



Department for Transport

# Road Conditions in England 2015

**In 2014/15, local authorities reported that 4 per cent of the principal ‘A’ road network in England should have been considered for maintenance, the same as the previous year and 1 percentage point lower than in 2007/08.**

## About this release

This annual release presents information on the condition of roads in England covering the period April 2014 to March 2015. All 151 local authorities (LAs) approached with road condition surveys provided a data return.

Regional and national figures are representative of valid data reported for the given year.

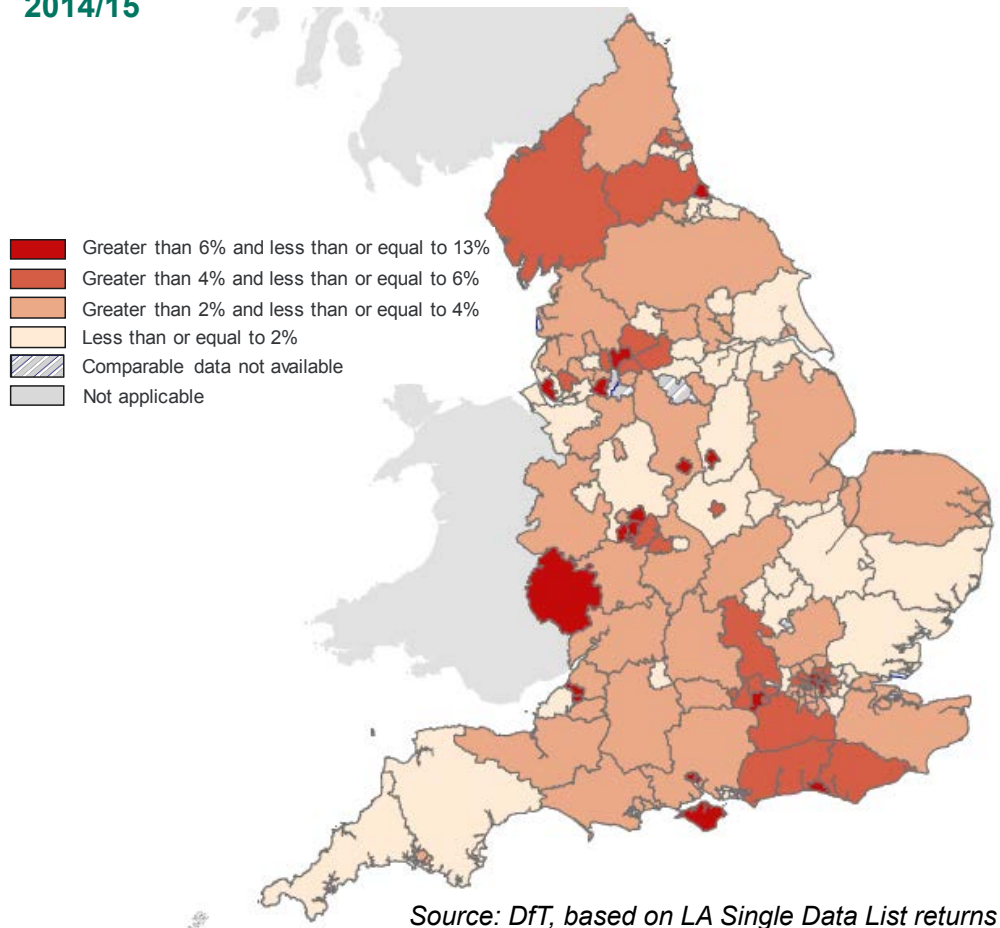
The principal measure for road condition is the percentage of the network that *‘should have been considered for maintenance’*. Data for this measure are collected via accredited automated survey machines that are used by LAs and the Highways Agency to make decisions about maintenance on their networks. Figures are available back to 2007/08.

Further charts and tables can be accessed online via the [road condition statistical series](#).

