



Department for Transport

Road Conditions in England 2016

In 2015/16, 3 per cent of the principal ‘A’ road network should have been considered for maintenance, the lowest level since data were first collected in 2007/08.

About this release

This annual release presents information on the condition of roads in England, as well as other aspects of highways maintenance.

Automated survey machines are used by local authorities (LAs) and Highways England to determine the percentage of the network that ‘should have been considered for maintenance’ (see side bar on [page 2](#) for more detail). The data are used to make decisions about maintenance on the networks.

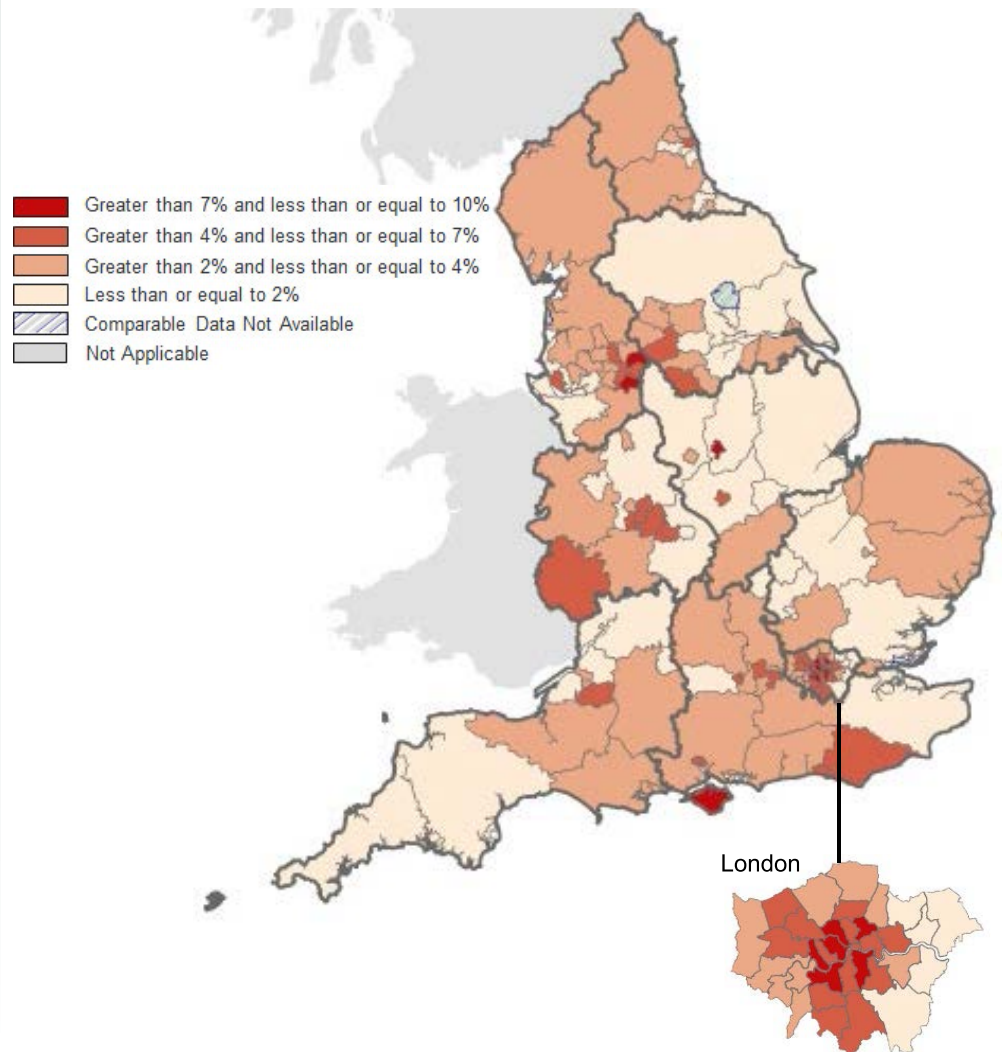
Figures for road condition are available back to 2007/08, with the most recent available data covering the period April 2015 to March 2016. Regional and national figures include all LAs whose data passed validation checks.

Further information can be found via the [road condition statistical series](#).

