



Department for Transport

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05 December 2024

From the Permanent Secretary

Sir Geoffrey Clifton-Brown FRICS MP
Chair of the Public Accounts Committee
House of Commons
London
SW1A 0AA

[Sent via email]

Dear Sir Geoffrey,

Local roads in England – Follow up on local authority expenditure

Thank you for the opportunity to provide evidence on what the Department is doing in relation to local roads in England alongside my colleagues David Buttery (Director of Roads Strategy) and Rupert Furness (Deputy Director, Local Highways and Active Travel).

I am writing to the Committee to provide further information on how the £4.494 billion figure of local authority expenditure in the 2022/23 financial year breaks down, and an explanation of how much of it is capital and how much is revenue expenditure.

Datasets about the condition and maintenance of roads by both local authorities and National Highways are regularly produced by the Department and published on gov.uk. Within these statistical datasets is workbook **RDC0310: Maintenance expenditure by road class in England**¹. This workbook contains a summary of expenditure in each financial year since 2005/06, with an accompanying cover, contents, and notes worksheet. These figures are badged as Official Statistics, part of the statistical publication Transport Statistics Great Britain². This data is set out in **Annex A** and is broken down by expenditure on different road classifications and type of work performed.

The Department allocates capital funding for English local authority highways maintenance activities each year, and this funding is wholly incorporated within the overall **Capital: Structural Treatment** column in RDC03010. Expenditure data is based on information collected by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, including "*local authority capital expenditure and receipts in England*" (covering Structural Treatment); and "*local authority revenue expenditure and financing England*" (covering Routine and other Treatment, and Highways Maintenance Policy, Planning & Strategy). Revenue funding for highway maintenance activities on the other hand, typically comes from MHCLG's Revenue Support Grant, as well as from other locally derived sources.

Yours sincerely,

Dame Bernadette Kelly DCB
Permanent Secretary

¹ <https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/6579ee99254aaa0010050cc9/rdc0310.ods>

² <https://osr.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/accredited-official-statistics/>

Annex A: RDC0310: [Maintenance expenditure by road class in England](#)

Maintenance expenditure by road class, adjusted for inflation, in England, from April 2005 to March 2023

All numbers account for inflation by using the "GDP deflators at market prices" as supplied by HM Treasury. All funding provided by the Department for Transport is Capital and this funding is wholly incorporated within the overall **Capital: Structural Treatment** column.

Local highway authority roads [Note 6, 7, 8]				
Financial Year Ending March	<u>Capital:</u> Structural Treatment £million at FYE 2023 prices [Note 1, 2]	<u>Revenue:</u> Routine and other Treatment £million at FYE 2023 prices [Note 1, 2]	<u>Revenue:</u> Highways Maintenance Policy, Planning & Strategy £million at FYE 2023 prices [Note 2]	<u>Total:</u> £million at FYE 2023 prices [Note 2]
2006	2,574	1,756	410	4,740
2007	2,450	1,689	453	4,591
2008	2,396	1,821	444	4,661
2009	2,341	1,391	413	4,145
2010 [Note 4]	2,646	1,876	445	4,967
2011	2,519	1,766	412	4,696
2012	2,441	1,661	365	4,467
2013	2,132	1,611	357	4,100
2014	2,238	1,581	378	4,196
2015	2,679	1,388	341	4,407
2016	2,627	1,316	389	4,332
2017	2,641	1,262	400	4,304
2018	2,575	1,311	382	4,268
2019	2,935	1,173	369	4,478
2020	2,804	1,163	425	4,391
2021	2,817	1,162	424	4,403
2022	2,650	1,230	567	4,446
2023	2,692	1,276	526	4,494
<i>Of which: Local authority motorway and 'A' roads</i>				
2006	786	583	[z]	1,369
2007	730	516	[z]	1,246
2008	652	643	[z]	1,295

2009	636	391	[z]	1,027
2010 [Note 4]	824	725	[z]	1,549
2011	817	596	[z]	1,413
2012	922	634	[z]	1,556
2013	726	613	[z]	1,339
2014	792	642	[z]	1,434
2015	1,029	449	[z]	1,478
2016	979	490	[z]	1,469
2017	1,256	438	[z]	1,693
2018	1,105	503	[z]	1,607
2019	1,124	377	[z]	1,501
2020	1,076	344	[z]	1,419
2021	1,035	342	[z]	1,377
2022	909	384	[z]	1,292
2023	973	395	[z]	1,368
<i>Of which: Local authority minor roads ('B', 'C' and 'U')</i>				
2006	1,787	1,174	[z]	2,961
2007	1,720	1,173	[z]	2,893
2008	1,744	1,178	[z]	2,922
2009	1,705	1,000	[z]	2,705
2010 [Note 4]	1,823	1,151	[z]	2,974
2011	1,702	1,170	[z]	2,871
2012	1,519	1,027	[z]	2,546
2013	1,406	998	[z]	2,404
2014	1,446	939	[z]	2,385
2015	1,650	939	[z]	2,588
2016	1,648	826	[z]	2,474
2017	1,386	825	[z]	2,210
2018	1,470	808	[z]	2,278
2019	1,811	796	[z]	2,607
2020	1,728	819	[z]	2,547
2021	1,782	820	[z]	2,602
2022	1,741	846	[z]	2,587
2023	1,719	881	[z]	2,600

*[z] refers to data not applicable

Notes:

1. Structural treatment expenditure includes expenditure on bridges in addition to structural maintenance and unplanned patching on roads. Routine and other treatment expenditure includes expenditure on environmental, safety, and routine maintenance (excluding unplanned patching) on roads in addition to winter service.
2. According to the GDP deflators issued by the Treasury on 2 October 2023.
3. Figures up to the financial year ending (FYE) 2009 are on a resource accounting basis. The remaining trunk figures are on a cash accounting basis, hence the break in the series represented by the break line.
4. There was a change in Government accounting implemented in FYE 2010 moving from UK GAAP (Generally Accepted Accounting Practice) to IFRS (International Financial Reporting Standards) reporting.
5. To reflect the current reporting, Structural Maintenance for FYE 2015 includes technology renewals and winter assets.
6. Local authority expenditure reported is on a gross-equivalent basis. This is consistent with previous iterations of this table, but different to regional expenditure on roads reported in DfT Table RDE0101.
7. Apportionment of expenditure between local authority motorway, 'A' roads and minor roads involves an estimation process.
8. Figures for local authority motorway and 'A' roads and local authority minor roads ('B', 'C' and 'U') may not sum to total for local authority roads due to rounding.

Sources of Data

- National Highways and Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities
- Outturn data of local authority revenue expenditure and financing for the financial year April 2022 to March 2023 (Table RO2, Worksheet 1):
<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/local-authority-revenue-expenditure-and-financing-england-2022-to-2023-individual-local-authority-data-outturn>
- Data for compiling the final outturn figures of local authority capital expenditure and financing for 2022 to 2023 (Table COR A2, tab named roads_sup):
<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/local-authority-capital-expenditure-and-receipts-in-england-2022-to-2023-individual-local-authority-data>
- GDP deflators at market prices, and money GDP September 2023 (Quarterly National Accounts) - all figures in TSGB0723 are adjusted for inflation:
<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/gdp-deflators-at-market-prices-and-money-gdp-september-2023-quarterly-national-accounts>