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## Percentage of principal ‘A’ road network where maintenance should have been considered, by local authority in England in 2014/15

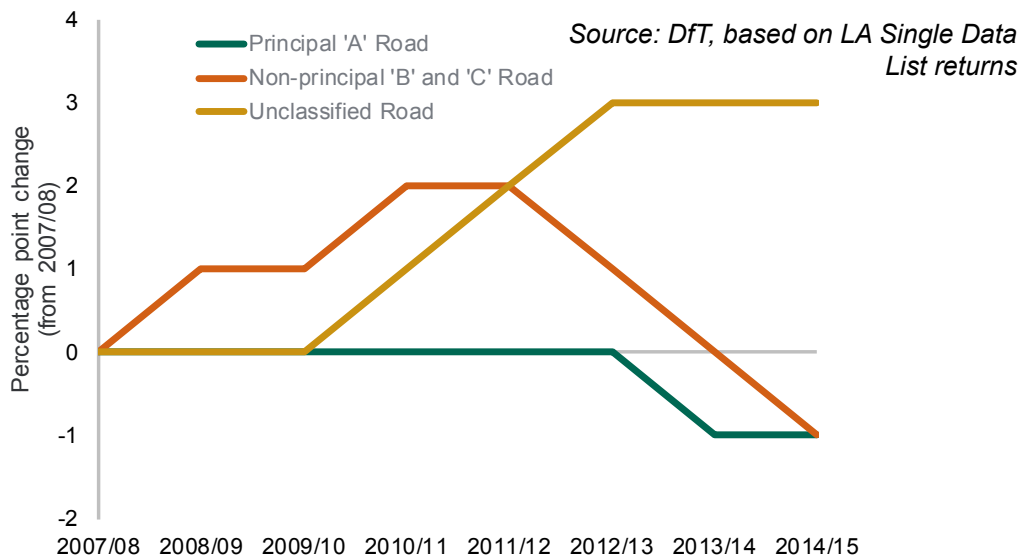


By region, the proportion of the principal ‘A’ road network that should have been considered for maintenance varied between 3 and 5 per cent. The highest figure was for the South East.

A higher percentage of the non-principal classified network should have been considered for maintenance than the principal network in all English regions.

# Road Condition in England by Road Type

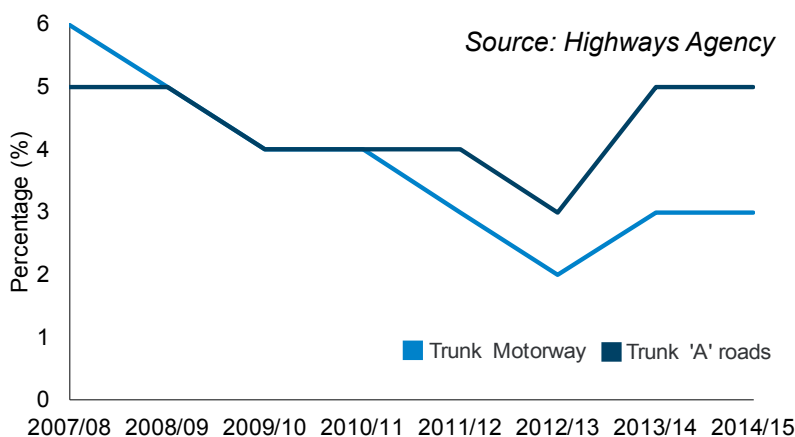
Change in proportion of the local authority road network that should have been considered for maintenance by road type, compared to 2007/08



For non-principal classified 'B' and 'C' roads, 7 per cent of the network should have been considered for maintenance. This was a decrease of one percentage point from 2013/14 and is a lower figure than all previous years for which data have been collected.

Data on unclassified roads is collected via different methods. In 2014/15, 18 per cent of the unclassified network in England should have been considered for maintenance, the same figure reported for the two previous years.

## Proportion of the trunk road network that should have been considered for maintenance by road type, 2007/08 to 2014/15



For both trunk motorway and trunk 'A' roads, the proportion of the network that should have been considered for maintenance in 2014/15 was the same as in 2013/14.

The trunk motorway figure was 3 per cent, 3 percentage points lower than the 6 per cent that should have been considered for maintenance in 2007/08. The trunk 'A' road figure was 5 per cent, the same as in 2007/08.

## Road Types in England

Trunk motorways and 'A' roads in England make up the **Strategic Road Network (SRN)**, and in 2014/15 these were managed by the Highways Agency (HA). In 2014, the SRN made up 2.4 per cent of road length but carried 33 per cent of motor traffic vehicle kilometres.

