

## Public Satisfaction of the condition of roads in Worcestershire

Worcestershire County Council ran detailed customer focus groups through Oakham Research to gain perceptions of the condition of roads in Worcestershire. The focus groups represented different geographical areas around the county where attendees observed a number of videos and then commented on these. Scores were given out of ten given to create an average score with detailed comments then given to justify these scores.

The videos have been reviewed in detail, to determine the range of issues that were raised. There were many specific issues raised. For detailed specific information, please refer to the appendix.

When members of the focus groups were asked to justify their scores there were a number of common themes that were repeatedly raised which caused a loss of score, these are listed below.

### Common themes of concern

- Carriageway/footway surface issues:
  - Potholes
  - Concerns about overuse of surface dressing
  - Concerns relating to patchwork quilt repairs
  - Concerns relating to the perceived lack of clearance of mud from the highway
  - Sweeping required of footways and cycle paths
  - Worn anti-skid lifting and in need of replacement
  - Condition of nearside of carriageway considered more important (for motorcyclists/cyclists)
- Worn road markings:
  - at junctions creating safety concerns
  - centre lines
  - advanced stop lines faded
- Overgrown vegetation masking signage and forward visibility
- Carriageway drainage concerns with blocked gullies and ditches leading to surface issues and ice hazards
- Parking on footways creating obstructions for pedestrians
- Highway signage concerns:
  - Signage plates in need of cleaning
  - request for more wicket signs/ advanced direction signs around one way systems and on approaches to roundabouts
  - concerns about the amount of fly posting/ unauthorised signage
  - excessive highway signage creating clutter

- Request for more double yellow lines on main roads to keep traffic on main roads flowing
- Support for more graduated speed limits into villages (e.g. 60mph/40mph/30mph)
- Support for greater monitoring of utility reinstatement works
- Support for analysing traffic signals to maximise efficiency of operation

### **Recommendations**

It is recommended that focus is given through the relevant teams to reviewing the above areas of concern. Where applicable, **Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)** could be developed or modified in a bid to improving the overall perceptions of the conditions of roads in Worcestershire.

## **Appendix: Focus Groups video review 'Public Satisfaction of the condition of roads in Worcestershire'**

All video clips filmed in April 2013 (30 clips referenced)

Oakham research – (Attendees: Male dominated, Age 50+ typical, car driver typical)  
Specific references from geographical focus groups

### **Worcester Focus Group**

Clip 1 (5,6s,7) (URBAN - Vale)

Badly eroded surface

Obstructions in cyclepath

Cyclist on path near bridge

Potholes at end

Anti-skid near crossing degraded

Parking on the footway

Many dropped kerbs – misconception that you are allowed to block a dropped kerb

Poor surfaces in Worcester

Remove grit

Suggestion that inspectors travel by bike

Polarised opinions on utility reinstatements

Worcester Clip 2 (6,8s,9s) (RURAL)

Good surface and lining

Happy with signage

Worcester Clip 3 (URBAN7)

Not considered a safe junction

Signage to Alexandra Hospital questioned

Slip road access visibility questioned in the fog, better signage needed

Worcester Clip 4

Poor road markings

Signage issues

Markings at roundabout considered to be too late

Consider making 'Access only'

Consider making urban section 20mph

Worcester Clip 5

Request for clearer signage

Request for traffic signals

Signage confusing near chevron signs

Worcester Clip 6 (RURAL 6)

Drainage questioned

Signage at triangle/fork (Y-junction) questioned

Worcestershire (Worcester group) General

Bath Road, Worcester signals (toucan/pelican) questioned why they both stop traffic

Newtown Rd, Worcester (near Lidl) – tiny sign about bus lane / stop operations should be bigger

Powick Hams – claims of near misses because of people misinterpreting the crossings

Partial yellow boxes – Ombersley Road/Droitwich Road & Tybridge Street

Whittington island debate

Asda, Worcester – many uncontrolled and controlled crossings

User unhappy with conversion of pelicans to puffins

Issue with fly signage – Upton Music Festival in late August quoted

Tudor Way, Worcester – 20mph signs are obstructed

### **Redditch Focus Group**

Redditch 1 (A) - Location in Worcester (URBAN 1)

