

General Information

Winter weather conditions can affect roads and footpaths in the North East over a considerable period of the year.

In order to deal with problems which may arise Aberdeenshire Council undertakes monitoring of weather forecasts throughout winter. A formal standby system for men and machinery is in place between mid November and the end of March and can be varied to suit prevailing conditions.

Personnel and equipment are dispersed throughout the Council area so that relevant treatment can be carried out as quickly and efficiently as possible. Appropriate materials are also stored in local depots.

Around 300 personnel are available to operate some 70 gritters, 45 snowploughs, and 60 footpath ploughs. They are backed up by around 100 farmers with tractor snow ploughs.

Winter maintenance expenditure varies according to the severity of the weather but is expected to be around £6 million annually.



Prioritisation

Every road or footpath cannot be treated at the same time so a priority system has been devised based on traffic volumes with account taken of public bus service and school transport routes where practicable.

Priority 1 Routes

Priority 1 routes are principal or other classified roads (generally A and B class roads) serving as main routes between communities or major traffic distributors within communities.

Priority 2 Routes

Priority 2 routes are principal or other classified roads not included in the priority 1 list which serve as main roads between small communities or as traffic distributors within larger communities.

Priority 3 Routes

Priority 3 routes are access roads to isolated communities in rural areas and local access roads, service roads and minor roads in urban areas.

Private and unadopted roads are not normally treated.

Action

Priority 1 routes are treated first with lower priority routes following on later when conditions justify it.



Priority 1 Footways

Priority 1 footways are those in the central areas of urban communities where shopping and commercial facilities are concentrated and those serving essential public services.

Priority 2 Footways

Priority 2 footways are all other footways not on the Priority 1 list.

Action

Priority 1 footways are treated before Priority 2 footways.



Trunk Roads

These roads are the responsibility of the Scottish Executive and are now managed by BEAR Scotland. The roads involved are the A90 Laurencekirk to Aberdeen to Fraserburgh and the A96 Aberdeen to Inverness.

Queries relating to Trunk Roads should be directed to BEAR on 0800 587 1107.



Operational Procedure

Treatment is based on predicting weather conditions and spreading salt in advance to prevent ice forming on the road.

Weather forecasts using information gained from a range of ice detection sites located throughout the Council area are used to predict likely conditions.

Evening treatment is frequently carried out on the highest priority routes to prevent ice formation.

Further treatment is carried out as necessary by early morning patrols which normally start at 5.30 am and continue until the appropriate treatment is completed.

During storm conditions treatment is carried on into the evening but would normally stop at around 10.00 pm unless an emergency situation had to be dealt with.

Early morning patrols start at 6.30 am on Sundays and Public holidays.

In times of snow, especially when drifting is taking place the need to revisit main routes can lead to delays in treating minor routes. Nevertheless the workforce involved will be doing their best to cover all of their area as quickly as conditions permit.

Motorists are reminded that they should be aware of actual conditions at all times and drive accordingly.



Contacting the Council

Winter maintenance is carried out by the Roads Service of Transportation and Infrastructure.

Queries or complaints relating to winter activities should be directed to Transportation and Infrastructure as follows:

By Phone: 08456 08 12 05 (during office hours)

Via Website: www.aberdeenshire.gov.uk

In Writing:

Banff & Buchan / Buchan

Cape House, Seafeld Street
Banff AB45 1ED.

Formartine / Garioch

Gordon House, Blackhall Road
Inverurie AB51 3WA.

Kincardine & Mearns / Marr

Carlton House, Arduathie Road
Stonehaven AB39 2DP.

Other Sources of Road / Traffic Information

Local radio stations are a good source of road condition information. Additionally information for major routes is available from AA Roadwatch on **09003 401100** (premium rate)

or at **www.trafficscotland.org**

In the event of an emergency contact the Police.

