

## Post Project Review

Project Title	Reactive Weed Maintenance 2023
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### Purpose of This Document

To collate and review the information and feedback from the trial of the reactive weed maintenance undertaken through the weed maintenance season of 2023.

To understand the successes and issues faced by undertaking reactive weed maintenance on select roads.

To present the outcome and conclusions made from this trial.

### Trial Overview

The reactive trial worked on the same principle as other highways reactive services, such as potholes, whereby ESCC would only attend to weed control when areas are identified by a highway steward inspection or via a customer report. Weeds would be removed when posing a health and safety risk or potential damage to the infrastructure.

The method of control would vary depending on location but would not include use of Glyphosate.

This was only an option on cul-de-sacs or residential roads with low-speed limits. See **Appendix A** for list of reactive roads.

### Benefits Noted

- No Glyphosate used.
- Appeases residents against the use of glyphosate.

### Issues Noted

- Weeds generally worse in paved areas, channels and at property/highway boundaries.
- Large weeds restricting width of pavement causing accessibility issues.
- Public perception e.g. Highways are not undertaking works they are responsible for, cost cutting.

### Considerations

- Increase in claims due to trips and hazards on footway.
- Cost increase due to call out for specific tasks.
- Deterioration of assets over time predominantly from roots causing cracking and lifting of pavement.
- Footway accessibility.
- Increase in complaints from those expecting complete weed removal.

## Appendix 3

### Customer Cases

Year	Number of cases to do with weeds in trial areas.
2023	7
2022	9
2021	4
2020	6
2019	8

There has been no noted increase in customer cases due to the trial.

#### Resident Feedback

Feedback from residents taking part in the trial has been positive, with many expressing concerns around the use of glyphosate and finding the greener streets visibly more appealing.

Some residents cleared weeds themselves in reactive trial areas, ensuring they do not become too lush.

#### General Feedback

Although standard case numbers have remained similar to pre-trial levels, the public have voiced their opposition through other routes, such as directly to Members, on Highways Facebook posts, the complaint process and submission of Information Requests.

It should be noted that there is a certain mix of public opinion in terms of how weeds should be maintained, and concerns are more frequently being raised for reasons such as accessibility, safety and aesthetics.

#### Contract and Commercial Supervisor Visits

The Contract and Commercial Supervisors inspected the reactive trial locations and noted that generally those that have received no maintenance over the past 2 years have larger weeds which could cause potential deterioration and accessibility issues.

The main areas with issues were generally found to be paved areas. In addition, channels, kerbs and at property/highway boundaries. These areas are noted to be places where soil and detriment can collect allowing weeds to grip and grow.

See **Appendix B** for comments and **C** for images.

### Costs

Emmanuel Road and St Georges Road in Hastings did not receive Glyphosate sprays in 2022 and 2023 and provide a good example of two years' worth of growth, see **Appendix D** and therefore the costs to maintain using a strimmer and removal of foliage.

- £1,356.88 for Emmanuel Road and the footpath located between St Georges Road and St Thomas's Road, Hastings
- £644.79 for St Georges Road, Hastings

## **Appendix 3**

The pavement length for both sides of St Georges Road is 734 metres (0.456086 miles). Therefore, if the 1,914 miles of channels, footpaths, central reservations and islands which are currently maintained was considered under the same costs it could be in the region of 49 times more expensive than the current weed spraying service at £55,000.

There is potential for these situations to become more frequent if rolled out wider and weeds are not maintained appropriately, year on year.

### **Contractor Feedback**

The contractor team which visited Emmanuel Road and St Georges Road to trim and hand pick weeds found it was impossible to ensure the whole weed had been removed and advised that the area would require spraying.

## **Outcome & Conclusion**

Moving to a reactive approach would lead to a deterioration in asset condition if regular maintenance is not undertaken.

The full impact would take several years to understand, however from the 2-year trial it can be seen in this limited time how weeds can affect highway infrastructure without maintenance.

This therefore presents a safety and accessibility hazard as weed growth can damage paved surfaces, displace kerb stones, and crack walls, all of which make maintenance difficult and costly.

It is therefore recommended that reactive maintenance is not continued at this stage.

## **Appendix 3**

### **Appendix A – Reactive Roads**

- **The Fairway St Leonards**
- **Plynlimmon Road Hastings**
- **Roebuck Street Hastings**
- **High Wickham Hastings**
- **Edgar Road Hastings**
- **All Saints Street Hastings**
- **Croft Road Hastings**
- **Clive Avenue Hastings**
- **Beaufort Road Hastings**
- **Anglesea Terrace Hastings**
- **West Hill Road St Leonards**
- **Aldborough Road Hastings**
- **St Johns Road Hastings**
- **Maze Hill Terrace Hastings**
- **Stanhope Place Hastings**
- **De Cham Road Hastings**
- **Hillyfield Lewes**
- **Winterbourne Close Lewes**