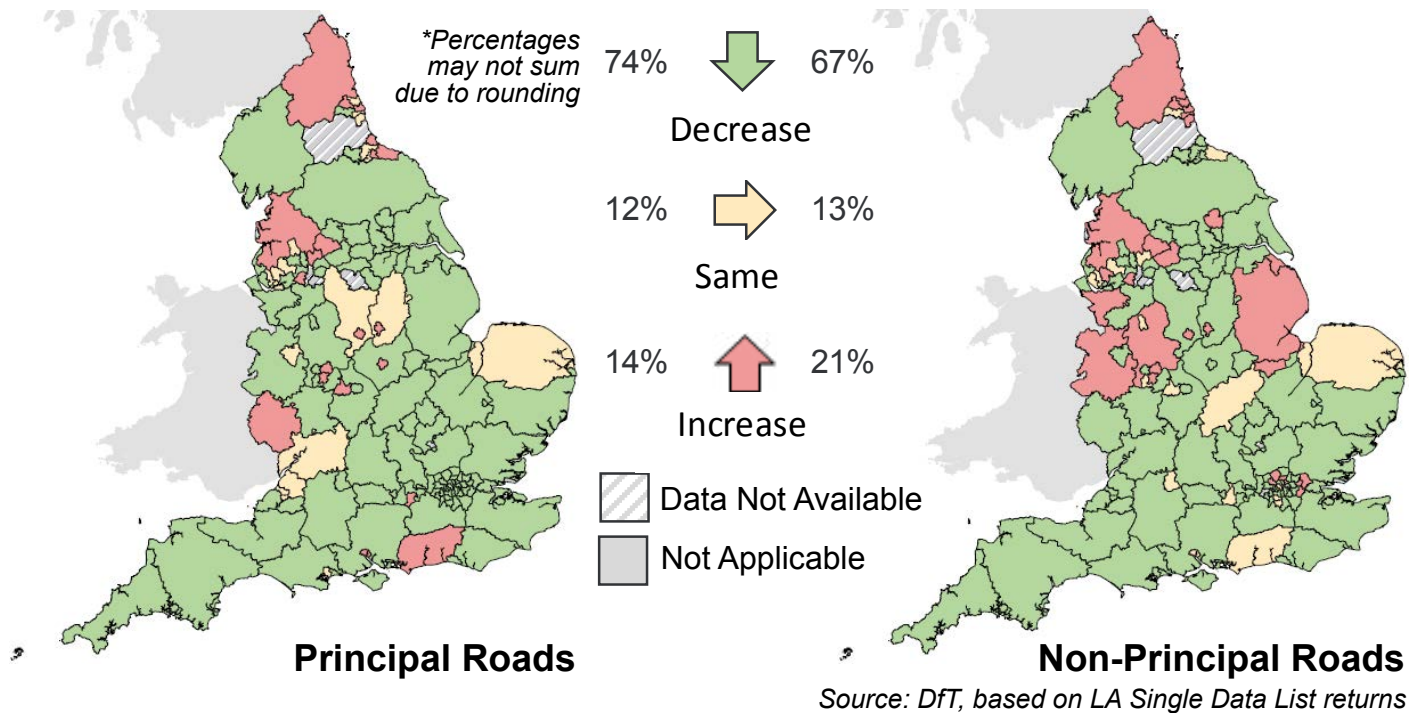
All other road types in England are **managed by LAs**. In 2014:

- **Principal 'A' roads** and motorways made up 9.3 per cent of road length and carried 32 per cent of motor traffic vehicle kilometres.
- 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 88.3 per cent but carried only 35 per cent of motor traffic vehicle kilometres.

Statistics on road length in Great Britain are published here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/road-network-size-and-condition>

Statistics on road traffic in Great Britain are published here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/road-traffic-statistics>

## Change in proportion of the local authority road network that should have been considered for maintenance between 2009/10 and 2014/15



For principal 'A' roads, 86 per cent of LAs (reporting comparable data for both years) reported that the proportion of the network that should have been considered for maintenance either decreased or stayed the same over the 5 year period between 2009/10 and 2014/15. For non-principal road networks the figure was 80 per cent.