Poor signage, issues getting into the correct lane, suggested additional advanced directions on carriageway in Worcester

Concerns with markings on Callow Hill/ Windmill Drive, Redditch

Redditch 2 (B)

Verges could be modified to improve visibility

Redditch 3 (C)

Inconsiderate parking issues (on footway)

Questioning arrow for turn right

Use of double yellow lines supported

Redditch 4 (D) rural road (Astwood Lane – RURAL 9)

Needs signage

Pothole issues

Drainage issues

Road through Burcot – drainage issues as ditch has disappeared

Horse warning signs requested as horses use lane

Consider lowering the speed limit

Redditch 5 (E) – 6s,7s, 8s (Clip URBAN 9 - A4184 Evesham)

Advanced signage to roundabout (Merstow Green)

Requires advanced signage to roadworks required

Redditch 6 (F) 6,7s,8,9 (Clip Rural 1 - A44 from Evesham towards Broadway) RURAL1

40mph limit could be reviewed 60 to 40mph location near a junction

Worcestershire (Redditch) General

Lane markings/ signage on approach to roundabouts (14:30) McDonalds, Redditch

J4 of M5 (lane markings)

A38s j/w M42 (lane markings)

A441 Evesham sign obscured by 40mph sign (two lanes to roundabout) markings worn out

Requested a response to feedback

### **Evesham Focus Group**

Evesham 1 (A) (3,4,5,6,7,8) (Clip Urban, A44 London Road Worcester) (URBAN 2)

Parked vehicles – restrict parking to one side of the road

Suggested Park & Ride into city

Issues with garage at crossroads  
Re-modelling layout to be more shared space

Evesham 2 (B) (6s, 9) (Clip Rural)  
Clear signage  
Solid white centre lines cause cars to squeeze cyclists  
Foliage may create issues for HGVs

Evesham 3 (C) (3,4s,5s,7) (Clip URBAN 1, A44 St Johns towards Worcester)  
Signage excessive  
Re-planning – remove centre white lines

Evesham 4 (D) (4s,5s) (Rural between Redditch and Bromsgrove) (RURAL 4)  
Poor surface  
No warning sign for bridge with height  
Suggested 30mph limit on narrow section near bridge rather than 40mph  
Requested 'pedestrian in road' warning signs  
Reallocate road space

Evesham 5 (E) (6,6,7,7,8,) (URBAN 3 or 4 Stourport town centre)  
Poor signage around one way system in Stourport (advance directions)  
Potholes and poor reinstatement from utilities  
Re-marking of white lines

Evesham 6 (F) (4s,5s,6s,7) (village rural 2- Bewdley/Ombersley) (RURAL2)  
Tired surface around roundabout, road needs re-laying  
60mph to 30mph (Do graduated speed limit 60mph, 40mph, 30mph)  
M42 Redditch – Evesham – 70mph & 40mph (camera) Make dual carriageway 50mph  
Lack of footways  
Support for inspectors (14:30 need stronger enforcement)  
Little support for surface dressing  
Oxfordshire and Warwickshire surfaces considered worse

Evesham (Worcestershire General)  
Potholes in Honeybourne missing some holes  
Workman Bridge – temporary sign issues  
Abbey Bridge – Swan Lane communication issues/ decisions already made  
Enforcement issues – cyclists on footways in Evesham  
A46T cycle path (Highway Agency) – needs sweeping  
Enforce mud clearance left on roads  
B road poor surface past Tesco, Evesham

### **Kidderminster Focus Group**

Kidderminster 1( Clip A) (7s, 6s) (Worcester – URBAN1)  
Which lane to get into  
Patches of surface  
ASLs and other road markings not marked clearly combination with signage (positioning)  
Difficult to navigate around city  
Traffic signals not joined up  
Badly worn anti-skid not maintained well enough

More double yellow lines to clear parked cars

Kidderminster 2 (Clip B) (9s, 7, 8) (country road, open road, A or good B road) (RURAL1 or 5)

Bends and black barn

Don't do blanket 50 mph, only where safety needs

Glare from diamond grade signs on rural routes

Kidderminster 3 (Clip C) (10,9s,8s) (Redditch Highway/ Bromsgrove Redditch) URBAN 7

