges-and-pavements/road-maintenance/winter-service/winter-service-plan/ and view the winter maintenance service plan.

KEY EMERGENCY PLANNING CONTACTS

Source:

Organisation Telephone Email/website/twitter

Organisation	Telephone	Email/Web site/Twitter
Sussex Police	01273 470101	https://www.sussex.police.uk/#sub-menu-1 https://twitter.com/sussex_police
South Coast Ambulance Service	0300 123 0999	https://www.secamb.nhs.uk/ https://twitter.com/SECAmbulance
West Sussex Fire and Rescue	01243 786211	https://www.westsussex.gov.uk/fire-emergencies-and-crime/west-sussex-fire-and-rescue-service/ https://twitter.com/share?u=https://www.westsussex.gov.uk/fire-emergencies-and-crime/west-sussex-fire-and-rescue-service/contact-west-sussex-fire-rescue-service/
Horsham District Council	01403 215100	https://www.horsham.gov.uk/ https://twitter.com/HorshamDC
West Sussex County Council	01243 777100	https://www.westsussex.gov.uk/roads-and-travel/ https://twitter.com/WSCCNews
Environment Agency	0370 850 6506	https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations https://twitter.com/envagency
Southeast Water	03330 000365	https://www.southeastwater.co.uk/ https://x.com/sewateruk
Southern Water	0330 3030368	https://www.southernwater.co.uk/contact-us/
UK Power Networks (Crawley)	0800 3163105	https://www.ukpowernetworks.co.uk/ https://twitter.com/ukpowernetworks

NHS	111 (Nonemergency) 999 (Emergency)	https://www.nhs.uk/
Woodmancote Parish Council	07906 159754	http://www.woodmancoteparishcouncil.gov.uk/default.aspx http://www.woodmancoteparishcouncil.gov.uk/Contact_Us_25920.aspx

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Direct.gov, the official UK Government website - for legal advice and "The Snow Code"
West Sussex County Council: "Preparing a Local Winter Management Plan" Horsham District Council: Guidance for Response to "Severe Weather"

DISCLAIMER: While every effort has been made to follow official guidance in drafting this Winter Management Plan, Woodmancote Parish Council is not responsible for any event resulting from misinterpretation of or subsequent changes to the guidance.