

Heald Green and Long Lane Ratepayers' Association

Watching over the interests of Heald Green ward since 1927



Blocked Drains and Grids, Highways Maintenance – Cllr Catherine Stuart

A number of residents have expressed concerns about the maintenance of drains in Heald Green. So, when the drainage maintenance schedule was changed without notice I raised the matter at the council meeting in November.



Subsequently I met with a senior officer in the Highways Department, to discuss this matter. Some of the facts shared were, I thought, of wider interest, so I've included them here:

- The highways network in Stockport is an asset owned by the council, worth approximately £1.1bn if it had to be rebuilt.
- It's good practice to assume 10% of the network is at risk and in need of maintenance at any time. It is estimated that the council should be spending £8-10million per year on maintenance. However, national policy has tended to favour funding for new road building over maintenance.
- With regards to ongoing maintenance, under the City Region Sustainable Transport Maintenance Settlement, Stockport gets approximately £4m per year, this needs to fund highway and footway maintenance in addition to flood defences, structural repairs and a range of other expenditure.
- This leaves approximately £1.5 million per year for road maintenance, significantly lower than the £10m required. So, this has to be invested on a risk approach to areas of greatest need. Which is why funding for drains clearance, amongst other things, is limited, and in some cases much lower than we might wish.
- Several years ago, the council set up the Highways Investment Program, the 'Investing in Stockport' initiative. This was a ten year commitment to invest £100 million funding to improve roads and footpaths across the borough, also to carry out a range of repairs from patching, to resurfacing in targeted areas. This funding concluded in 2023/24 and means that the Stockport network is now in a better position than many other local authorities.