

## Highways, transport and planning



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## Our winter service



As Christmas draws near, our gritters have been busy keeping roads in West Sussex safe. When road surfaces reach freezing temperatures, our gritting teams are mobilised to treat key routes.

This season we have approximately 8,500 tonnes of salt stock in our depots, we've refilled 211 community grit bins and 19 gritters are on standby for when cold weather hits.

You can find out more about our winter service on [WSCC website](#), and the routes we grit on [one.network](#).

Keep up to date with our winter gritting decisions by following us on [Twitter](#).

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## Overwintering pollinators on WSCC verges

Nature on verges isn't just about wildflowers. Overwintering pollinators make use of verges all year round.

Most butterfly species enter a dormant phase over winter, as either an egg, larva, pupa or adult insect, depending on their species. They often shelter under bark or dried leaves on verges.



Some bees hibernate in hollow stems or ornamental grasses, while others burrow into the ground or make use of man-made bee hotels.

All of this is happening on our roadside verges, and in residential gardens across West Sussex.

You could create leaf and twig piles for bees to use as shelter this winter, or let fallen leaves stay where they drop and avoid disturbing them from autumn until spring.

Ivy can also be of huge help to pollinators in winter, to give shelter from heavy rain and provide a late nectar source for species that are still foraging for food.

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# Faster, cheaper and greener pothole repairs



We're exploring new technologies to combat an age-old issue: potholes. The Velocity road patching system is being used to treat carriageways even before routine inspections have highlighted issues.

Results at the end of the six month trial have been impressive with over 2,100 separate repairs, and

approximately 8,000 square metres of patching being completed.

Velocity managing director, Dominic Gardner said: "There's no excavation, no waste, often no need for road closures, and repairs are ready to drive on in minutes. The repairs cost a third of the price of traditional techniques, and because there's no heat involved, it's also exceptionally low on carbon emissions."

To find out more about Velocity, visit [WSCC website](#).

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## The tree version of hibernation

Trees go dormant to survive winter conditions, cold temperatures, and lack of sunlight. It's their version of hibernation. Cooler temperatures and shorter days help trees to enter a state of dormancy, which means that normal physical functions are suspended or slowed down for a period of time.

They are still alive, but don't use energy to grow and they perform very few functions, although there can be a lot of activity in buds, twigs and to a lesser extent in roots.

There are three stages of dormancy:

1. Pre-dormancy is like a light sleep cycle when trees can still respond to stimuli and resume growth.
2. True dormancy is a deep sleep when trees cannot 'wake up'. They will have already formed terminal buds and dropped their leaves if they are deciduous.



3. Post-dormancy is a bit like waking up on a Monday morning and not wanting to get up! Trees push water back into their shoots, but growth is unlikely.

As our climate changes, warmer winters may compromise dormancy release. To transition from true dormancy, most trees need a chilling period. Without this, a tree's future growth quality can be directly affect.

See [Nature's Calendar](#) for more information on how our changing climate is affecting wildlife.

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## Government award for active travel



A government award of £274,900 means we can develop our next package of cycling and walking schemes and active travel promotion.

This will help to encourage active travel choices and reduce carbon emissions across West Sussex.

[West Sussex Transport Plan](#) sets out how we intend to balance our environmental, economic and social objectives.

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## Heritage Funding for the Queen's jubilee

In June 2022, the Queen will celebrate her Platinum Jubilee and to mark the milestone, the National Lottery Heritage Fund has £7m available to help UK communities re-connect with nature.

Grants can be used for a range of natural heritage activities, from wilding verges and sowing meadows, to digging ponds and creating highways for nature. The fund will particularly target in economically and/or nature deprived areas.

The Heritage Fund will share further details about their £7m Platinum Jubilee investment in January 2022. [Sign up to their newsletter](#) to be the first to hear more.

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## Donate a tree scheme takes root

More than 300 young trees have been safely delivered – and are now being planted across West Sussex as part of the County Council's [donate a tree scheme](#).

The majority have been part-funded by residents and will be planted near their homes, or on a nearby green space. All other trees have been fully funded by the council. [Visit WSCC website](#) to find out more.



If you're thinking of planting trees as part of the Queens Green Canopy, remember you could use our [donate a tree scheme](#).

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## A285 at Duncton reopened under traffic light control



Despite the wintry blast, the A285 at Duncton reopened ahead of schedule, under traffic light control, on Friday 3 December.

The lights will be in place for at least two weeks while the remaining works are completed to protect the workforce and road users.

More information is available at [www.westsussex.gov.uk/duncton](http://www.westsussex.gov.uk/duncton)

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## Merry Gritmas!

Thanks for reading. We'd like to wish you a safe and happy Christmas on behalf of all the highways, transport and planning teams at WSCC. We'll be back in the New Year to update you on highways news throughout 2022.

As always, please share this newsletter with anyone you know that might be interested.



Produced by the Stakeholder and Partnerships team, Highways Transport and Planning. Please contact [active.communities@westsussex.gov.uk](mailto:active.communities@westsussex.gov.uk) with any comments or suggestions regarding what you like and don't like in this e-bulletin and what you'd like to see in future editions.



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