

# Pothole Fund Application Form



Department  
for Transport

Guidance is available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/pothole-fund-2014-to-2015-application>

Only one application form should be completed per local highway authority.

## **Applicant Information**

**Local authority name:** Somerset County Council

**Bid Manager Name and position:** Neil Guild, Highways Asset Improvement Officer

**Contact telephone number:** 01823 358224    **Email address:** [nguild@somerset.gov.uk](mailto:nguild@somerset.gov.uk)

**Postal address:** Highways & Transport Commissioning  
Economic and Community Infrastructure  
Somerset County Council  
County Hall, The Crescent  
Taunton, TA1 4DY

When authorities submit a bid for funding to the Department, as part of the Government's commitment to greater openness in the public sector under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and the Environmental Information Regulations 2004, they must also publish a version excluding any commercially sensitive information on their own website within two working days of submitting the final bid to the Department. The Department reserves the right to deem the business case as non-compliant if this is not adhered to.

**Please specify the weblink where this bid will be published:**

<http://www.somerset.gov.uk/policies-and-plans/plans/transport-asset-management-plan-tamp/>

## **SECTION A – Your Highway**

The Department would like to understand more about the highway assets that fall under your statutory duties.

We already collect data from your authority in regards to road lengths but we would like to understand more about the other assets you are responsible for. Please answer the following in your application:

**A1: What is the number of bridges owned by your authority with span over 1.5 metres?**

Spans of 1.5 or greater for bridges = 1501  
Spans of 1.5 or greater for culverts = 45  
Spans of 1.5 or greater for special structures = 26  
Spans of 1.5 or greater for subways = 26  
Spans of 1.5 or greater for tunnels = 3

Total = 1601

**A2: What is the total number of street lighting columns under your authority's responsibility?**

48108 street lights

**A3: What is the total number of street lighting columns under your authority's responsibility over 40 years old?**

7097 street lights

**A4: What is the total length of footways under the responsibility of your authority (in miles)?**

2600 km

**A5: What is the total length of off road cycleways under the responsibility of your authority (in miles)?**

82 km

**A6: Please provide a weblink to your authority's statement of how the flood recovery funding, awarded in March 2014, has/will be spent:**

<http://www.somerset.gov.uk/policies-and-plans/plans/transport-asset-management-plan-tamp/>

## **SECTION B – Potholes**

**B1: Which of the recommendations arising from the Pothole Review Report has your authority adopted?**

The report can be viewed here:

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/3995/pothole-review.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/3995/pothole-review.pdf)?

Please answer the following, including providing supporting information, where applicable:

Question	Yes/No	All 'yes' answers must be supported evidence.  Please append supporting information, clearly marking the question number to which the information refers.
<b>A. Has your authority aligned its maintenance programme to the Government's highways maintenance funding years (i.e. 2011-2015 and 2015-2021)?</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
<b>B. Has your authority adopted the principle that 'prevention is better than cure' in determining the balance between structural, preventative and reactive maintenance activities in order to improve the resilience of the highway network and to minimise the occurrence of potholes in the future?</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<b>Appendix B - Highway Surfacing Materials Policy</b>  <b>Appendix A - Transport Asset Management Plan (TAMP)</b>
<b>C. Has your authority ensured that appropriate competencies have been made available to make the right choices when designing and specifying techniques and materials for the maintenance and repair of highways? Note – these competencies can be secured through training, collaboration with neighbouring authorities or external advice.</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Somerset has a published <b>Highway Surfacing Materials Policy</b> document. Attached as <b>Appendix B</b>
<b>D. Does your authority co-ordinate with other parties working on the highway short and long term programmes of work activities for up to four years in advance?</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Somerset County Council (SCC) holds regular three monthly HAUC – Co-ordination meetings with; Statutory Undertakers (SU's). SCC's term maintenance contractor and other stakeholders that require occupation of SCC's road network.

