

# **Highway Drainage Asset Management Policy**

## **East Sussex County Council**

**Policy Owner:** Highway Asset Management Team

**Approved By:** Lead Member Transport and Environment

**Date of Approval:** September 2025

**Review Date:** September 2028

### **Purpose of Policy**

East Sussex County Council (The Council) recognises the vital role played by the local highway network in supporting communities, the economy, and public safety.

The Council is committed to ensuring that the highway drainage system is managed in a way that delivers the best possible network for the investment available. A targeted, risk-based approach to the maintenance of drainage assets will ensure that surface water on the highway is captured and discharged appropriately, minimising flood risk and disruption.

In carrying out this work, The Council will:

- Meet its statutory obligations as Highway Authority and Lead Local Flood Authority.
- Support The Council's Priorities, Local Transport Plan, and Highway Service Outcomes.
- Contribute to wider objectives for resilience, environmental protection, and climate adaptation.

### **Policy Statement**

The Council is committed to a risk-based, lifecycle approach to drainage asset management. Resources are directed to the most critical assets and highest-risk locations, ensuring effective surface water management, minimising flooding, and supporting climate adaptation.

The policy aligns with statutory duties, national best practice and The Council's Highway Asset Management Policy and Strategy. It provides the framework for the Drainage Asset Management Plan 2025–2030, which contains operational standards and performance targets.

### **Delivery Model and Contractor Role**

Highway drainage services are delivered through The Council's term maintenance contract.

The Contractor is responsible for:

- Delivering routine and reactive drainage maintenance, including inspection, cleansing, and repairs.
- Maintaining and updating the drainage asset inventory in dedicated asset management and GIS systems.
- Implementing a risk-based approach to prioritise maintenance and renewal.
- Supporting flood response during severe weather events.
- Managing and regulating connections to the highway drainage system.

The Council monitors The Contractor's performance against agreed Key Performance Indicators, as defined in the Drainage Asset Management Plan.

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## **Service Delivery Commitment**

The Council will deliver drainage services that:

- Safely and efficiently remove surface water from the highway.
  - Minimise flood risk to people, property, and transport links.
  - Support resilience to climate change and extreme weather.
  - Protect the environment and promote sustainable drainage solutions.
  - Prioritise critical assets and high-value locations.
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## **Supporting Information**

- Highway Infrastructure Asset Management Policy and Strategy
- Drainage Asset Management Plan 2025–2030
- Local Flood Risk Management Strategy
- Highways Commuted Sums Policy and Guidance Note
- Highway Drainage Connections Guidance

## **Legal Framework and Duties:**

- Highways Act 1980 – duty to maintain highways, including drainage.
- Flood and Water Management Act 2010 – duties as Lead Local Flood Authority.
- Environment Act 2021 – biodiversity and water quality requirements.
- Land Drainage Act 1991 – riparian responsibilities and enforcement powers.
- Water Framework Directive (UK legislation) – pollution prevention.

## **Best Practice Guidance:**

- Well-Managed Highway Infrastructure (UKRLG, 2016)
- CIRIA SuDS Manual
- Highways Maintenance Efficiency Programme (HMEP) Guidance

## **Policy Development**

- Version 1.0 – Highway Drainage Policy  
Approved by Lead Member for Transport and Environment – April 2016
- Version 1.1 – Highway Drainage Policy  
Updates approved by Lead Member for Transport and Environment – 19 November 2018
- Version 2.0 – Highway Drainage Policy  
Approved by Lead Member for Transport and Environment – 8 September 2025