

BRADFIELD PARISH COUNCIL LOCAL WINTER MANAGEMENT POLICY

Adopted 26th September 2012

INTRODUCTION

The Parish Council does not have a statutory duty to prepare for and deal with snow and ice (except around their own property) and although we do not have the resources to make a commitment to provide a snow clearing service the Parish Council will endeavour to assist where practicable. This plan has been created to clarify what can be expected from the Parish Council.

LEGAL ADVICE

People have been hesitant to clear snow because of fears of litigation if someone should slip on the treated area. The Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and the Occupiers' Liability Act 1984 place responsibility on the employer to maintain access to premises in a safe condition. Although an employer can be held liable for 'failing to act reasonably' to prevent accidents pedestrians also have a responsibility to take care.

The Ministry of Justice issued a letter during the first half of 2010 which stated;
"The prospects of a person who volunteers to clear snow from a pavement being successfully sued for damages by a person who subsequently slips on the cleared area and is injured are very small"

The following statement was taken from direct.gov, the official UK government website on 4th November 2010 - http://www.direct.gov.uk/en/N11/newsroom/DG_191868

The snow code – tips on clearing snow and ice from pavements or public spaces

Don't be put off clearing paths because you're afraid someone will get injured. Remember, people walking on snow and ice have a responsibility to be careful themselves.

Follow the advice below to make sure you clear the pathway safely and effectively.

And don't believe the myths - it's unlikely you'll be sued or held legally responsible for any injuries if you have cleared the path carefully.

Clear the snow and ice early in the day

It's easier to move fresh, loose snow rather than hard snow that has packed together from people walking on it. So if possible, start removing the snow and ice in the morning. If you remove the top layer of snow in the morning, any sunshine during the day will help melt any ice beneath. You can then cover the path with salt before nightfall to stop it refreezing overnight.

Preventing slips

Pay extra attention to clearing snow and ice from steps and steep pathways – you might need to use more salt on these areas

Use salt or sand - not water

Don't make the pathways more dangerous by causing them to refreeze. If you use water to melt the snow, it may refreeze and turn to black ice. Black ice increases the risk of injuries as it is invisible and very slippery.

You can melt snow or prevent black ice by spreading some salt on the area you have cleared. You can use ordinary table or dishwasher salt - a tablespoon for each square metre you clear should work. Don't use the salt found in salting bins - this will be needed to keep the roads clear.

Be careful not to spread salt on plants or grass as it may damage them.

If you don't have enough salt, you can also use sand or ash. These won't stop the path icing over as effectively as salt, but will provide good grip underfoot.

Take care where you move the snow

When you're shovelling snow, take care where you put it so it doesn't block people's paths or drains. Make sure you make a path down the middle of the area to be cleared first, so you have a clear surface to walk on. Then shovel the snow from the centre of the path to the sides.

Offer to clear your neighbours' paths

If your neighbour will have difficulty getting in and out of their home, offer to clear snow and ice around their property as well. Check that any elderly or disabled neighbours are alright in the cold weather. If you're worried about them, try contacting their relatives or friends, or if necessary the local council.

WHERE GRITTING WILL/WILL NOT BE UNDERTAKEN BY THE PARISH COUNCIL

During periods of severe/persistent frost, ice or snow the Parish Council will ENDEAVOUR to treat the following locations where the public have access;

Council Offices, Mill Lee Road, Low Bradfield
Birtin Cemetery, Burton Lane, Oughtibridge
Coronation Park, Station Lane, Oughtibridge,
Dungworth Pavilion, Dungworth
Storrs Park, Storrs
(main walkway from car parks/road side only)

Groundstaff will endeavour to grit/clear snow on arrival on site. Priority to be given to areas of special risk ie ramp to Council Offices, entrance to Coronation Park. Gritting to be carried out on a priority basis on a daily basis. Posters to be displayed informing staff and visitors of gritting procedures at start of winter season. It should be noted that in extreme weather conditions where transport is difficult or dangerous it may not be possible to treat the above named locations as staff themselves may have difficulty in reaching the locations. It is also to be noted that in very low temperatures the effectiveness of salt is significantly reduced.

Property or land owned by the Parish Council which will NOT be gritted by the Parish Council;

Kaye Meadows Allotment – not a priority area
Low Bradfield Post Office – responsibility of tenant
The Smithy, Midhope – responsibility of tenant
Bus shelters – owned by Parish Council at various locations in the Parish – access difficult for staff to rural locations in severe weather therefore gritting can not be guaranteed

PPE

The Parish Council will ensure all Groundstaff have appropriate PPE this to include hi-vis waterproofs and boots.

DRIVING IN SEVERE CONDITIONS

The Parish Council has a clear severe weather travel plan that is communicated to all employees and contractors. A driving policy is in place which contains guidelines for driving in difficult weather conditions.

RISK ASSESSMENT

The Parish Council have completed a Risk Assessment for snow and ice clearance activities in the Parish. This is reviewed annually and can be viewed at the Parish Council offices.

ROLE OF THE PRINCIPAL AUTHORITY – SHEFFIELD CITY COUNCIL

"To carry out such precautionary salting and snow clearing, as far as reasonably possible, to keep the precautionary salting network free from ice and snow, permit the safe movement of vehicular traffic and pedestrians and minimise delays and accidents directly attributable to the adverse weather conditions."

“There are over 2,000 grit bins across Sheffield, most of them on minor roads, pavements and pedestrian areas” – “Amey, Streets Ahead contractor will maintain and replenish them throughout the Winter. You can spread grit from them onto roads and pavements to help your community”.

Further information on the role of the principal authority can be found at www.sheffield.gov.uk