

Changes to winter resilience support and update on community emergency preparedness

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Service: Highway Operations
Further Enquiries to: Adrian Hampton
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Direct Line: (01249) 706799

Introduction

This briefing provides an update on changes to Wiltshire Council's winter resilience arrangements and outlines the wider investment being made to strengthen community resilience, emergency preparedness and highway operations across the county.

Parish Emergency Assistance Scheme (PEAS)

The current Parish Emergency Assistance Scheme (PEAS), which provides some emergency equipment to local town and parish councils, will come to an end following the 2026/27 winter season, in March 2027.

The ending of the scheme reflects a change in the council's approach to community resilience, with support and investment continuing but being focused on a range of other initiatives. Town and parish councils that wish to continue providing this service will need to determine their own provision and funding arrangements beyond this date.

Wider investment in community resilience

Wiltshire Council is refocusing resources towards a broader resilience and preparedness programme designed to support communities before, during and after emergency events.

This includes investment and support through:

- Local Highways and Footway Improvement Groups (LHFIGs)
- Area Boards
- The Crisis and Resilience Fund
- The Digital Wiltshire Programme
- Community-based Emergency Contact Hubs

These initiatives are intended to strengthen local resilience, improve communication during emergencies, and help communities access a wider range of support mechanisms.

Investment in operational resilience

Alongside community-focused measures, the council is continuing to invest in its operational capability to respond to severe weather and maintain the highway network.

Planned investment includes:

- Development of a new highway salt depot at Hindon
- An additional £1m investment in resilience equipment including:
 - Procurement of a new tractor to add to our fleet
 - Additional snow ploughs
 - Flail equipment
- Other specialist assets to strengthen winter maintenance and highway operations

The council is also continuing to invest significantly in highway drainage infrastructure to help communities better withstand extreme weather. Annual capital funding for drainage renewals has increased from £600,000 to £1.5m, representing a 150% increase in investment.

This additional funding is enabling more drainage assets, including gullies, pipework, culverts and other critical infrastructure, to be renewed and repaired across the county. Over time, this proactive approach will improve resilience, helping to reduce the frequency and severity of flooding incidents and better protect communities from the impacts of severe weather.

These investments are intended to build on and continue to improve the council's ability to keep roads operational, respond to severe weather incidents and support communities during periods of disruption.

Ongoing support for local councils

Although PEAS is ending, Wiltshire Council will continue to provide:

- Advice and guidance on community resilience planning
- Procurement support
- Information on sourcing and maintaining resilience equipment
- Assistance in developing local emergency arrangements

The council's intention is for town and parish councils to develop locally appropriate solutions while benefiting from wider county-wide resilience investment.

Collectively, these measures represent a significant enhancement of Wiltshire Council's ability to support communities before, during and after severe weather and emergency events.

More information

More information about weather events and flooding can be found at [Overview - Wiltshire Council](#)

For further information or if you have any specific questions, please email adrian.hampton@wiltshire.gov.uk