

Winter Services in West Lothian



Gritting
Snow clearing
Winter driving tips
Contact numbers



How you can help:

- Share information with friends and neighbours, and spare a moment for vulnerable neighbours.
- Park sensibly - abandoned vehicles can cause serious issues.
- Sign up for the email alert on the council's website.
- If you are able, clear the path and pavement in front of your home.
- Look out for the winter Bulletin and keep it handy.

For more information visit: westlothian.gov.uk/winter
Visit your local Customer Information Service (CIS)
centre or library or telephone 01506 280000.



For more information
scan this QR code with
your smartphone



Winter Services

How we deal with roads and footways in West Lothian

Every winter West Lothian Council has to treat over 1,000km of roads and 1,300 km of footways to combat the effects of bad weather.

In this leaflet we have set out our plan for treating roads and footways. There is also some self help on the back page. We hope you find the leaflet useful but please contact us on the numbers below if you have any further queries.

Where possible, we treat major roads and important bus routes prior to the formation of ice. When it snows these important routes are treated first. We operate this service over 24 hours when necessary.

Once these primary routes have been completed, we treat secondary routes such as those in housing estates during normal working hours.

We also deal with footways on a priority basis. In ice and snow conditions footways leading to schools, hospitals, health centres, shopping areas and where there is heavy pedestrian movement are treated first. Main routes to residential areas follow, with internal footways in housing areas being treated as resources permit. In addition over 2,200 grit bins are positioned throughout West Lothian for use by members of the public.

This policy of priorities has been adopted by the Council to ensure that the most important areas are dealt with as quickly as possible.

Note:

The M8 and M9 motorways are maintained by Amey Scotland South East Unit on behalf of the Scottish Government. The contact numbers for Amey Scotland South East Unit are given below.

Contact numbers

For: Policy on route priorities; Requests for new grit bin or refills; General comments/ information on service provision;	Call: 01506 280000 24 hour contact number
For: M8/M9 - Amey Scotland South East Unit	Call: 24 hour contact number 0800 0420 188



The service you can expect

West Lothian Council is responsible for providing a Winter Service on adopted roads and footpaths within the Council Area. The normal period of operation extends from the last Thursday in October till the last Thursday in March.

It is important to appreciate that it is not possible to treat all routes simultaneously. In view of this, the council must adopt a priority system to ensure that the treatment is targeted to areas of greatest need first.

Carriageways

Primary Routes

(SNOW ROUTES)

Important principal roads, major scheduled bus routes, routes to fire stations, hospitals, ambulance depots and local danger spots on highly trafficked roads and major industrial estates.

Gritting and/or snow ploughing 24 hours a day on all days. Pre grit if required. Planned or reactive.

Secondary Routes

Level 1

Other classified routes, distributor routes and connecting routes between centres, minor bus routes, main accesses to schools, medical centres and residential areas.

Gritting and/or snow ploughing during normal working hours i.e. 0800 to 1505 hours Monday to Friday. Pre grit if required.

Secondary Routes

Level 2

Residential areas, cul-de-sacs and other unclassified roads.

Gritting and/or snow ploughing during normal working hours i.e. 0800 to 1505 hours Monday to Friday. Reactive treatment only.

Secondary Routes

Level 3

Surfaced areas within schools, roads within industrial estates, routes to car parks and car park surfaces.

Gritting and/or snow ploughing during normal working hours i.e. 0800 to 1505 hours Monday to Friday. Reactive treatment only.



Footways

Footway Type

Treatment

Primary Routes

(SNOW ROUTES)

Urban shopping areas and precincts. Routes to schools, accesses to health centres and medical centres, hospitals, etc. main routes to residential areas and bus stops.

During November and March, gritting of widespread ice/snow clearing 0500 to 1505 hours Monday to Friday. **During December, January and February** the service will be extended to cover weekends and public holidays (0500 to 1505 hours). Reactive treatment only.

Secondary Routes

Level 1

Other routes to schools, residential areas and housing areas in general.

Gritting of widespread ice/snow clearing 0800 to 1505 hours Monday to Friday.
Reactive treatment only.

Secondary Routes

Level 2

Footway links to car parks, community centres, day centres etc and cycle routes.

Gritting of widespread ice/snow clearing 0800 to 1505 hours Monday to Friday.
Reactive treatment only.

Tips for winter driving

- Clear all snow and ice from your car before you set off.
- *In severe conditions - don't travel. Allow the roads to be cleared first. Remember, if you attempt to drive in such conditions, and get stuck, the gritter won't get through.*
- Leave early. It takes longer to get about in bad weather.
- *Reduce your speed - take care on the roads - you can't always tell if a route has been treated.*
- Use dipped headlights in poor visibility.
- *Drive in the highest gear possible and avoid harsh braking and acceleration.*
- Keep a safe distance behind other vehicles.
- *Watch out for pedestrians and cyclists.*
- Please be patient.



