

**Our Reference:** 101497  
**Your Reference:** None

**Safety Engineering and Standards  
 Official Correspondence Team**  
 Highways England  
 Woodlands  
 Manton Lane  
 Bedford  
 MK41 7LW

**By Email:**

10 November 2020

Dear

**Freedom of Information Request**

Thank you for your request for information about bridges dated 13 October 2020.

We have dealt with your request under the terms of the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

You asked us:

*Defining a “road bridge” as a structure with a span of 1.5m or more providing public highway passage for motor vehicles over an obstacle such as a watercourse, railway, road or valley, please provide the following information for all road bridges for which you own as highway authority, including those which are jointly owned with another authority, but for which you are the lead authority:*

When considering the information in the table, please note the following:

- During the financial year 2018/19 the number of general and principal inspections we carried out was significantly higher than in a typical year. This was due to a programme to eliminate any inspections backlog. This programme is now complete.
- Our structures asset management system was replaced during 2019. Most of the information in the table below was collated through our new system.

<b>1</b>	How many road bridges are you responsible for maintaining?	At 31 March 2020, Highways England is responsible for maintaining:	
		<b>Bridge and Large Culverts</b>	8,857 (8,249 excluding non-road bridges <sup>1</sup> )
		<b>Small Span Structures<sup>2</sup></b>	2,276 (1,143 having span >= 1.5m)
		<b>Total number of road bridges</b>	9,392

		<p><sup>1</sup>Non-road bridges = footbridges, railway overbridges and aqueducts</p> <p><sup>2</sup>Small Span Structures have a span <math>\geq 0.9\text{m}</math> and <math>&lt; 3.0\text{m}</math></p>								
2	For the last financial year (2019/20) how many Principal Inspections have taken place?	<table border="1"> <tr> <td><b>Bridge and Large Culverts</b></td> <td>1,223 Principal Inspections (1,136 excluding non-road bridges<sup>1</sup>)</td> </tr> <tr> <td><b>Small Span Structures<sup>2</sup></b></td> <td>168 Principal Inspections (168 of those have a span <math>\geq 1.5\text{m}</math>)</td> </tr> <tr> <td><b>Bridge and Large Culverts</b></td> <td>2,742 General Inspections (2,551 excluding non-road bridges<sup>1</sup>)</td> </tr> <tr> <td><b>Small Span Structures<sup>2</sup></b></td> <td>688 General Inspections (347 of those have a span <math>\geq 1.5\text{m}</math>)</td> </tr> </table> <p><sup>1</sup>Non-road bridges = footbridges, railway overbridges and aqueducts</p> <p><sup>2</sup>Small Span Structures have a span <math>\geq 0.9\text{m}</math> and <math>&lt; 3.0\text{m}</math></p>	<b>Bridge and Large Culverts</b>	1,223 Principal Inspections (1,136 excluding non-road bridges <sup>1</sup> )	<b>Small Span Structures<sup>2</sup></b>	168 Principal Inspections (168 of those have a span $\geq 1.5\text{m}$ )	<b>Bridge and Large Culverts</b>	2,742 General Inspections (2,551 excluding non-road bridges <sup>1</sup> )	<b>Small Span Structures<sup>2</sup></b>	688 General Inspections (347 of those have a span $\geq 1.5\text{m}$ )
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4	For the last financial year (2019/20) how many Structural Reviews and/or BD21 assessments have been conducted?	These reviews are usually only undertaken when there is a change of use of a bridge, or significantly change of condition, or there are other structural concerns. Whilst we hold this data it is not collated centrally and therefore complying with this request would be in breach of the appropriate time limits of the Freedom of Information request.								
5	How many sub-standard (in terms of capacity) and/or weight restricted bridges do you have?	We have specific procedures for managing structures with restricted capacity to ensure that they remain safe and fit for service. There are currently 95 structures with interim measures in place ensuring that they remain safe and fit for service. These interim measures will vary, but may include a combination of weight or width restrictions.								
6	Of these, how many do you intend to return to full load carrying capacity in the next 5 years?	Work to remove the interim measures and restore the bridges to full load carrying capacity is planned, prioritised and programmed with other maintenance works. Meanwhile all the structures referred to in point 5 (above) remain safe and fit for service.								
7	How many bridges would you return to full load carrying capacity if you	All the structures referred to in point 5 (above) remain safe and fit for service. Work to remove the interim measures will be planned, prioritised, programmed with other maintenance works, and adequately resourced.								