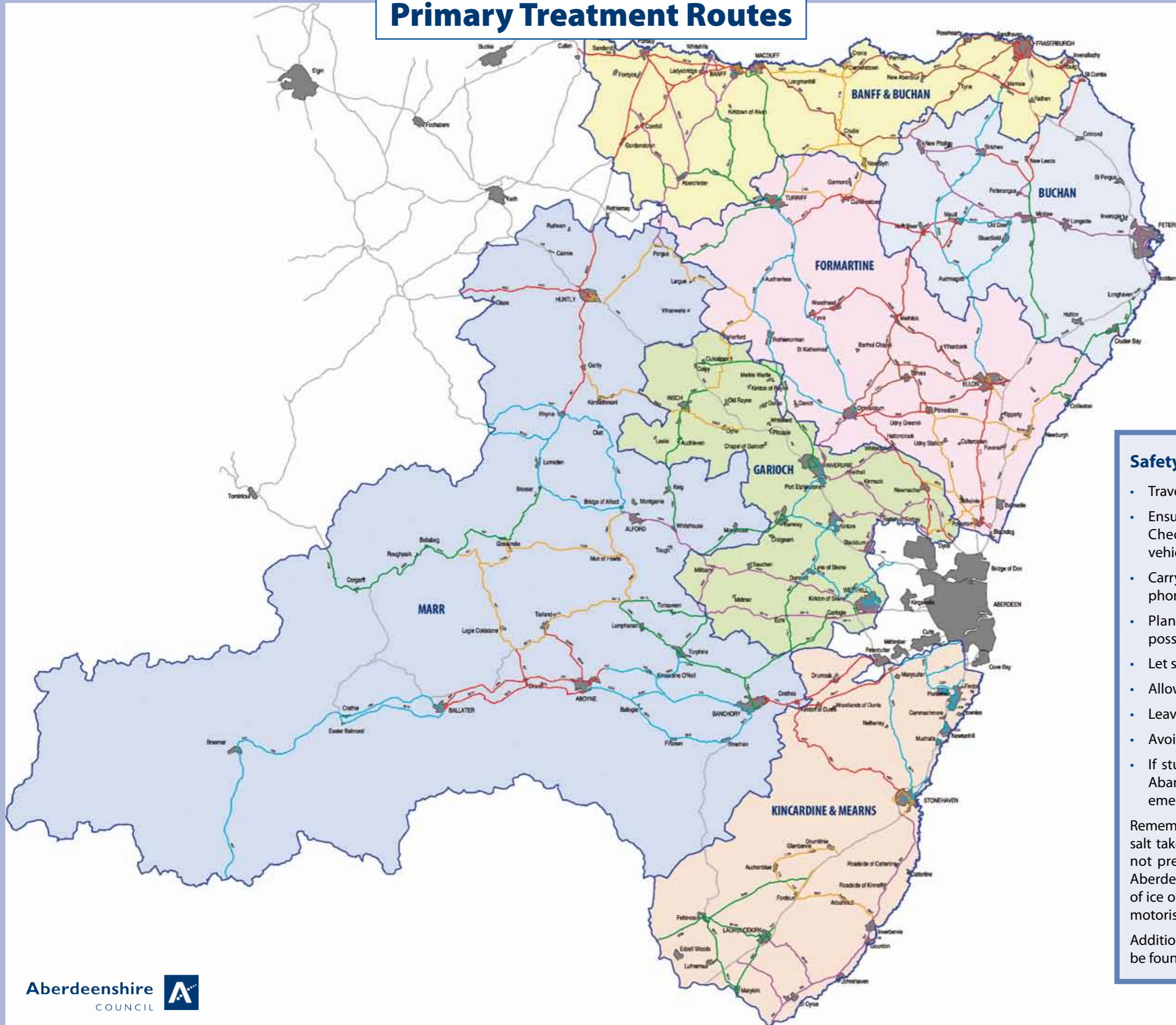


WINTER MAINTENANCE

Gritting and Snow Clearing Information



Primary Treatment Routes



Coloured lines represent individual treatment routes.

Within the overall Council area there are 32 Primary treatment routes, consisting mainly of Priority 1 and Priority 2 routes as defined overleaf. Other routes are treated after completion of the Primary routes when weather conditions justify it.

GENERAL ADVICE

Primary routes are first to be treated. In adverse conditions it is therefore advisable to vary your normal route if necessary to ensure you travel on treated routes.

Safety Tips for Winter Driving

- Travel only if the journey is necessary.
- Ensure your vehicle is prepared for the journey. Check: fuel, lights, tyres, visibility through all vehicle windows.
- Carry warm clothing, food & drink, a torch, mobile phone and a spade.
- Plan your journey using main roads wherever possible.
- Let someone know your journey plans.
- Allow longer journey times.
- Leave a greater distance to the vehicle in front.
- Avoid sudden braking, acceleration or turns.
- If stuck, stay with your vehicle and stay warm. Abandoned vehicles make gritting and access for emergency vehicles difficult.

Remember, road conditions can change very quickly; salt takes some time to become effective, and will not prevent ice forming in very cold conditions. Aberdeenshire Council cannot keep all roads free of ice or snow at all times. It is the responsibility of motorists to drive according to road conditions.

Additional information on preparing for winter can be found at ReadyScotland.org.uk