

State of the City Report: London's Highways 2018

This is London's second annual report on its highways – roads, footways, bridges, street lighting and drainage. It provides key information on numbers, condition and funding – in particular the £900m maintenance backlog.

LONDON'S HIGHWAYS MATTER

London boroughs are responsible for 95 per cent of the capital's roads, as well as pavements, street lighting, drainage and other associated structures. Maintaining these assets is essential if people are to be able to move safely around the city.

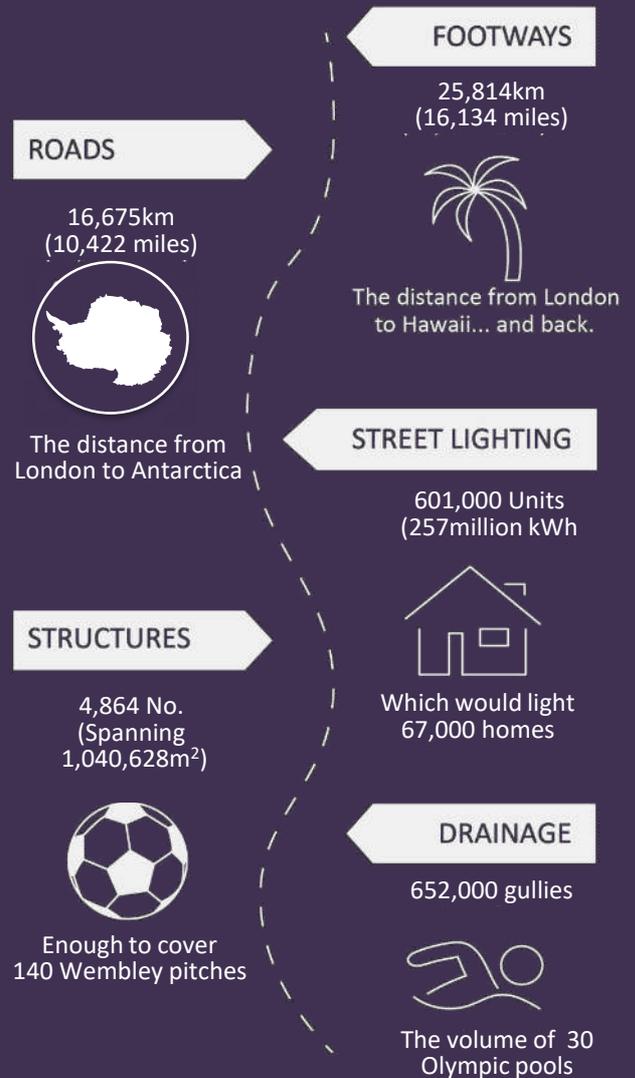
If road surfaces are not maintained they cause significant damage to vehicles and become extremely dangerous for cyclists. Bridges must be maintained to support the weight of traffic that uses them. Pavements must be maintained to prevent injury from slips, trips and falls; street lighting is essential for community safety, and adequate drainage is essential to prevent flooding of homes and businesses.

However, the funding available to London boroughs for highways maintenance continues to fall short of what is needed. The accumulated highways maintenance backlog in London is currently estimated to be approximately **£907 million**. This total has grown again despite authorities having increased spending in cash terms in 2017/18. The £350m spent in that year was still £63m short of the £415m required to maintain assets in a steady state.

London local authorities will have seen the core funding they receive from government reduced by 63% in real terms over the decade to 2020. This equates to around £4 billion less funding to spend on essential services in the capital.

This has forced authorities to prioritise vital services for vulnerable adults and children at the expense of other services, including highways maintenance.

OUR HIGHWAY ASSET IN NUMBERS...



| | ROADS | FOOTWAYS | STRUCTURES | LIGHTING | DRAINAGE |
|--------------|---------|----------|------------|------------------------|------------|
| ANNUAL SPEND | £152.0m | £61.3m | £84.7m | £39.5m (Capital only.) | £12.4m |
| ANNUAL NEED | £209.0m | £68.8m | £87.2m | £47.7m | To develop |
| BACKLOG | £223.4m | £310.8m | £173.6m | £198.9m | To develop |

| | TOTAL CURRENT ANNUAL SPEND | TOTAL ANNUAL NEED | TOTAL ANNUAL SHORTFALL | TOTAL BACKLOG |
|------|----------------------------|-------------------|------------------------|---------------|
| 2017 | £341m | £433m | £92m | £729m |
| 2018 | £350m | £413m | £63m | £907m |

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Maintaining London's highways matters to everyone

Infrastructure maintenance and development in London is vital to ensure that the capital can continue to deliver its £32.5 billion net benefit for the country. It is also essential to keep pace with the needs of a thriving city whose population is expected to grow by another 15% by 2040.

Our asks

Our immediate concern is the need to maintain London's vital highways infrastructure. Not only is maintenance essential, but it can also reduce the need for more expensive repairs and replacements at a later date.

At the Budget we are calling on the Government to provide an immediate cash injection to support highways maintenance.

In the medium term the Spending Review must acknowledge local authorities' responsibilities for highways maintenance and fund it accordingly. The current situation, whereby funds must be diverted from highways maintenance to essential care services for adults and children, is not sustainable and not acceptable.

If the government is not willing to fund highways maintenance directly, then it must allow London local government greater control over its own assets and taxes. It should therefore look again at the recommendations of the London Finance Commission.



Map illustrating backlog for all highway assets (per km) by borough.

WHAT NEXT?

LoTAG supports London and its boroughs by building a case for more investment in London's highways assets.

LoTAG's annual State of the City report provides an overview of the transport infrastructure assets that support London's growth, from roads and pavements to street lighting and drainage, as well as totalling the investment needed to maintain these assets so they can continue to be used by London's residents and businesses.

ABOUT LoTAG

London Transport Officers Group (LoTAG) is a network for London borough officers working in highways and transport who represent all highways authorities in the capital.

It encourages collaborative asset management practices to maximise London's potential to deliver a highway service that continues to support the needs of the people that live and work in the capital.

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