

Foreword

The need for delivering best value in highway maintenance has never been greater, to preserve and wherever possible improve safety, serviceability and sustainability. This includes the need to prevent structural failure and to satisfy the increasing expectations of network users, especially when the network continues to grow. While budgets continue to be under pressure, priorities must be set such that the available resources are spent wisely and the consequences of decisions taken are made clear to both elected representatives and their constituents.

The Government's 10-year plan for transport (2000-2010) places highway maintenance as 'a key priority for investment'. A key challenge is to eliminate the maintenance backlog for local roads, bridges and street lighting by the end of the Plan period. In addition the intention was to halt the deterioration in local road condition by 2004; unfortunately this has not materialised as yet due to the level of Government funding, however this Highway Network Management Plan through Best Value, asset management philosophy and effective allocation of resources aims to eliminate the backlog and halt the deterioration by the end of the 10-year plan in 2010.

The Code of Practice for Maintenance Management, published by the Institution of Highways & Transportation (IHT) requires that an objective assessment is made on the extent of the outstanding maintenance work necessary to facilitate assessment of the maintenance strategy. It has been estimated that the intensity of funding of some £50 million per annum (baseline) is required for maintenance works in Derbyshire just to maintain the network at the current levels.

Currently in Derbyshire a Revenue Budget of some £12 million and a Capital Budget of £18 million are spent each year on maintaining and improving the condition of the highway network which leaves a shortfall of £20 million against the baseline figure.

The UK Roads Board is developing a methodology to use road condition data to calculate the road maintenance backlog for the UK, which it hopes will be adopted across the whole of the UK. This methodology, when available in conjunction with this plan, the Highway Asset Management Plan (HAMP) and Transportation Asset Management Plan (TAMP), which are currently being developed, will help calculate the size of the County's road maintenance backlog.