

# Appendix One - Additional information related to the condition of the Boroughs Highway Network

## 1. Sandwell's Classified Carriageway Network

Sandwell's roads are part of a national asset and as such there are national datasets for the classified road network.

The condition of the Classified carriageway network is currently assessed annually by SCANNER surveys with skid resistance measured annually on our principal roads ('A' roads) only using Griptester.

A summary of proportion of classified roads in red risk condition performance covering the period 2017/18 to 2025/26 is shown in Table 1 below.

	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26
<b>A Roads (130-01)</b>	2%	2%	3%	3%	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%
<b>B &amp; C Roads (130-02)</b>	2%	2%	2%	3%	3%	2%	2%	2%	2%

**Table 1: - Percentage of Sandwell Classified Road Network in Red Risk Condition**

The official statistic for the proportion of Sandwell A roads in red risk condition in 2025/26 remained stable at 2%. However, the actual figure was 1.8% of A class roads are in red risk condition, down from 1.9% last year.

Similarly, the official statistic for the proportion of Sandwell B & C roads in red risk condition also remained stable at 2%. And again, this masks a slight improvement in condition, from an already good baseline with B class decreasing from 2.9% red risk to 2.4% and C class roads decreasing from 1.3% to 1.1% in the year.

**In summary, it can be seen the condition of our classified road network has remained stable at a good level of condition, that compares well on a national basis.**

## **2. Sandwell's Unclassified Carriageway Network**

A summary of carriageway condition performance for our unclassified roads covering the period 2015/16 to 2024/25 is shown in Table 2 below.

	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26
<b>Unclassified Roads</b>	16%	15%	15%	17%	18%	19%	22%	23%	22%

**Table 2: - A summary of Sandwell Unclassified Road Network condition**

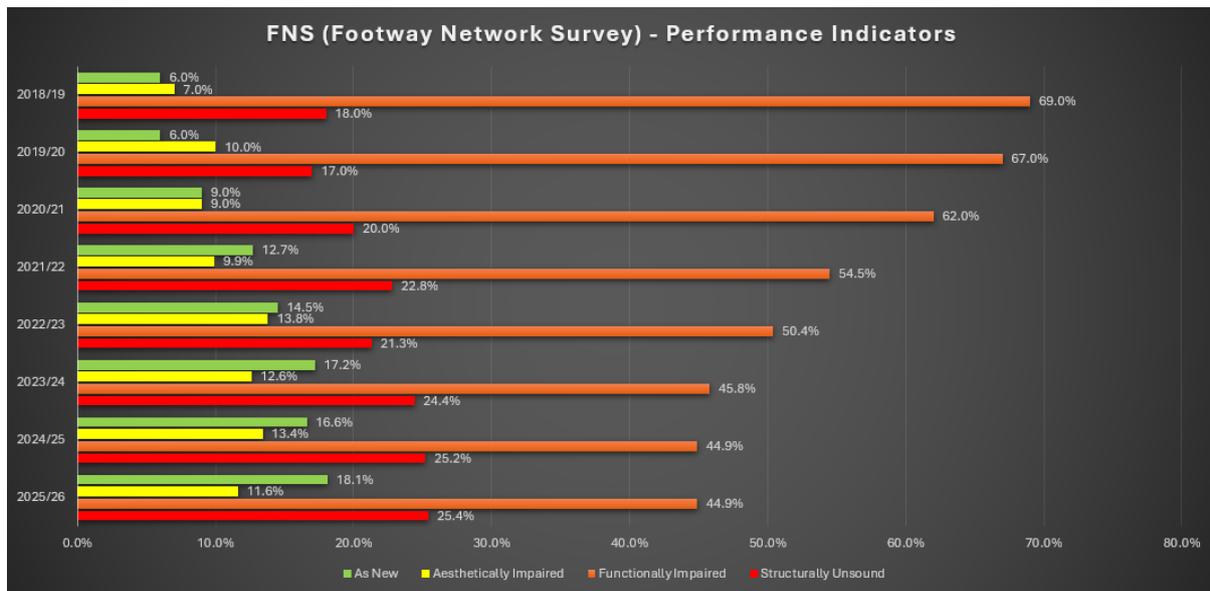
22% of Sandwell unclassified road network has been assessed as being in red risk condition in 2025/26., which is broadly stable over the short term but shows a slight deteriorating trend over the longer term.