In this publication

- Road Condition.....[p2](#)
- Skidding Resistance.....[p4](#)
- Maintenance Treatment.....[p5](#)
- Maintenance Expenditure.....[p5](#)
- Background[p6](#)

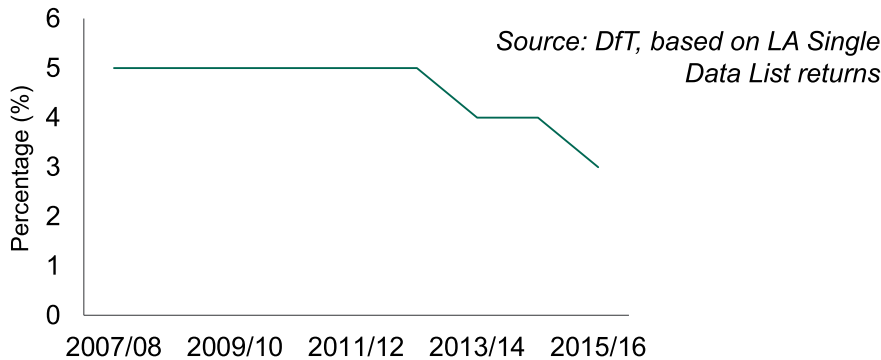
Percentage of Principal ‘A’ road network where maintenance should be considered, by local authority in England in 2015/16



By region, the proportion of the principal ‘A’ road network that should have been considered for maintenance varied between 5 per cent (London) and 2 per cent (East Midlands and the South West).

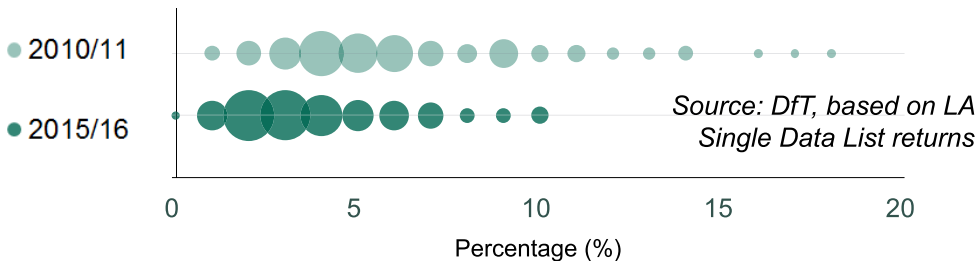
Road Condition in England by Road Type - Principal 'A' Roads

Proportion of principal 'A' roads that should have been considered for maintenance, 2007/08 to 2015/16



Change in proportion of the LA principal 'A' road network that should have been considered for maintenance between 2010/11 and 2015/16

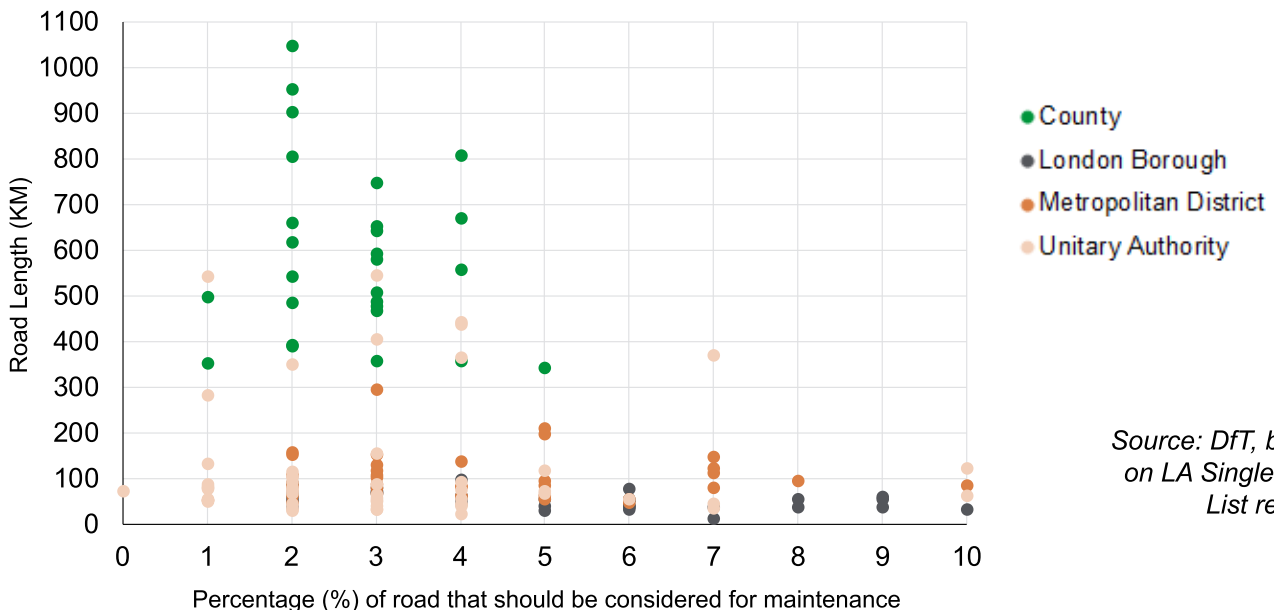
- The size of the circle indicates the number of LAs reporting that percentage.



