

Fulking Parish Council Winter Plan 2024-2025

This plan outlines what resources and actions Fulking Parish Council (FPC) will deploy in conjunction with West Sussex County Council (WSCC) to maintain access to and from Fulking during the winter.

WSCC is responsible for all highways in West Sussex except the A23 and A27 which are managed by the Highways Agency. WSCC produces a “Winter Service Plan” (link below) which outlines their policies and actions to be taken.

<https://www.westsussex.gov.uk/roads-and-travel/maintaining-roads-verges-and-pavements/road-maintenance/winter-service/>

A key part of their winter plan is the “precautionary salting networks” where the road surface will be treated based on the forecast for the area and the priority of the road. West Sussex is divided into three forecast areas to reflect the diverse weather conditions often experienced across the county.

Fulking lies within the “Inland Domain” forecast area and the main street from Poynings through Fulking to Edburton is a Priority 3 road in the precautionary salting network.

Although Fulking is part of the salting network, because it is a Priority 3 road, resources may be allocated by WSCC to the higher priority routes if there are severe conditions or a shortfall in resources e.g grit and gritters. This means that the road may not be treated in extreme conditions and snow ploughs may not be sent to clear the road.

Roads to be cleared are the main road through Fulking from Edburton in the west to Poynings in the east and Clappers Lane running from the junction with the Street in Fulking at the southern end to the junction with the A281 Henfield Road at the northern end.

Fulking Parish Council has purchased seven grit bins for use by residents to supplement the activities of WSCC and details of these are contained within this plan. In addition in extreme weather conditions WSCC will authorise and pay local farmers under their “Community Winter Offer” to clear local roads and the details for Fulking are also included within this plan.

1. Communication

Local Contact for Fulking

Parish Clerk - Trevor Parsons

Email parishclerk@fulking.net

Tel 07767 422733

WSCC Highways Contact Southern Area Office – Winter Service Duty Manager

Tel 01243 642105

2. Daily Decision Report and Gritter Twitter feed

Every day around noon WSCC receives a 24-hour weather forecast together with road temperature sensor data. They use this information to help decide on what action to take including activating the precautionary salting networks.

The Daily Decision report will normally be issued by WSCC between 1 October and 31st April and can be viewed on Twitter with the following hashtag: #grittertwitter AND from: @WSHighways

The Daily Decision report will still be issued to Parish Clerks via email. It details which parts of the 'Precautionary network' are to be treated and includes weather forecasts for all regions within West Sussex.

The Daily Decision is to be emailed to the Fulking Parish Clerk at parishclerk@fulking.net

3. Actions to be taken in severe winter conditions:

The Chairman and Parish Clerk will discuss and agree actions in the following areas:

a) Farmer Snow Clearance. WSCC use set criteria to decide whether they will fund snow clearance by local farmers. It is intended as a response to significant weather events only. If WSCC decide to authorise they will email the Fulking Parish Clerk and our agreed local farmer.

The Parish Clerk will advise the Chairman if Farmer snow clearance has been approved by WSCC. If WSCC have not approved snow clearance and following discussions between the Chairman, and other Councillors, it is considered necessary, FPC may agree to fund snow clearance from its own resources. The Chairman or Parish Clerk will contact the relevant parties to action the snow clearance.

b) Supplemental Gritting (also see sections 4 & 5 below) Residents will be encouraged to undertake supplemental gritting to local paths/highways, especially those which have been identified as problem areas below. Supplemental gritting can be carried out by anybody in the local area and please do not assume that this is somebody else's duty to spread the grit. The grit bins are unlocked to allow access.

c) 4 X 4 Volunteers (also see section 6 below) Decide if 4 X 4 volunteers are needed (e.g. to get medication or food basics for residents) and alert volunteers.

4. Road Problem Areas

The following areas have been identified as likely to cause problems in icy and snowy conditions:

a) Hill running west from Shepherd & Dog pub in The Street to Perching Manor Farmhouse in Edburton Road. Problem: hill, bend and surface water commonly accumulates.

b) Hill running up east from Shepherd & Dog pub to Primrose Cottage in The Street. Problem: hill and tight bend.

c) Southern end of Clappers Lane towards junction with The Street Problem: hill and tight bend

d) Corner in Clappers Lane adjacent to Lower Kent's Problem: water accumulates

e) Bridge over stream in Clappers Lane close to Knowle House Problem: water accumulates

f) Hill running south from Sunnyacres in Clappers Lane.

g) Hill running north from Badgerwood Stables in Clappers Lane.

h) Junction of northern end of Clappers Lane starting from junction with Holmbush Lane running to busy junction with Henfield A281 road.

5. Grit Bins and Bags

To help keep the local roads open several grit bins have been installed in strategic locations in the parish. A “grit audit” is undertaken once a year, usually in May/June by one of FPC Councillors and WSCC have agreed to top up those bins, which are showing less than 75%, by the end of October. In addition some Grit Bags are located at Perching Manor Farm to provide additional resources in case of need.

The grit bins are sited in the following locations:

1. The Street, junction with Stammers Hill
2. The Street, junction with Clappers Lane
3. Clappers Lane opposite Lower Kents
4. Clappers Lane adjacent to bridge over stream
5. Clappers Lane top of hill close to Sunnyacres
6. Clappers Lane outside Furzefield
7. Clappers Lane junction of Holmbush Lane

6. 4x4 volunteers

As a small village, there is close contact between residents and owners of a number of 4x4 vehicles. There is an informal network of support. FPC will continue to review whether it will be necessary in the future to define a more formal system.