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

## Skidding Resistance

As per standard practice, skidding resistance data are averaged over three years. Over the period 2012/13 to 2014/15, figures from a sample of local authorities estimated that 25 per cent of the principal road network in England required further investigation to check whether the level of skidding resistance was acceptable. This is an increase of 1 percentage point from the previous three year period, 2009/10 to 2011/12.

The proportion requiring further investigation between these periods increased for Counties, Metropolitan Districts and London Boroughs, and decreased for Unitary Authorities. The amount of road network that required further investigation in 2012/13 to 2014/15 ranged from 22 per cent for Unitary Authorities to 39 per cent for London Boroughs.

In 2014/15, 5 per cent of the trunk motorway network required further investigation to assess whether the level of skidding resistance was acceptable. This was the same as in the previous year. For trunk 'A' roads the figure was 15 per cent which is higher than in all previous years for which data have been collected.

## Maintenance Treatments on Local Authority Managed Roads

The amount of treatment applied on roads fluctuates each year and is influenced by a range of factors such as weather and funding.

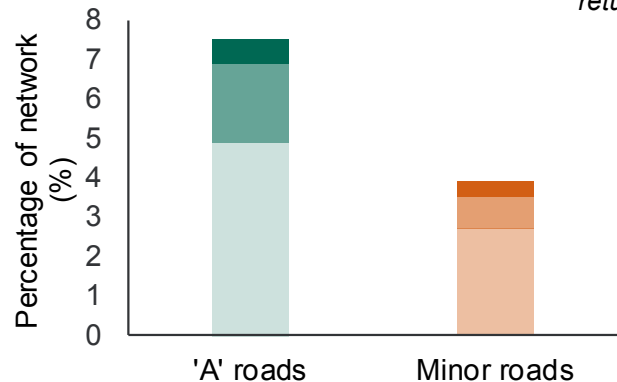
In 2014/15, 7.5 per cent of the principal 'A' road network across England received maintenance treatment, 0.6 percentage points less than in 2013/14. Over the same period 3.9 per cent of the minor road network ('B', 'C' and 'U' roads) received maintenance treatment. This was 0.1 percentage points less than the previous year.

The most common treatment used on both road types in 2014/15 was surface dressing (layers of chippings and binder), followed by resurfacing, then strengthening (reconstruction and overlay). Surface dressing accounted for 65 per cent and 69 per cent of all treatment on the principal 'A' road network and minor road network respectively.

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

### Percentage of local authority managed roads receiving maintenance treatments in 2014/15

Source: DfT, based on LA Single Data List returns



## Maintenance Expenditure on Roads in England

In 2014/15, £4.6 billion was spent on the maintenance of roads in England. Of this, £1.0 billion was spent on trunk motorways and 'A' roads and £3.6 billion on LA managed roads. The £4.6 billion was comprised of:

Source: DCLG and Highways Agency

Trunk Roads Routine and Other £234m	LA Motorway and 'A' Roads Routine and Other £358m	LA Minor Roads ('B', 'C', 'U') Routine and Other £769m	Highways Maintenance Policy, Planning and Strategy for LA managed roads £280m
Trunk Roads Structural £747m	LA Motorway and 'A' Roads Structural £843m	LA Minor Roads ('B', 'C', 'U') Structural £1,352m	

The amount spent on structural treatment for LA managed roads was higher than the previous four years, whereas the amount spent on routine and other treatment was lower over the same period.

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

### Funding Grants

DfT has provided additional grants to LAs that may have impacted upon the maintenance of local roads in England for 2014/15.

In the 2012 Autumn Statement £75 million was provided for Additional Highways Maintenance Funding Allocations after underspend in 2013/14.

In March 2014, £183.5 million was made available to LAs for the Weather Repair fund for roads hit by weather damage in the winter of 2013/14, with the expectation LAs would use this in 2014/15.

LAs were also invited to bid for a share of a £168 million Pothole Fund to repair local roads, for use explicitly in 2014/15.

## Background Information

### 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 set out in 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. This can lead to 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 across years, and in particular for the local authorities 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: 2016, and accompanying tables are due to be published in 2017.