Lack of central barriers

Number of signs in reserve

Kidderminster 4 (Clip D) (3s,4,5s,6s) RURAL 8 (Typical village road – black and painted conifer, bin day)

Bad state of repair of carriageway, worn out

Amount of loose material from potholes and verges

Poor drainage – ice trap

Signage worn

Poor junction road markings

Layout to island not good

30 and 40 limits

Franche Road roundabout issues (tight – visibility, markings, too small) – needs traffic signals

Reduce limit from 30 to 20 past church

Kidderminster 5 (Clip E) (5s, 6s, 7, 8) (URBAN 8 road works and white van) (024)

Road markings difficult to see

Bad surface – lots of patching

Hidden speed camera sign (Station Road) behind other sign before bend

[Elsewhere Hartlebury – patched sections criticised]

Signage not that clear

Road markings looked worn out

Misconception that Speed Camera sign is used as a traffic calming sign

Kidderminster 6 (Clip F) (4,6s,7s) (RURAL 6)

Maintenance of ditches - flooded because of snow

White lines not maintained

Suggested parish lengthsman intervention

[Elsewhere: Dowles Bridge drainage]

Worcestershire general

Between A449 Kidderminster and Worcester – leaving Ombersley junction

Gilgal badly painted doesn't help merge

Gritting very good from Wyre Forest to Worcester

Re-painting white lines generally at junctions

Support for mobile VAS - Belbroughton calibration challenged – needs to be calibrated to not bring into disrepute

Bromsgrove Highway into Bromsgrove – poor lane markings Lane 1/ Lane2 (Slideslow)

Quality assurance – speed limit Stourbridge Rd – wasted 30mph repeaters

Utilities – NRSWA – monitoring of utility reinstatement not as good as it could be

Communication – reported but no feedback to customer via online reporting  
Junction with Safari Park on Bewdley Road – dangerous junction – suggested roundabout  
Crossley Park – island worked better than signals  
Call for Stourport bypass  
Questioning Kidderminster link road – problems for Wilden Lane forecasted  
Clean drains out more often  
Improve estate roads  
Speed bumps disliked – Hurcot Lane – no school remains  
Inappropriate parking – introduce car parking prices

### **Bromsgrove Focus Group (0029)**

Clip 1 (5s, 6s, 7s)

Residents parking and dangerous manoeuvres  
Footways narrow and missing  
Markings deteriorated  
Patchwork quilt surface – suggested that larger sections are treated  
Average town road  
Signage could be improved (quality, size and cleanliness)  
Park and ride suggested

Clip 2 (6s,7s,8,9) (Country road)

Enjoy driving such road  
Issues with some of road surface  
Good road markings  
Hidden driveways  
Suggested edge of carriageway markings  
Don't want too many road signs  
Lower speed limit to aid cycling  
Dirt from verge edges on carriageway  
Hedges cut be cut back to aid visibility

Clip 3 (4,5,6,8) Stourport one way system

Not enough signage on Worcester Road approach, signage needed earlier to aid positioning  
Lane markings issues  
Lane discipline issues  
Badly repaired with ridges  
Build a Stourport bypass  
Suggested bicycle lanes for healthier nation  
Poor surface issues  
Suggested 20mph limit around one way system  
Questioned location of warning sign near a crossing  
Truck unloading causing an issue (time restrictions)  
Cycle lanes on wider sections

Clip 4 (2,3s,) Country Lane RURAL 9

Potholes  
Dirt in road  
Centre line worn out / no double white lines/ no cats eyes  
No signage  
No warning of horses

Slippy surface, mud on road  
Overhanging trees  
Farm vehicles signage  
No signage of bends  
Carriageway not wide enough – use part of verges  
Driver education – aim to reduce irresponsible speeding driving

Clip 5 (5s,6s,7s) (40 limit)  
Footway parking an issue for pedestrians/ cyclists  
40 could be a 30  
Lack of enforcement - police not interested in footway parking – obstruction of footway, not wide enough for mobility scooters and pushchairs, no place to cross  
Insufficient pedestrian crossings  
Possible cycle lanes  
Possible double yellow lines down one side of road  
Bus layby requested  
Support for parking meters  
Best practice exchange