		<p>These meetings are generated through NRSWA legislation and the Code of Practice for the Co-ordination of Street Works for Road Purposes and Related, this code of practice proffers the use of forward planning notices and Appendix E as a means of communicating between these organisations and ourselves as a Authority to co-ordinate work under Section 59 of the NRSWA. However both SCC and SU's find it difficult to provide works programmes more than a year in advance of their proposed works and in general terms the evaluation and provision of long term funding for SCC's maintenance requirements and refurbishment of SU's assets are the spoiling factors to these advance programmes. Further meetings are held through out the year with internal SCC stakeholders as well as SU who are carrying out special refurbishment projects.</p>
<p><b>E. Has your authority considered the guidance provided in the ADEPT report Potholes and Repair Techniques for Local Highways and adopted as appropriate to your local circumstances?</b></p>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<p>Our current Term Maintenance Contract specifies repairs in line with the ADEPT report guidance – Somerset only pays for cut-out, hot laid, permanent repairs.</p>
<p><b>F. Has your authority developed a detailed highway inspection manual and have put appropriate training in place for your Highway Inspectors?</b></p>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<p>Somerset has a <b>Highway Safety Inspection Manual</b>. A copy can be found at <b>Appendix C</b>. This manual sets out in the detail the standards for highway inspection on the county roads of Somerset and is intended to give guidance on Somerset County Council's policy and procedures relating to Highway Safety Inspections.</p>
<p><b>G. Does your authority use technology and systems for the effective identification and management of potholes?</b></p>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<p>SCC employs the Pitney Bowes Confirm Asset Management system for the identification and ordering of highway works.</p>
<p><b>H. Does your authority have a public communications process in place that provides clarity and transparency in the policy and approach to repairing potholes? This should include a published policy and details of its implementation, including the prevention, identification, reporting,</b></p>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<p>Details are published on our website:</p> <p><a href="http://www.somerset.gov.uk/roads-parking-and-transport/problems-on-the-road/report-a-pothole-or-road-defect/">http://www.somerset.gov.uk/roads-parking-and-transport/problems-on-the-road/report-a-pothole-or-road-defect/</a></p> <p>We also have a Parish Highway</p>

<p><b>tracking and repair of potholes.</b></p>		<p>Information Pack distributed to all Parish Councils in the County. This document outlines the Levels of Service that the public can expect from the Council as the highway authority and the means by which they can report problems on the network. This document can be found at:</p> <p><a href="http://www.somerset.gov.uk/policies-and-plans/schemes-and-initiatives/local-choices/">http://www.somerset.gov.uk/policies-and-plans/schemes-and-initiatives/local-choices/</a></p>
<p><b>I. Does your authority monitor public satisfaction with road, footway and cycleway condition and report annually through the National Highways and Transport Public Satisfaction Survey or their own surveys?</b></p>	<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No</p>	<p>Somerset is a member authority of the NHT. We also carry out surveys of the public through the Council's Your Somerset publication.</p>
<p><b>J. Does your authority adopt permanent repairs as the first choice when repairing potholes?</b></p>	<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No</p>	<p>Somerset's current Term Maintenance Contract specifies permanent repairs when repairing carriageway potholes and similar defects.</p> <p><b>Appendix C - Somerset's Highway Safety Inspection Manual</b></p>
<p><b>K. Has your authority adopted dimensional definitions for potholes based on best practice as part of its maintenance policy?</b></p>	<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No</p>	<p><b>Appendix C - Somerset's Highway Safety Inspection Manual</b></p>

**B2: Does your authority adopt any innovative methods to help repair potholes? This could include, for example, specialist pothole maintenance crews.**

Yes  No

**If yes, please provide details as an annex as part of your bid:**

Somerset has introduced MPOTS (multiple pothole repairs) which enables the repair of more than one safety defect within one patch and includes any adjacent carriageway deterioration. This has the benefit of utilising competitive rates to improve public perception and deliver savings through multiple repairs in "one hit". It has been found that we achieve better quality repairs which last longer and deliver good value for money.

**B3: Does your authority use reporting tools to identify potholes in your local area including:**

**CTC Fill that Hole**  Yes  No

**Council's Own Web Reporting**  Yes  No

Other

Please specify:

Yes  No

**B4: Does your authority regularly consult and seek feedback on its highways maintenance regime, including potholes, with key stakeholders?**

Local Member(s) of Parliament

Yes  No

District, Borough and Parish Councils

Yes  No

Local Residents

Yes  No

(Including neighbourhood Forums)

Yes  No

Business Community

Yes  No

Emergency Services

Yes  No

**If yes, please provide details as an annex as part of your bid.**

Area Highways Managers and staff hold routine meetings with local stakeholders in their areas regards the services provided.

SCC uses its Your Somerset publication to seek the views of the public on the full range of services provided by the Council. We are also a member of the NHT survey and receive feedback from the public through that process.

Annual Local Choice events are held across the county in which opinions are sought from local councillors on the range of services provided by the Council

Details of these events can be found at:

<http://www.somerset.gov.uk/policies-and-plans/schemes-and-initiatives/local-choices/>

**B5: Does your authority have an up-to-date vision and action plan to improve the walking environment and encourage walking?**

Yes  No

**If yes, please provide a weblink:**

<http://www.somerset.gov.uk/policies-and-plans/strategies/transport-strategy/>

**B6: Please explain how you deliver your duty under NRSWA to 'co-ordinate the execution of works of all kinds', including for example permit schemes, noticing, co-ordination meetings?**

SCC has chosen to administer its co-ordination using the NRSWA noticing system which is driven under Eton (Section 59.1).