- Figures rounded to nearest whole percentage, an LA can report a figure of zero if below 0.5%.

In 2015/16, 79 per cent of LAs reported that 5 per cent or less of their principal 'A' road network should have been considered for maintenance. This compared with 54% in 2010/11.

Proportion of the road network that should have been considered for maintenance by LA type, 2015/16, and size of road network, 2015



Measuring road condition

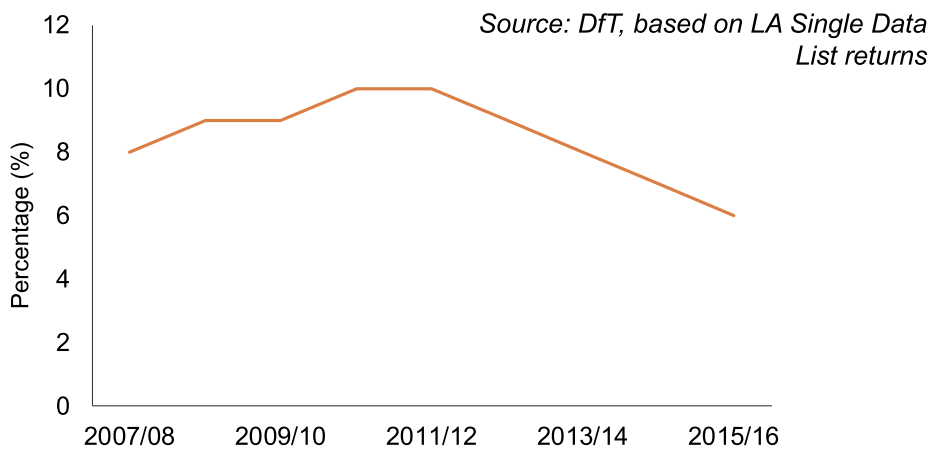
The term 'considered for maintenance' is the percentage of the network calculated to be above a certain threshold (in 'red' condition), based on its Road Condition Indicator (RCI) score. However, roads in 'red' condition will not necessarily require immediate treatment.

As data for other road condition categories (green and amber) are not currently collected, the figures should only be taken as an indication of whether condition is improving or worsening. Comparisons of road condition are not typically made across different road types due to differing methods.

See the [Road network size and condition statistics guidance](#) for further detail.

Road Condition in England by Road Type - Non Principal Roads

Proportion of classified non-principal 'B' and 'C' roads that should have been considered for maintenance , 2007/08 to 2015/16

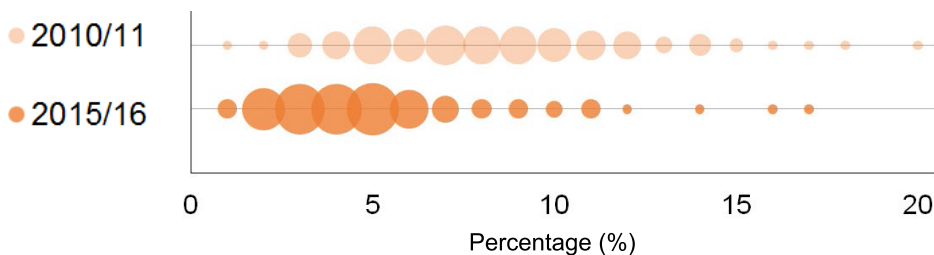


For classified non-principal 'B' and 'C' roads, 6 per cent of the network should have been considered for maintenance. This continued the gradual downward trend since 2011/12.

Data on unclassified roads is collected via different methods. In 2015/16, 17 per cent of the unclassified network in England should have been considered for maintenance, 1 percentage point lower than in 2014/15.

Change in proportion of the LA non-principal road network that should have been considered for maintenance between 2010/11 and 2015/16

- The size of the circle indicates the number of LAs reporting that percentage.



- Figures rounded to nearest whole percentage, an LA can report a figure of zero if below 0.5%.

Source: DfT, based on LA Single Data List returns

In 2015/16, 71 per cent of LAs reported that 5 per cent or less of their principal 'B' and 'C' road network should have been considered for maintenance. This compared with 23% in 2010/11.

