

Highway Maintenance Highway Services

BRIEFING NOTE

Gully Maintenance Service

The gully maintenance programme

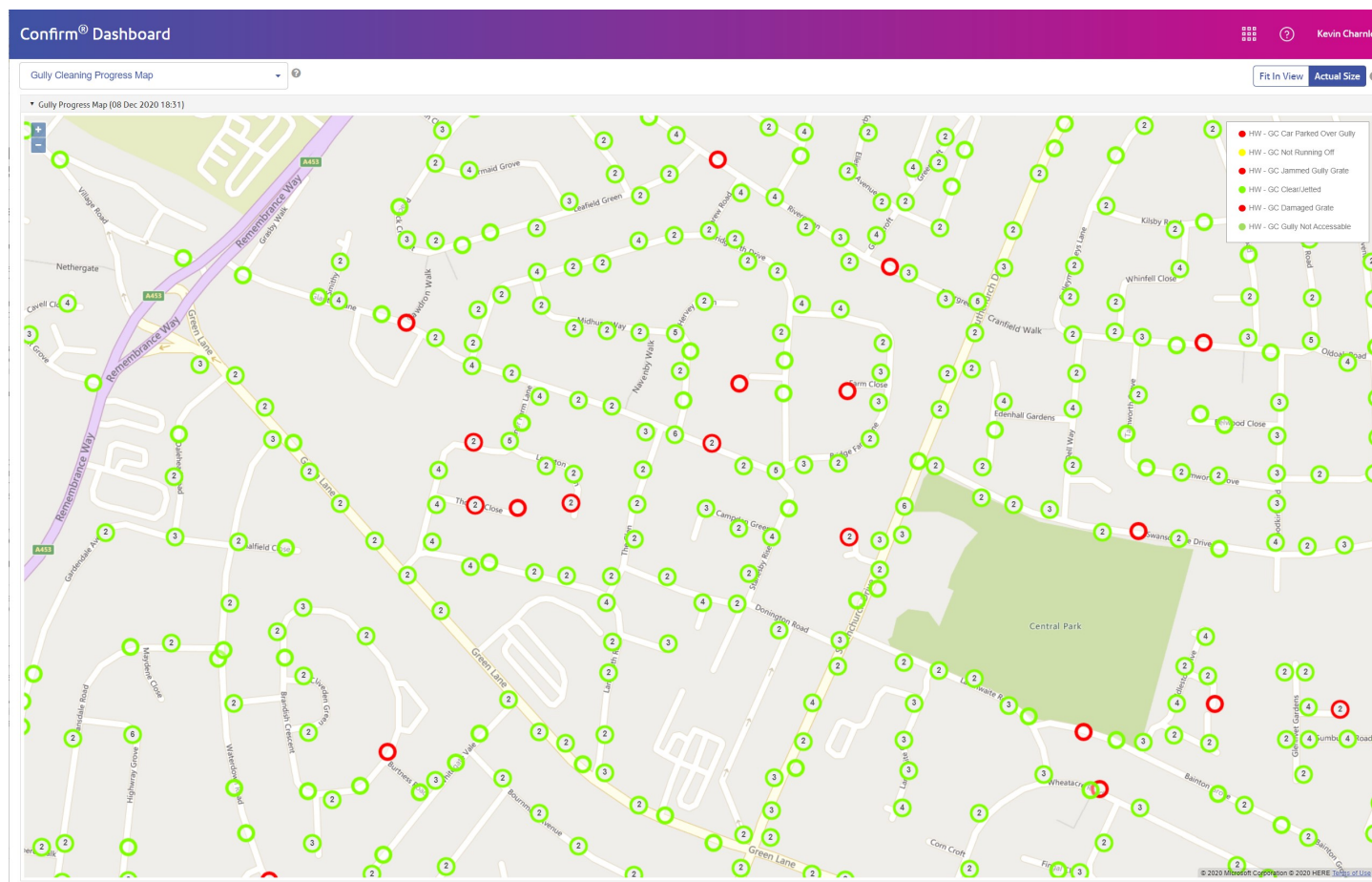
The overriding service aim is that all public highway gullies are cleaned a minimum of once every 12 months, there are approximately 36,100 highway gullies on the network at present. The number will increase through new developments and road improvement schemes.

Electronic systems (Confirm Connect) have been installed to monitor the progress of the service. These in cabin tablet devices are used to record maintenance outcomes at each gully location (cleared and jetted, parked car, structural work required etc) and operatives are trained to input the data.

The focus is on speed and ease of use for drivers – further utilisation has been incorporated to record any defective gullies or defective pipework which connects the gullies to the drainage network, details of all defects identified are then passed to a structural repair team.

From April 2020 we have introduced an additional task to monitor the silt level in each gully visited, the gully machine operators can record the percentage of silt removed from the gully bowl.

Real time data for each visit is transferred back into our asset management system 'Confirm' and displayed on a live dashboard which is accessible to all users of the system.



Provisions in place during adverse weather

We monitor all flood warnings from the Flood Forecasting Office, Natural Hazards Partnership and the Met Office and endeavour to provide guidance and assistance to citizens throughout the day and over weekends. Highway Maintenance has a dedicated call out service to assist and these personnel are trained to use gully machines in order to respond to incidents/requests.

We ensure gully machines are in service, patrolling the known problem areas and dealing with problems and reacting to further reports and requests where possible. Working closely with our street cleansing colleagues we check all known hot spots, clearing as required and will further react and monitor.

Structural maintenance

In addition to routine maintenance, throughout the year new gully bowls, grates and frames are routinely installed, gully frames and lids are reset, broken pipe work and channels replace and connections checked. In the region of £40k was spent in 2019/20 undertaking structural repairs and this forms part of the highway safety inspection regime.

Frequency of gully cleaning

The gully service currently comprises of 3 vehicles that operate on a locality basis with a developed cyclical programme to clear gullies once a year. This includes a dedicated vehicle employed to attend to areas with known hot spots, emergencies and to respond to citizen requests for reactive work. This regime has been operating since May 2012 and all performance targets have been achieved. Gully cleaning is a Covalent Performance Indicator for Highway Services.

Length of time it takes to respond to requests for gully cleaning

Citizen requests are prioritised - emergencies and properties at risk of flooding are attended on the day.

Routine requests are prioritised and responded within 3 working days, of course emergency requests are excluded from this timeframe.

The effectiveness of the cleansing approach which was implemented in 2012 – what monitoring is in place and outcomes?

For all gully cleaning activities a record of the outcome for each visit is recorded electronically and uploaded to "Confirm" our corporate asset management system. This information can then be viewed in a live dashboard as shown above.

In addition all of our vehicles are tracked through the Masternaut GPS tracking system and Confirm GPS. GPS tracking can enable a record to record mileage, monitor daily progress and to view where vehicles are working in real time.

Delivering the programme will always have challenges including:

- Parked cars; it is not always possible to gain access to the gullies to clean them
- Busy roads; working time restrictions means that the gullies on some routes cannot be readily cleaned during normal working hours
- Temporary traffic management schemes, pop up cycle routes. Unable to gain access to clean the gullies

Subsequently it is not always possible to clean each gully each time the gully cleansing route is driven. We now hold increased asset knowledge which we have recorded within Confirm over an 8 year period, improved gully maintenance and the commitment to maximise vehicle use is helping to provide an efficient and cost effective service.