Appendix 3

Appendix B – Supervisor Review

Location	When	ESCC Supervisor Review 24/08/2023
The Fairway St Leonards	Reactive 2023	<b>Green Condition</b> Very little weeds found
Plynlimmon Road Hastings	Reactive 2023	<b>Amber Condition</b> Half the street is clear other half has a lot of weeds.
Roebuck Street Hastings	Reactive 2023	<b>Amber Condition</b> Very small weeds found but overall tidy.
High Wickham Hastings	Reactive 2023	<b>Amber Condition</b> 2 small areas have been untouched rest of street has small weeds
Edgar Road Hastings	Reactive 2023	<b>Amber condition</b> Few small areas where weeds have been found but overall looks clear.
All Saints Street Hastings	Reactive 2022 &2023	<b>Red condition</b> Large area where weeds are across footway. Majority of street looks untouched.
Croft Road Hastings	Reactive 2023	<b>Amber Condition</b> Majority of footway looks clear however some areas where weeds remain
Clive Avenue	Reactive 2023	<b>Amber Condition</b> Large area has been cleared, however few small areas where weeds remain.
Beaufort Road Hastings	Reactive 2022&2023	<b>Amber Condition</b> Majority of area is clear some patches where weeds are collecting.
Anglesea Terrace Hastings	Reactive 2023	<b>Amber condition</b> Majority of footway is clear few small areas

Appendix 3

Location	When	ESCC Supervisor Review 24/08/2023
		where weeds have collected.
<b>West Hill Road St Leonards</b>	<b>Reactive 2023</b>	<b>N/A</b>
<b>Aldborough Road Hastings</b>	<b>Reactive 2023</b>	<b>Amber Condition</b> Large areas clear of weed however some small areas where weeds have been found.
<b>St Johns Road Hastings</b>	<b>Reactive 2023</b>	<b>Red condition</b> Large areas completely untouched.
<b>Maze Hill Terrace Hastings</b>	<b>Reactive 2023</b>	<b>Amber Condition</b> Majority of footway is completely clear however few small areas remain.
<b>Stanhope Place Hastings</b>	<b>Reactive 2023</b>	<b>N/A</b>
<b>De Cham Road Hastings</b>	<b>Reactive 2023</b>	<b>Amber Condition</b> Majority of footway is completely clear however few small areas remain.
<b>Hillyfield Lewes</b>	<b>Reactive 2022 &amp; 2023</b>	<b>Amber Condition</b> Majority weed free.
<b>Winterbourne Close Lewes</b>	<b>Reactive 2022 &amp; 2023</b>	<b>Amber Condition</b> Majority weed free.



Appendix 3

Appendix C – Supervisor Images





## Appendix 3

### Plynilmmon Road





Appendix 3

Roebuck Street





Appendix 3





Appendix 3

Edgar Road





Appendix 3





Appendix 3





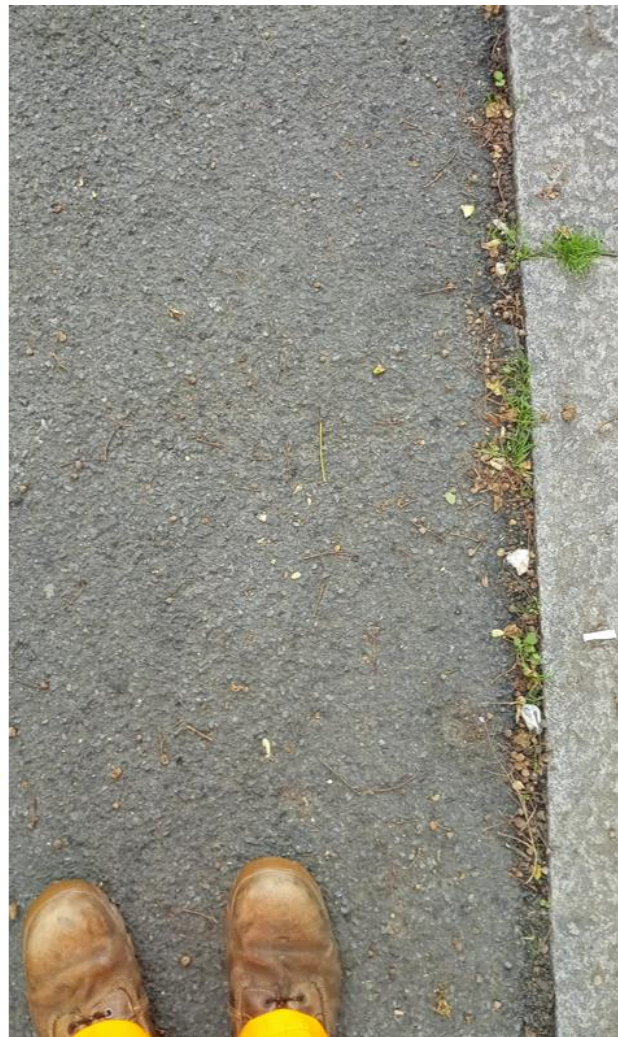
Appendix 3

Clive Avenue





Appendix 3





Appendix 3

Anglesea Terrace





Appendix 3





Appendix 3

St Johns Road





Appendix 3





Appendix 3

De Cham Road





Appendix 3



## Appendix 3

### Appendix D - Emmanuel Road Images