Please note that the Council's highways maintenance Term Maintenance Contractor notices their works on SCC's network as well, ensuring parity with SU colleagues.

Somerset has a strong ethos of working with SUs in achieving their and the Council's maintenance requirements on the network.

As an example of the Council's co-operation with SUs, Wessex Water have over the past five years carried out two major rehab project in the Taunton and Bridgwater. These schemes necessitated a full time NRSWA inspector to assist in the day to day operations of these works, which Wessex Water paid for in full. In this period the Council met with senior managers and monitored all forms of co-ordination from nationally attended carnivals to abnormal load movements etc.

**B7: What actions does your authority take to ensure road repairs undertaken by other parties (such as utilities companies) meet the standards in the specification?**

- Inspections regime**
- Scoring programme**
- Performance bench-marking**
- Meetings**
- Other (please specify)**

Through the normal legislative sample inspection regime SCC NRSWA inspectors monitor the performance of SU's reinstatements within Somerset. These performance details are shared at the above mentioned SCC HAUC Co-ordination meeting on a quarterly basis. SUs that trigger a 10% failure rate are warned of their failings and if necessary have an improvement notice placed on their company.

SCC has also undertaken extensive coring operations on SUs and private reinstatements (Section 50 licence holders) to ensure the requirements of the specification for the Reinstatement of Opening in Highways are adhered too.

Somerset County Council also participates in sending street works performance data to the National Hub. This scorecard data is essential in working out how all works promoters, utilities and local authorities are performing and identify trends that over time may need addressing at a national level. The project is led by HAUC(UK), and has the full support of the DfT. GeoPlace are acting as the data hub and carry out the administration, consolidation and production of the Scorecards on behalf of HAUC (UK).

## **SECTION C – Asset Management**

**C1: Has your authority adopted the recommendations arising from the Asset Management Strategy Guidance published in May 2013 –**

<http://www.ukroadsliasongroup.org/en/utilities/document-summary.cfm?docid=5C49F48E-1CE0-477F-933ACBFA169AF8CB> ?

Yes       No

**Please answer the following, including providing supporting information, where applicable.**

Question	Yes/No	All 'yes' answers must be supported evidence.  Please append supporting information, clearly marking the question number to which the information refers.
Has your authority got an up to date asset management policy and strategy?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	If yes, please provide a weblink.  <a href="http://www.somerset.gov.uk/policies-and-plans/plans/transport-asset-management-plan-tamp/">http://www.somerset.gov.uk/policies-and-plans/plans/transport-asset-management-plan-tamp/</a>  SCC is in the process of developing an updated Highways Infrastructure Asset Management Plan (HIAMP) in line with HMEP/DfT guidance. This will build on the previous work carried out in developing the TAMP for Somerset.
Does your authority communicate relevant information associated with asset management through engagement with your relevant stakeholders when you set requirements, make decisions and report performance?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Area Highways Managers and staff hold routine meetings with local stakeholders.  Annual Local Choice events are held across the county in which opinions are sought from local councillors on the range of services provided by the Council
Does your authority have an asset management register?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	SCC holds complete asset data for all its asset types – this includes carriageway, footways, cycle routes, street lighting, structures, signage and other street furniture, as well as other associated highways assets owned by SCC
Does your authority follow lifecycle planning principles which are used to review the level of funding and which will help support investment decisions including long term investment in your assets?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Comprehensive lifecycle planning was developed as part of the wider TAMP project. Annual asset valuations for Whole Government Accounting takes place in Somerset, allowing for decisions about

	<p>sustainable, long term funding for each asset type.</p> <p>Somerset is currently developing the implementation of a scheme manager IT system to allow for the programming of resurfacing and surface dressing programmes on a whole asset basis according to a needs based approach.</p> <p><a href="http://www.somerset.gov.uk/policies-and-plans/plans/transport-asset-management-plan-tamp/">http://www.somerset.gov.uk/policies-and-plans/plans/transport-asset-management-plan-tamp/</a></p>
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**C2: As part of your last L-Pack return for Whole Government Accounting requirements for the accounting period 2012/13, can you confirm you submitted the following return:**

