

HICKLING PARISH COUNCIL

(Nottinghamshire)

Clerk to the Council: Maggy Jordan

Ivy House, Main Street, Hickling, Melton Mowbray, Leicestershire, LE14 3AJ
Telephone: 01664 822088 e-mail: a.terry125@btinternet.com

March 2009

Winter Road Conditions

Most people will be aware that there have been a number of accidents on the hill on Bridegate Lane since early December. The Parish Council has taken this up with the County Council in an effort to get the hill added to the winter gritting programme, but this has been rejected. The response and advice from the Council was as follows.

"I have liaised with our Winter Maintenance Manager with regards to your request for these roads being added to our gritting route and unfortunately we are unable to accede to this request. Approximately one third of the County's roads are included in pre-cautionary gritting routes, to ensure that the roads are salted prior to the forecast formation of ice. These gritting routes cover all 'A' and 'B' category roads together with some 'C' and unclassified roads carry heavy traffic flows and high numbers of buses. Although these roads are on a bus route, the Winter Maintenance Manager has advised that it is unlikely that they will ever be included in the main gritting programme.

The County Council's Winter Service budget is just over £2 million, which means it is not possible to include the entire highway network in the pre-cautionary gritting routes. This means that two thirds of the roads in the network are untreated and will remain icy in frosty weather. It is crucial that all road users remember that even on treated roads, winter weather can make them treacherous and a degree of caution is still needed. Localised showers can wash away salt, and particularly cold or snowy weather can render salt less effective. All road users should be aware of weather forecasts and road conditions. Simple precautions such as steering gently, avoiding harsh brakes, ensuring windows and lights are free of snow and ice and maintaining safe distances can all save lives."

The Parish Council has managed to secure the siting of a grit box on the hill, although this is dependent upon volunteers spreading the grit during icy periods. We have also requested the extension of the 40mph zone to beyond the bottom of the hill, however the response received is that the County Council consider the speed limit to be in the most appropriate and visible place for drivers approaching it.

We are now seeking a "liable to icing" sign on the hill. We have been advised by the County Council that a decision regarding this would depend upon the number of recorded accidents on this stretch of road caused by icy conditions. It is important therefore that the County Council are notified of all accidents as and when they occur to ensure that their records are accurate. We have notified the County Council of the accident on 20th January, to which an ambulance was called.

We would encourage villagers to inform the County Council and Hickling Parish Council of any road accidents on the hill that occur as a result of wintery/icy conditions. Their email address is cshighsouth.en@nottscc.gov.uk. We would also, of course, re-iterate the advice about safe driving.

Karen White
Chairman