Extreme Weather Event

An extreme weather event will be considered to be an event where continuous snow is forecast and likely to give significant accumulations in excess of 10cm covering the whole of the north or south expanse within the council area. The snow will also be expected to remain in untreated areas for a prolonged period due to low temperatures before a natural thaw disperses it.

During periods of extreme weather and heavy continuous snowfall when roads and footways are affected by significant levels of lying snow, priority will be given to primary carriageway routes and primary footpath routes and these routes will be known as West Lothian Council's "Snow Routes". These routes are defined within the Council Policy and will be published on the Council Website. Gritters and footpath resources will be deployed on these specified snow routes continuously until satisfactory snow clearance has been achieved before resources are deployed to any secondary routes.

The policy is aimed at providing a minimum strategic network during periods of extreme weather and will provide access to key facilities and other transport needs.

Resilience and Salt Conservation

West Lothian Council procures and stocks salt supplies for use on the whole of the public carriageway and footway network during the winter period. A minimum stock of 30,000 tonnes of salt will be available at the start of the winter period.

In periods of an extreme weather event or periods of prolonged conditions that demand a high usage of salt it may be necessary to restrict the use of salt to snow routes only. For West Lothian Council, salt will be restricted to snow routes when the council reaches a minimum stock level of salt for 6 days resilience of continuous salting.



Grit Bin Policy

- Only provided on sites with difficult conditions.
- Bins will only be located where they can be filled from a lorry.
- Only replenished during and immediately after, periods of adverse weather or upon request from the public as resources allow.
- No provision in private areas or car parks for internal use by either Council or any other public or private property such as schools, parks, hospitals, old peoples homes, lunch clubs etc. unless a service level agreement is in place.
- Bins will not be designated to serve a carriageway if that carriageway is designated as a primary route or snow route.
- Bins will not be designated to serve a footway if that footway is designated as a primary route or snow route.
- Only written requests for bins will be considered.
- A request will not be accepted unless a location to site the bin has been agreed. Therefore, even if the criterion for locating the bin is met, none will be provided if residents cannot agree a position.
- The position of any proposed bin should not obstruct the passage of pedestrians.
- Grit Bins will be left in-situ during the summer months unless the responsible officer confirms that they are causing a public nuisance.
- Bins should be yellow and tagged with a unique id number and their position recorded in the electronic database.

In times of an extreme weather event it is not always possible to service and replenish grit bins due to their location and the deployment of resources in higher priority areas.

In the event that West Lothian Council suspends the grit bin service then Road Services will provide temporary grit bags and grit heaps at strategic locations across West Lothian for use by the public. The locations of the grit bags and grit heaps will be advertised to the public when the service is in operation.

Self Help - What Can You Do?

There is no law preventing members of the public from clearing snow and ice from public roads and footways outside their properties and businesses. However, people should exercise care and caution when attempting to undertake any snow clearing so that they do not create any further hazards through careless or inconsiderate actions.

Being a good neighbour during severe winter weather is usually welcomed. Detailed below is some advice provided by the government on clearing roads and footways yourself:-

1. Do not use hot water as this could freeze, increasing the risk of injury to persons.
2. Choose suitable clothing for the task to ensure that you remain warm, clearly visible to traffic and that footwear provides a good grip.
3. Do not take unnecessary risks in the road and be aware that vehicles may find it difficult to stop quickly in icy conditions.
4. If shovelling snow consider where you are going to put it to avoid shifting the problem elsewhere, for example, avoid blocking other footways and drainage features such as gullies.
5. Use a shovel with a wide blade and do not overload the shovel with snow.
6. It is easier to remove fresh snow before pedestrians have compressed the snow into compacted ice.
7. Clear a line down the middle of the area to be cleared first to create a safer surface to work from.
8. Spread some salt on the area cleared to prevent the formation of ice.
9. Do not use too much salt as a few grams, about a tablespoon, for each square metre that you clear should be sufficient.
10. If there is no salt available then a little sand or grit is a reasonable substitute. It will not have the same de-icing properties as salt but will improve grip underfoot.
11. Salt applied to the road or footway could be washed away by rain or snow and subsequently freeze – in this case a further application of salt should be used soon after the rain has ceased and before temperatures approach freezing.
12. Particular care and attention should be given to steps and steep gradients to ensure that snow and ice is removed – it may be beneficial to apply additional salt at these locations to reduce the risk of injury.