



## **STURMINSTER NEWTON TOWN COUNCIL**

### **Snow and Ice Policy and Procedures**

#### **1. Purpose**

To provide staff and members of the public with a clear statement of the measures that will be taken by the Town Council in the event of snow and ice conditions occurring in the Sturminster Newton area. The Town Councils objective is to use the resources available to assist in the continuance of safe access to businesses and facilities.

#### **2. Introduction**

Dorset County Council is the Highway Authority for public roads. This means Roadways and pavements in Sturminster Newton.

The County Council have a duty to ensure safe passage along a road is not endangered by snow or ice so far as is reasonably practicable.

To comply with this duty, roads are gritted to help prevent or remove ice and ploughed to clear snow.

Unfortunately, due to the severe winter weather encountered in the last few years there are area's which the County Council cannot access or fit into their priority schedule.

The Town Council has no responsibility in this we have approved a limited budget but are not obliged for this type of operation but it will carry out snow and ice clearance duties as far as is reasonably practicable

Sturminster Newton Town Council is working with Dorset County Council, to form a snow/ice clearing policy to make the Town a safer place during our cold winters.

Communication between Dorset County Council and the Town Council is vital to achieve the clearance of snow and ice from pavements, car parks and other accessible sites which are of high priority. Working closely together a greater area may be covered and therefore minimise the risk of accidents and material waste. North Dorset District Council have agreed with Dorset County Council to clear the station road car park.

A web link is available to give information to the public on our website.

#### **3. Town Council Resources**

In very severe weather conditions, the Head Groundsman will supply the Town Clerk with regular updates to allow timely decisions to be made concerning the limiting or closing of any services or facilities.

Contact between Sturminster Newton Town Council and Dorset County Council will be established in serious conditions to communicate on badly affected areas or areas which extra resources are necessary.

Overall control of day to day decisions on Town Council resources will be by the Head Groundsman.

The Head Groundsman will be responsible for work prioritisation and staff organisation, making available suitable equipment and materials, stock check materials and order as necessary to ensure cover seven days a week if necessary.

#### **4. Snow and Ice Procedure**

If bad weather conditions are anticipated, the Town Clerk and the Head Groundsman will make a decision whether or not to grit the Town Centre. Gritting will either be done by asking staff to stay after their normal working day finishes or to come in early prior to their normal starting time.

The environmental conditions, either current or predicted, can be categorised as follows:

**Category 1** – Heavy snow, complete coverage of all surfaces, freezing

**Category 2** – Heavy snow, complete coverage of all surfaces

**Category 3** – Snow, light coverage, freezing conditions

**Category 4** – Heavy frost, all surfaces frozen

**Category 5** – Light frost (No response)

**Category 6** – Freak changes in weather involving hail, ice, snow and blizzards

In the case of **Categories 1 / 2**, all Grounds staff should be alerted by the Town Clerk and will be expected to give assistance in the operation under the direction of the Head Groundsman.

Where possible, staff will be asked to work after their normal working hours and/or attend work prior to 8.00am, or be invited to work weekends. Normal arrangements for additional hours/overtime will apply.

In the case of **Categories 3 to 5**, the level of response will be determined by the Town Clerk based on need and resources available.

In all cases, when the operation is underway the Head Groundsman will update the Town Clerk at regular intervals as to the situation and progress.

Daily Assessments will be made by the Head Groundsman and or the Town Clerk throughout the operation and teams will only be disbanded when it is deemed that the situation has been dealt with and the Town is in a safe condition.

In the case of prolonged bad weather, the Head Groundsman and Town Clerk will meet to discuss plans for the following day(s) and Grounds staff will be informed accordingly.

Rock salt will be kept in stock at Sturminster Storage until alternative site is sourced and will go round and fill them up there after.

Usage of salt will be recorded in the form of a Log Book, which will give date, location, amount and signed by the member of staff once authorisation has been given by the Town Clerk or Head Groundsman.

Keeping records will not just show where it all goes, but also help estimations on the amount of salt required each winter.

We can use these records to identify areas which require grit bins to be topped up with the expectation that Dorset County Council will provide the grit/salt. Extra bins to be placed and to keep a check on areas which are over using the supply.

The corrosive nature of salt makes careful cleaning and maintenance of the vehicles and equipment essential.

## **5. Snow Clearance**

A light covering of snow will be dispersed by spreading salt. However, if the snow is deep, then it will need to be cleared away before the salt procedure can begin. This should be done with snow shovels that will be located at the Workshops and Station Rd Toilets store. The routes to be cleared as priority are highlighted red on the town centre map which is included in this document as well as displayed in the workshop. For larger areas a snow plough may be required.

When clearing snow, it is impractical to clear the whole path or road. On the pathways, at least 1m wide should be cleared and, on roads, bends and junctions should be given priority. The moving traffic will transfer the salt onto the rest of the surface. The stopping of traffic flow should be avoided unless deemed too dangerous to continue.

## **6. Priority Areas**

When assessments are made on the Town before/after snow and ice, decisions will be made on prioritising area's which are deemed high priority in relation to public safety.