	had no resource restrictions?	
<b>8</b>	How many of your bridges require post tensioned special inspections (PTSIs)?	A programme of investigation of post-tensioned bridges was initiated in the mid-1990's. All structures were reviewed, had special inspections, and where required, intrusive post-tensioned special inspections were undertaken. All post-tensioned bridges are managed in accordance with our standards which involves regular inspections, risk reviews and risk assessments. However, they do not require a repeat of the post-tensioned special inspection programme, by default.
<b>8.1</b>	How many of those have had PTSIs within the last 18 years?	Please refer to our reply for Question 8.
<b>8.2</b>	Of those that have not had a PTISI, how many require/are due one?	Please refer to our reply for Question 8.
<b>8.3</b>	How much funding would you anticipate is required to remove the backlog of PTSIs for those bridges identified in 8.2?	Not Applicable
<b>9</b>	In monetary terms, what is the current Depreciation (i.e. difference between your GRC and DRC as declared for your WGA return for 2019/20)?	The total depreciation charge for all structures (includes gantries, retaining walls etc.) on the Strategic Road Network in 2019/20 was £300.9m.
<b>10</b>	Have you calculated your back log (or workbank) for bridges? What is the calculated value of your backlog of road bridges, or your best estimate if a calculated value is not available?	We do not create a backlog (or workbank) of activity on our assets as we manage risk in a dynamic way considering road user/road worker safety and/or impact upon the road user. To manage our structure assets our regional teams, create a one-year detailed plan, a five-year (moving to eight by 2023) summary plan and monitor structural risk up to 30 years ahead (2050). However, as a result of the nature of asset management, and variable way in which our assets deteriorate, our plans are always updated to ensure we priorities work based on the need to minimise risk, meaning our plans are constantly evolving. Therefore, as a result of the approach taken to manage our structure assets we cannot provide you with a calculated value on the back log of activity.
<b>11</b>	What is the annual revenue works budget for maintaining your bridge stock?	Due to the ongoing process in moving the management of our maintenance activities in-house (due to be completed in 2022/2023) we are not able to provide a breakdown showing the annual cost of maintenance activities on our structures assets
<b>11.1</b>	What is the annual capital works budget for	Our capital budget for the financial year 2019/20 for our structures assets was £185.6m

	maintaining your bridge stock?	
<b>11.2</b>	What total budget would you estimate is required to maintain the bridge stock at its current level (standstill budget)?	We cannot provide a “standstill” budget for our structure assets as we do not manage our assets only considering the lowest whole life cost. When managing our assets, we must consider the asset as a system (so every asset on the network together), overall safety, the impact to customers, the interaction of our renewal activities with other activities on the network (for example our enhancement programme), and it is not best practice to consider a single activity in isolation. For example, at times it is better to undertake a holding activity on a component on a structure, so the full renewal can be undertaken on a broad set of issues at a later date (as this minimises the impact to the road users, improves safety for both the road user and road worker and reduces cost).
<b>12</b>	How many BD97 Stage 1 Scour Assessments did you undertake in 2019/20?	There were 11 Stage 1 Scour Assessments undertaken in 2019/20.
<b>12.1</b>	How many BD97 Stage 2 Scour Assessments did you undertake in 2019/20?	There were 5 Stage 2 Scour Assessments undertaken in 2019/20.
<b>13</b>	How many bridges under your management collapsed in the last 12 months?	None
<b>13.1</b>	Was it a full or partial collapse? Full / Partial	Not applicable
<b>13.2</b>	Would you be happy to share the detail with members of the UK Bridges Board? Y/N	Not applicable

If you have any queries about this letter, please contact us by email: [info@highwaysengland.co.uk](mailto:info@highwaysengland.co.uk). Please kindly quote reference number 101497 in any future communications.

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).

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

Yours sincerely

**Safety Engineering and Standards  
Official Correspondence Team**