In January 2026 the Department for Transport wrote to inform the Council of the outcome of a rating process which gauges how the Council maintains local roads. The overall rating the Council received was green.

This comprised a green rating for adoption of best practice, a green rating for the focus of capital funding on preventative treatment but an amber rating for road condition. This amber rating for road condition can be wholly attributed to the condition of the unclassified road network. The condition of the unclassified road network in Sandwell fares less well on a national comparison.

Sandwell have used the data collected on carriageway condition over many years to develop a sophisticated set of lifecycle modelling and deterioration tools. These tools enable different capital maintenance scenarios to be modelled to determine which provides the best long-term outcome that will deliver the objective of stabilising the proportion of carriageway at red risk condition. This modelling has determined a capital requirement of £8.604M for carriageways.

### 3. Sandwell's Footway Network



**Table 3: - A summary of Sandwell Footway Condition**

The latest FNS assessment of footway condition suggests 70% of Sandwell's footway network falls into the worst two categories, being Functionally Impaired or Structurally Unsound.

This represents a sustained improving trend over a six-year period, comparable figures for the previous six years being: 70%, 71%, 77%; 82%; 84% and 87% and validates the Councils Asset Management approach of targeting amber risk footways to try to prevent further deterioration to red risk.

Preventative maintenance is reducing the number of footways in amber risk condition (69% to 45% over the period)

And increasing the proportion of footway in green condition (from 6% in 2018/19 to 18.1% in 2025/26).

However, there is still a gradual upward trend in red risk condition (18% to 25% over the period).

As for carriageways, Sandwell have used the data collected on footway condition over many years to develop a sophisticated set of lifecycle modelling and deterioration tools. These tools enable different capital maintenance scenarios to be modelled to determine which provides the best long-term outcome that will deliver the objective of stabilising the proportion of footway at red risk condition. This modelling has determined



£500,000. The implementation of the required work was made possible by the provision of DfT grant funding and that was supplemented by £500,000 of Council capital funding in 2022/23.

The Council's planned work to Station Road and Dudley Street bridges are now complete

Dudley Port Bridge carries the A461 over the Birmingham Canal. An historic inspection identified a number of structural faults to the bridge, and at that time the highway alignment was altered from a dual 2 lane carriageway to a dual single lane carriageway to reduce the loading on the bridge.

More recent inspections have identified additional deterioration and in 2023, following a programme of structural investigations, a structural assessment was carried out which identified that the assessed capacity of the structure is sub-standard.

As part of a wider West Midlands plan to improve the A461, a feasibility study has been carried out in order to replace or strengthen the structure, whilst also exploring the feasibility of accommodating safe space for cyclists and pedestrians and to have increased usable carriageway width.

### **A discussion on the bridges currently the maintenance responsibility of The Canal and River Trust (CRT):**

Gilberts Bridge – Crosses the canal on Britannia Street Tividale.

This bridge is historically a CRT 'occupation bridge'. CRT's liability is a load carrying capacity of 3 Ton. Currently it is signed at 7.5 Ton. CRT have written to SMBC a number of times to transfer the liability. The likelihood is that at some point CRT will raise issue with the assessed capacity and want to reduce the signage to 3 Ton. Sandwell could accept that. Alternatively, if SMBC wish to keep it 7.5 Ton (or improve it), we would need to do so at SMBC's cost and take on the liability. This would result in a significant 'one-off' capital requirement of between £2-3M.

Brasshouse Lane – Smethwick.

This is one of the pair of canal bridges that cross the two canal cuts on Brasshouse lane. Originally a narrow masonry arch bridge, it

has been widened historically on each side with steel beams. CRT have reported that the arch bridge is assessed at full capacity, but the extensions are 18 Ton. CRT are currently managing it. However, the risk is again that at some point the structure will deteriorate and CRT may be forced to apply a weight restriction, which we would not welcome. As per Gilbert Street above, if SMBC wanted a better capacity – the Council would have to take on liability and fund the upgrade. This would be a significant cost, estimated at up to £5M.

#### Great Bridge Bridge (on Great Bridge St – Tipton)

CRT claim that this structure should already have been transferred to SMBC. This bridge is relatively new and is in good condition. However, if we take liability we again need to include on the inspection/structural review programme and maintain it, with the associated future liabilities.