

Our ref: 755,054

Your ref:

Operations Directorate Services Team  
Manager  
9th Floor  
The Cube  
199 Wharfside Street  
Birmingham B1 1RN

10 October 2017

Dear

Thank you for your Freedom of Information (FOI) request dated 04 September 2017 asking for data on potholes.

In your email you asked for the following information:

- *How many potholes/defects do you currently have on record? Please provide a figure broken down by road:*
- *What is the age profile of these potholes/defects? Please provide a figure broken down by road:*
- *How long after a Pothole/Defect report is it inspected?*
- *What is the average repair time from report to repair?*

On 06 September, we contacted you to clarify the first part of your request. On 11 September you responded, *"I would like data on all potholes/defects records that are currently open, awaiting repair on our network. As well as the other information requested"*.

We identify defects on the network which need attention through regular safety inspections undertaken by our service providers and through reports from our road users or Traffic Officers.

Once a surface defect has been identified, they are categorised and we aim to fill the most serious ones i.e. safety related defects, within 24 hours. These are known as category 1 defects. Once made safe, these defects will be fully repaired or 'patched' within 28 days, dependant on weather conditions. This means that the area around the defect (which has been previously filled) will be cut out and a 'patch' will be applied to the carriageway surface. If there are a number of defects within a very short distance of each other, a larger patch will be applied.

All other defects, known as category 2 defects, are split into two sub-categories; non-superficial defects, which have to be repaired within 6 months and superficial defects, that are not likely to deteriorate and therefore can be repaired as part of a future programme of renewal or improvement schemes. For more information, please see the

Routine and Winter Service Code, part 2:

[http://www.standardsforhighways.co.uk/ha/standards/nmm\\_rwsc/docs/rwsc.pdf](http://www.standardsforhighways.co.uk/ha/standards/nmm_rwsc/docs/rwsc.pdf)

I attach a table that lists, by road number, all of the surface defects that were reported and logged by Highways England and were classed as 'open' and awaiting repair on 04 September 2017, the date of your original request. I have also provided an age profile against each road, as requested. The numbers of 'open' surface defects will fluctuate daily and some of those marked as open on 04 September will now have been dealt with. Please note that there may be two records for a defect on our database, which represents the complete repair of a defect; the initial work to mitigate any risk the defect presents, followed by the scheduled, permanent repair.

To answer your question relating to the average time taken to fully repair a pothole, I have analysed a report from one of our area teams. Looking over a six month period (05 March 2017 to 14 September 2017), the average time to complete a category 1 full repair is 17 days, against the target of 28 days. The average time to complete a category 2 repair is 94 days, or approximately 3 months.

If you are unhappy with the way we have handled your request you may ask for an internal review. Our internal review process is available at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/highways-england/about/complaints-procedure>

If you require a print copy, please phone the Information Line on 0300 123 5000; or e-mail [info@highwaysengland.co.uk](mailto:info@highwaysengland.co.uk). You should contact me if you wish to complain.

If you are not content with the outcome of the internal review, you have the right to apply directly to the Information Commissioner for a decision. The Information Commissioner can be contacted at:

Information Commissioner's Office  
Wycliffe House  
Water Lane  
Wilmslow  
Cheshire  
SK9 5AF

If you have any queries about this letter, please contact me. Please remember to quote reference number 755,054 in any future communications.

Yours sincerely

Email: [Ops\\_dst@highwaysengland.co.uk](mailto:Ops_dst@highwaysengland.co.uk)