

Press release

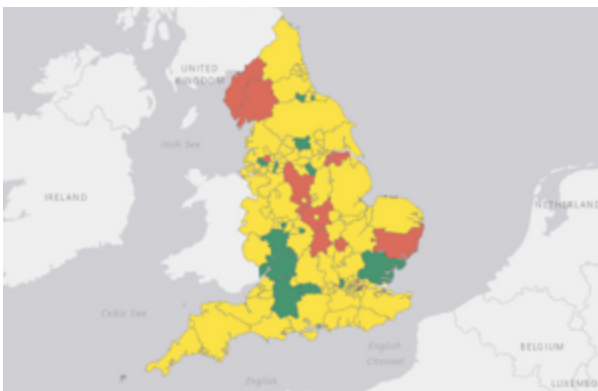
How well is your council fixing your roads?

New map rates how record government pothole funding is being used.

From: **Department for Transport**
(/government/organisations/department-for-transport) and **The Rt Hon Heidi Alexander MP** (**/government/people/heidi-alexander**)

Published: 11 January 2026

This was published under the 2024 to 2026 Starmer Labour government



- new red, amber, green ratings let public see which local highway authorities are fixing potholes effectively
- government's record £7.3 billion funding announced at budget is helping councils get on with fixing nation's roads
- record investment will drive real improvement, saving drivers money by preventing costly repairs and restoring pride in communities

Drivers across England can now see how well their local highway authority (LHA) is tackling the pothole plague thanks to a new traffic light rating system published by the government today (11 January 2026).

The new ratings – the first of their kind – grade 154 local highway authority (LHA) as red, amber or green based on current road condition and how effectively they are spending the government's record £7.3 billion funding to fix potholes and invest in long term measures to maintain roads.

The interactive map shows every LHA's rating (<https://maps.dft.gov.uk/local-road-maintenance-ratings-map/index.html>), to highlight best practice and drive improved performance from councils.

It comes after the government backed LHAs with a record multi-year investment to improve the condition of their roads, after years of them calling for long-term certainty.

This allows them to repair potholes effectively and move away from expensive, short-term repairs and instead invest in long-term preventative measures. The fixes will mean more money in drivers' pockets – with the average vehicle repair (<https://www.rac.co.uk/drive/advice/driving-advice/rac-pothole-index-statistics-data-and-projections/>) bill from hitting potholes around £320, with some motorists paying over £1,000 last year.

Transport Secretary Heidi Alexander said:

“For too long, drivers have paid the price because our roads were left to deteriorate. I have heard time and again their frustration on footing the bill because they hit a pothole – money they should never have to spend in the first place.

“We've put our money where our mouth is, increasing the funding for local highway authorities with £7.3 billion to fix roads and given them the long-term certainty they have been asking for. Now it's over to them to spend the money wisely, and for the first time, we are making sure the public can see how well councils are doing in delivering the improvements they want

to see in their local area.

This government's record investment will save drivers money on repairs, make roads safer and help restore pride in our communities."

The government's record £7.3 billion for local road maintenance is enough for LHAs to renew and improve tens of thousands of miles of roads in every corner of the country.

The red, amber, green ratings (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/local-road-maintenance-ratings>) are based on 3 key areas:

- the condition of local roads
- how much LHAs are spending on road repairs
- whether they are following best practice in maintaining highways

The first-of-its-kind rating system shines a light on where local authorities are excelling and, crucially, where more needs to be done to deliver change people see in their communities.

Those that scored 'green', like Leeds, Sandwell and Manchester, were able to demonstrate they are following best practice, such as investing in more long-term preventative measures rather than just patching up potholes, while also maintaining good road conditions and investing significantly into improving local roads.

'Amber' ranked LHAs showed some of these qualities with room for improvement in individual areas, while those rated 'red' are not yet meeting the expected standards in one or several areas measured by the ratings – such as the current state of the roads, their plans for preventing potholes or investment into maintaining their local roads more widely.

To boost standards, LHAs currently rated red will receive dedicated support to bring them in line with best practices, backed by £300,000 worth of expert planning and capability assistance. The support programme will include peer reviews where sector experts will help improve processes and provide practical advice.

As an incentive to better roads, access to full future funding allocations will be linked to performance, ensuring councils are encouraged to get on with the job and use taxpayer money efficiently to repair and maintain their roads before potholes form.

To further ensure transparency from LHAs, 25% of local highway authorities' £500 million funding uplift this financial year was withheld until they

published transparency reports

(<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/highway-maintenance-funding-guidance-for-local-authorities>) and set out how they comply with best practice. The withheld £125 million in funding was unlocked at the end of last year by councils which successfully submitted their reports.

In further support for local authorities, the government will extend the Live Labs 2 programme for another year, providing up to £300,000 to help councils access and adopt more innovative approaches to maintenance, including uptake of longer-lasting, low-carbon materials for repairing roads faster, more efficiently and far less often. These materials can unlock savings for the taxpayer, lower emissions and reduce disruptive roadworks long-term to keep drivers moving.

The announcement comes in the same week the government unveiled the first Road Safety Strategy (<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/thousands-of-lives-to-be-saved-under-bold-new-road-safety-strategy>) in over a decade, to save thousands of lives on the nation's roads by tackling drink-driving, improving training for young drivers and introducing mandatory eye tests for older motorists.

Edmund King, AA president and founding member of the Pothole Partnership, said:

“The top transport demand for 96% of AA members is fixing potholes with increased investment in repairing and upgrading roads.

“We welcome this government initiative to hold local highways authorities to account, which should help to promote the Pothole Partnership objective of more proactive and permanent repairs.”

Caroline Julian, Brand and Engagement Director of British Cycling and founding member of the Pothole Partnership, said:

“For cyclists, potholes are far more than an annoyance. One unexpected impact can cause a serious crash, life-changing injury or, in the worst cases, a fatality. Safe riding depends on safe roads, and a smooth, well-maintained surface isn't a luxury for cyclists, it's essential for their safety.

“This new mapping tool is a step forward. It gives riders clear insight into how well their council is maintaining the routes they rely on every day, whilst holding decision-makers to account.”

RAC Head of Policy, Simon Williams, said:

“These new ratings are a positive move that will help drivers understand how councils are performing when it comes to improving the state of local roads. While there are examples of good road maintenance practice taking place, this isn’t consistent across the country and means drivers have, for too long, been left with substandard roads.

“We hope this initiative, plus the promise of longer-term funding for councils to allow them to plan and carry out much-needed preventative maintenance, means we’re finally on the way to having smoother, better roads.”

Kerry Winstanley, Managing Director of Local Council Roads Innovation Group (LCRIG), said:

“The release of the national ratings provides a clear opportunity to target support and strengthen the local road network where it is most needed.

“For many years, highways authorities have worked hard to maintain roads despite declining budgets and resources and the ratings, released alongside record multi-year investment, will enable authorities to benefit from additional support and increase investment in preventative maintenance, while continuing collaborative work supported by LCRIG, including sharing best practices, adopting innovative solutions, and working towards a nationally green-rated road network.”

Roads media enquiries

Media enquiries 0300 7777 878

Switchboard 0300 330 3000





All content is available under the [Open Government Licence v3.0](#), except where otherwise stated



© Crown copyright