**Carriageway and Footways**       Yes    No

**Lighting**                                       Yes    No

**Structures**                                       Yes    No

**Street Furniture**                               Yes    No

## **SECTION D – Efficiencies**

**D1: Is your authority actively engaged with securing efficiencies for highways maintenance?**

Yes  No

**If yes, please provide additional information on what your authority has done since 2011 including what % efficiency savings (where efficiency savings are defined as delivering a similar or a better outcome at a lower cost) your authority has achieved year on year and what savings you hope to achieve by end of 2014/15.**

Somerset is currently in year 4 of a 5 year Term Maintenance Contract, with possible extensions, which secured a very competitive schedule of rates for pothole repair below the national average; therefore the Council's opportunities to further reduce rates is limited. We have, however, investigated other cost saving opportunities and these are described below.

Somerset had two examples of good practice in the 2012 Government report, **Pothole Review – Prevention and a Better Cure**. Which highlighted its:

- **Approach to analysis of data** - to ensure effective targeted spend of capital maintenance to reduce revenue expenditure and reduce the number of potholes likely to occur.
- **Use of technology** – this is a cradle to grave approach using mobile technology to quickly and effectively identify, record, order and monitor all pothole repairs. This initiative also received an award in the Highways Magazine Excellence awards in 2012.

In addition to the above examples we have introduced MPOTS (multiple pothole repairs) which enables the repair of more than one safety defect within one patch and includes any adjacent carriageway deterioration. This has the benefit of utilising competitive rates to improve public perception and deliver savings through multiple repairs in “one hit”. It has been found that we achieve better quality repairs which last longer and deliver good value for money.

It is difficult to define actual savings as we have targeted expenditure to prevent pothole occurrence rather than seek to reduce the cost of an individual repair.

We believe the number of potholes has reduced by around 2% each year and as continued investment in the above methods of treatment we expect this saving to be sustained for the next few years.

**D2: Is your authority exploring or has it already joined with neighbouring local highway authorities or a Highways Maintenance Alliance to achieve economies of scale?**

Yes  No

**If yes, please provide additional information. For example the names of other authorities or the Alliance.**

Somerset County Council is a member of the South West Highways Alliance, along with all 15 of the region's highway authorities. These are:

Somerset County Council  
Devon County Council

Wiltshire County Council  
Dorset County Council  
Gloucestershire County Council  
Cornwall Council  
North East Somerset Council  
Bath and North East Somerset Council  
South Gloucestershire Council  
Torbay Council  
Bristol City Council  
Poole Borough Council  
Bournemouth Borough Council  
Plymouth City Council  
Swindon City Council

**D3: Is your authority sharing its efficiency experience and/or case studies with other local highway authorities via the Highways Maintenance Efficiency Programme or other good practice networks?**

Yes  No

**If yes, please provide state where:**

Somerset contributed to the HMEP publication ***Potholes: Prevention and a Better Cure*** report. In Appendix B1 to that report Somerset County Council provided two case studies on ***Analysis of Data*** and ***Use of Technology***. The report can be found here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/potholes-review-prevention-and-a-better-cure>

## SECTION E – Other

**E1: Please provide details on which of the following good practice activities your authority is undertaking for its highways management activities.**

Invest to save  Yes  No  
Cross boundary collaboration  Yes  No

**Other (please specify):** SCC is engaged in potential joint procurement of future highway services with other authorities in the South West – through the SW Highways Alliance, and also outside of that group with partner authorities in the region on areas of joint interest.

**E2: Do you consider your authority to be an exemplar authority in tackling potholes and undertaking highway maintenance?**

Yes  No

**If yes, please explain why.**

Somerset County Council was an early adopter of the asset management approach and was one of the first authorities to develop a comprehensive Transport Asset Management Plan (TAMP) in 2009. Somerset has been a leading authority in initiating a South West regional highway alliance to look at the joint procurement of highway services.

Somerset continues to work with other authorities in the region to investigate the potential for shared services and joint procurement.

Through our existing Term Maintenance Contract Somerset continues to provide a good service at good value for money – as evidenced through the annual NHT survey results and other benchmarking.

**If yes, would your authority be willing to share its experiences more widely with other authorities / organisations?**

Yes  No

## **SECTION F: Declarations**

### **F1. Senior Responsible Owner Declaration**

As Senior Responsible Owner for [*scheme name*] I hereby submit this request for approval to DfT on behalf of Somerset County Council and confirm that I have the necessary authority to do so.

I confirm that Somerset County Council will have all the necessary statutory powers in place to ensure the planned timescales in the application can be realised.

Name: **David Jones**

Signed:

Position: **Commissioning Manager - Highway Asset  
& Improvement**