Road Types in England

Trunk motorways and 'A' roads make up the Strategic Road Network (SRN), and are managed by Highways England (HE). In 2015, the SRN made up 2.5 per cent of road length but carried 33 per cent of motor traffic vehicle KMs.

All other road types are managed by LAs. In 2016:

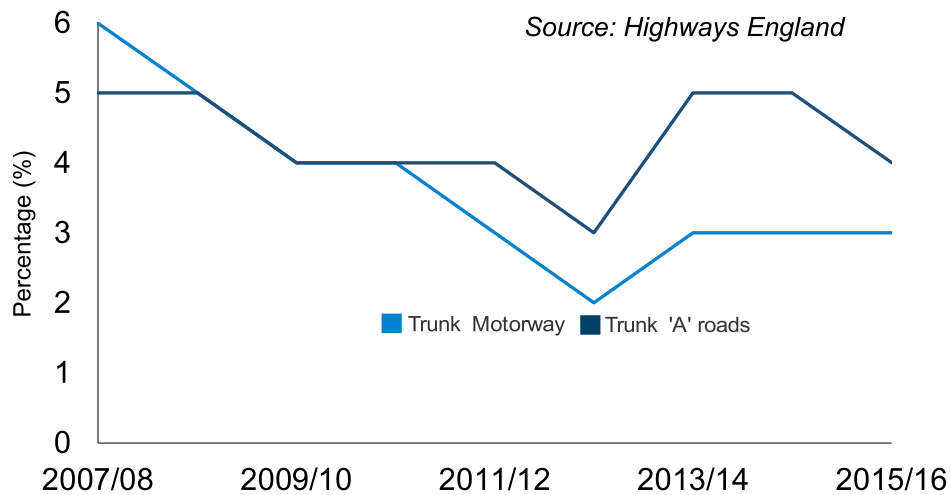
- **Principal 'A' roads** and motorways made up 9 per cent of road length and carried 32 per cent of motor traffic vehicle KMs.
- **Minor roads** are made up of **classified non-principal roads** ('B' and 'C' roads) and **unclassified 'U' roads**. They make up the majority of road length in England, at 88 per cent, but carried only 35 per cent of motor traffic vehicle KMs.

Statistics on road length in Great Britain are published [here](#).

Statistics on road traffic in Great Britain are published [here](#).

Road Condition in England by Road Type - Trunk Roads

Proportion of the trunk road network that should have been considered for maintenance, by road type, 2007/08 to 2015/16



For trunk 'A' roads the proportion of the network that should have been considered for maintenance in 2015/16 was lower than the previous year, while for trunk motorway this remained at the same level.

Condition of local authority managed principal and non-principal roads [RDC0120](#), [RDC0121](#); unclassified roads [RDC0130](#), [RDC0131](#); trunk roads [RDC0201](#).

Skidding Resistance

LA level skidding resistance data are typically averaged over three years, to allow the entire network to be assessed. Over the period 2013/14 to 2015/16, 26 per cent of the principal road network in England required further investigation. This was an increase of 3 percentage points from the previous period 2010/11 to 2012/13. The London Boroughs had the highest proportion of the road network requiring further investigation, at 45 per cent.

In 2015/16, 5 per cent of the trunk motorway network required further investigation, the same as the previous two years. For trunk 'A' roads the figure was 26 per cent, which was the highest since the data collection began in 2007/08.

As part of their function as Highways Monitor, ORR monitor HE's management and reporting of road condition information. Their latest report was published in February 2017, and can be found [here](#).

Skidding resistance of principal roads [RDC0140](#), trunk roads [RDC0210](#).

Highways Monitor - ORR

The Office of Rail and Road (ORR) are the independent monitor of Highways England (HE) and its management of the SRN.

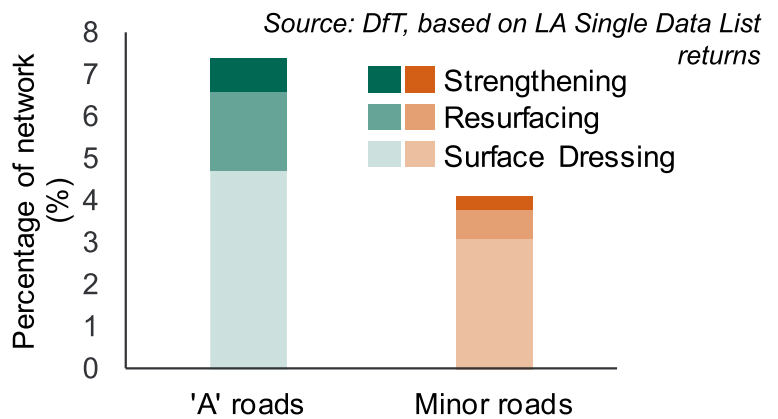
They provide objective assurance about HE's performance and efficiency. Further information can be found here: <http://orr.gov.uk/highways-monitor/about-the-highways-monitor>

Maintenance Treatments on Local Authority Managed Roads

Levels of treatment applied to roads fluctuate, and are influenced by a range of factors such as weather and funding.