Clip 6 (6s,7s,8,9s) (second bit in the country)  
Well maintained, signed and marked  
Possible warning signs for sharp bends  
Weeds on footway  
Support for graduated speed limits 60-40-30  
Need road sweeping

Worcestershire general  
Dissatisfaction with quality of repairs after utility works (sinking)  
Request for adoption of unadopted roads around Bromsgrove  
Ridges around metal work create issues for bicycle but wouldn't be intervention level or an issue  
Patching approach causing frustration, surface larger sections  
Road safety – young drivers – bad habits around schools – re-educating people  
Issues with footway conditions, not fit for wheelchair users  
PEMs 'closed by service area' – require more information  
Inspectors suggested to walk parts of the network looking for drainage issues  
Better condition for left hand side required for scooters and bicycles  
More inspections needed on motorcycle/bicycle to understand issues  
Signs left behind after previous road works  
Highways inspecting of utilities reinstatements supported  
User believed that he had been told that a compactor could only be used ten minutes a day for health and safety reasons  
Maintenance of road signage, trees clear, keep clean  
Driver education – removing driver intolerance

## **Worcester Focus Group 2**

Clip 1 A (5s,7s,8s) Stourport on Severn URBAN3  
Travel sick watching videos departed  
Yellow lines – lack of enforcement  
Centre white lines not consistent – needed re-painting



Too much parking, need to free up road  
Road signs could be improved  
Surface rough for cyclists (nearside) – drain covers – different types of surfaces  
Deposit of silt from rainwater  
Footway trips  
Visitor signage – priority to safety and direction – obscuring – suggested review of signage  
Ironwork could be relayed  
Block paving could be relayed

Clip 2 B (5,6s,7s,8,9) RURAL  
High hedge rows at the beginning  
Good markings  
Reasonable surface  
Possibility to lower speed limit  
Verges – little space for pedestrians  
White lines  
Hedges cutting back

Clip 3 (C) (4s,5,6,7) (URBAN with three sets of road works) Pershore  
Road works not clear  
Obscured signs – Birmingham (re-position)  
Back of footway would benefit from lengthsman clearance  
Poor white lining  
Support for local looking after verges/ sponsorship of roundabouts etc.  
Were roadworks co-ordinated?  
Support for road charging – spot the workman  
Clip was too fast, described as 'terrible'  
Lack of courtesy signs at roadworks  
Support for co-ordinated road works – communicate plans on the web?

Clip 4 (D) (3s,4,5,6,7,8) (URBAN Wyche cutting)  
Lacks footway in a cutting  
Potholes near kerb  
Road surface built up / cobbles at drainage point  
Narrow  
White lining  
Flyposting needs to be removed

Clip 5 (E) (4,5,7s,8)  
Lines needed re-doing  
Potholes need repair  
Originally a three lane road  
Sections had failed – surface had broken up  
Improve less sections but do them well (long term strategy) change the approach to funding  
Cycle lane was good

Clip 6 (F) (1,2s3s,5)  
Looks like a bridleway needs total rebuild  
Disaster with surface  
No foundations

How much traffic does it take. If hardly used then not an issue  
Potholes looked dangerous  
Lack of drainage and no grips/ ditch  
If little used reduce speed limit

Worcestershire general

Obscured signs by hedges

Worn junction markings/ lining

Surface-dressing split opinions, contractors standard of jobs questioned (cracking up after three months)

Suggestion that contractor can fill all holes not just those highlighted

Spending at year end creates frustrations – creates waste

Congestion concerns – Southern Link and Sheriff Street not seen to have a viable plan  
question of who involved

Whittington roundabout 'pathetic' – shunts – was it scored/audited

Consultants are the problem

County do not listen – suggest speaking to bus and taxi drivers

Signals do not appear phased on Barbourne Rd

Need to fund bus and park and ride otherwise more congestion

Support for zebra at viaduct on Croft Rd

Lowesmoor loss of pedestrian audible signal questioned

Build infrastructure before houses

Potholes used to repaired day after spotted

Release a road programme to the public – publicity

Old website described as appalling

Jon Fraser video of potholes split opinion

Traffic signals too many use right-hand lane for straight on and get blocked