In 2015/16, 7.4 per cent of the principal 'A' road network and 4.1 per cent of the minor road network ('B', 'C' and 'U' roads) received maintenance treatment, both similar to the previous year.

Percentage of local authority managed roads receiving maintenance treatments in 2015/16



Surface dressing (layers of chippings and binder) accounted for 64 per cent and 76 per cent of all treatments on principal 'A' road network and minor road network respectively in 2015/16.

Maintenance treatment by road class and type of treatment [RDC0320](#).

Maintenance Expenditure on Roads in England

In 2015/16, £4.5 billion was spent on the maintenance of roads in England. Of this, £1 billion was spent on trunk motorways and 'A' roads and £3.6 billion on LA managed roads. The £4.5 billion was comprised of:

Source: DCLG and Highways England

Trunk Roads Routine and Other £266m	LA Motorway and 'A' Roads Routine and Other £404m	LA Minor Roads ('B', 'C', 'U') Routine and Other £682m	Highways Maintenance Policy, Planning and Strategy for LA managed roads £280m
Trunk Roads Structural £688m	LA Motorway and 'A' Roads Structural £808m	LA Minor Roads ('B', 'C', 'U') Structural £1,360m	

Figures may not sum to totals due to rounding

Roads Funding

Funding for local road maintenance from DfT comprises a block capital grant, plus several smaller elements.

In 2014 views were sought from LAs and others on the allocation of these grants. In the Autumn Statement 2014 the Government confirmed it would be providing £6 billion between 2015 and 2021 to help improve local roads.

The first £75m from the new competitive Challenge Fund grant was subsequently made available in 2015/16. An additional £179m was later granted to those authorities with roads most damaged by storms Desmond and Eva.

Maintenance expenditure by road class [RDC0310](#).

Background Notes

Technical information

Further information about road condition data and surveys can be found in the guide, notes and definitions and technical note, which can all be found on the Road Condition Statistics webpage: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/road-network-size-and-condition-statistics-guidance>.

Further data on road expenditure and on road construction can be found in tables TSGB0717 to TSGB0720: <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/tsgb07>.

Further information on the Single Data List can be found here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/single-data-list>.

Official Statistics

Official Statistics are produced to high professional standards as per the Code of Practice for Official Statistics. They undergo regular quality assurance reviews to ensure they meet customer needs.

Details of ministers and officials who received pre-release access to these statistics up to 24 hours before release can be found in the pre-release access list: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/roadnetwork-size-and-condition-statistics-pre-release-access-list>.

Strengths and Weaknesses

Figures in this publication come from a wide range of sources. Consequently the accuracy of figures will vary between tables. Users are recommended to refer to separately published guidance for more detail on how information for each table was collected: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/road-network-size-and-condition-statistics-guidance>

SCANNER (Surface Condition Assessment for the National Network of Roads) data are collected using automated road condition survey machines. Although each machine is accredited for accuracy and readings fall within the accepted boundaries of the SCANNER specification for road condition, there is still variability between the results that each machine delivers. It can lead to small changes in the figures over time that are for reasons beyond the condition of the road, and above the expected range of variability that already exists within the data. Caution should therefore be taken when comparing the figures over time, particularly for the LAs and regions flagged in the publication tables.

Users should note that a range of factors will influence trends in road condition and expenditure on maintenance. These include the age of road assets, weather and funding, in addition to decision making at both local and central government levels.

The next update, Road Conditions in England: 2017, and accompanying tables are due to be published in 2018. In the meantime, continued engagement with stakeholders will be undertaken to improve the usability and relevance of the statistics (roadmaintenance.stats@df.t.gsi.gov.uk).



To hear more about DfT statistics publications as they are released please follow us on Twitter via our @DfTstats account: <http://www.twitter.com/DfTstats>. TWITTER, TWEET, RETWEET and the Twitter logo are trademarks of Twitter, Inc. or its affiliates