Sturminster Newton is split into 4 Zones -

Zone 1 – Red

Zone 2 – Yellow

Zone 3 – Purple

Zone 4 – Blue

Zone 1 is the Town Centre; this is of high priority as it's the busiest part of the Town. Shops, car parks, Schools and the Medical Centre must be attended to before work starts on other areas.

Particular attention must be made to sloped areas and narrow paths close to the road.

Once the Town Clerk or Head Groundsman deems Zone 1 Safe, then Zones 2 – 4 can be attended to.

(Please refer to map)

## **7. Methods for Salt Distribution**

### **a. Method 1: Spreading by hand**

This is done by filling a bucket with grit/salt and spreading on pathways with a trowel or scoop. To avoid an uneven spread, salt should be thrown from about waist height with an under arm bowling action. If it is spread by flicking it, it can end up in spots without clearing a good amount of the surface.

Spreading salt with bare hands should be avoided even if wearing gloves.

Although rock salt is non - toxic, it is very abrasive and will damage skin.

Staff must be aware that if bags of salt are being used, they are heavy to handle so safe lifting and handling procedures should be used. (See risk assessment – Manual Handling)

### **7.2. Method 2: Use of a Mechanical Spreader**

This can be done by a pedestrian spreader or a tractor mounted spreader.

#### **2.1. Pedestrian Spreader**

To operate, fill hopper with grit/salt, open the shutter and push if the salt stops running, close shutter and shake hopper, re-open shutter and continue. Repeat procedure until area is complete. This should only be used on small areas.

## **2.2. Tractor Mounted Spreader**

This should only be used by a suitably trained person. The principle and procedure are the same as above but on a larger scale. This should only be used on roads and car parks. The grounds staff will be trained in this operation.

### **8. Materials used**

All coarse grade rock salt used on the highway by Dorset County Council for winter service purposes is purchased by annual tender and is supplied to comply with BS3247 (Salt for spreading on highways for winter maintenance). English mineral rock salt complying with the current BS3247 is treated with Sodium Ferrocyanide as an anti-caking agent. To be most effective, the treatment should be applied before either ice forms or snow settles.

It is accepted practice that the following rates of spread be used when treating carriageways:

- **Precautionary salting** **15 and 20 gm/sq.m**
- **Treatment of ice and snow**  
**Plough where applicable and salt** **20-40 gm/sq.m**

It is advisable that for planned actions, salt is never spread at a rate greater than 40gm/sq.m.

#### **NOTE:**

Sustained low temperatures are rare in England. For each degree drop below 5<sup>0</sup>C the amount of salt needed to maintain the equivalent melting effect increases by about 14 gm/sq.m.

Salt will melt ice and snow at temperatures as low as -21<sup>0</sup> C but below -10<sup>0</sup>C the amount needed increases to become environmentally and economically undesirable.

Melt water from thawing accumulations of snow on roads or verges, can spread over the carriageway and then re-freeze, particularly at night.

Extra treatment may be needed and potential hazards such as these should be closely monitored.

Rock salt will quickly rot or make rusty all the tools and equipment used so it is important to clean tools properly before storing.

Materials and equipment can be located at Ricketts Lane Workshops.

Low salt stock or equipment should be reported to the Town Clerk in the absence of the Head Groundsman.

## **9. Protective Clothing**

Gloves and wet weather gear should be worn where possible, although if manually spreading salt, it is quite possible to get very hot. Please ensure you put clothing back on when you stop moving. If using machinery, protective safety footwear must be worn.

## **10. Health and Safety**

All works carried out by Town Council staff must be done so in a safe working manner. Particular attention must be taken while working alongside roads, Hi-Vis clothing must be worn and signs put out where appropriate.

The safety of staff and members of the public must be taken in to account before any works are started, and where appropriate risk assessments must be completed.

Staff should be trained in house or by another body, in the safe clearance of snow and ice.

Work should be carried out in teams of 2 minimum; communication equipment should be carried at all times.

Anything considered to be dangerous or unclear, must be reported to either the Head Groundsman or Town Clerk.

## **11. Grit Bins**

At present the Town has 17 grit bins.

2 Bins at Broad Oak

1 Bin at Station Rd Car Park

1 Bin at Rabin Hill

1 Bin at Honeymead Lane

1 Bin at Green Close

1 Bin at Stalbridge Lane

1 Bin at The Exchange Car Park (1 more to be added this year)

1 Bin at Alder Road

1 Bin at Penny Street

1 Bin at Filbridge Rise (Allotments)

1 Bin at Bath Road (Junction of Brinsley and the Library)

1 Bin at Sturminster Newton Museum

1 Bin at Market Place

1 Bin at Honeymead Lane (Junction at Manston Road)

1 Bin at Honeymead Lane (Sturminster Newton High School)

1 Bin at Drovers

1 Bin at Glue Hill

Each bin contains between 125kg and 200kg of grit/salt.

Grit bins need to be checked regularly as members of the public have access to these as well as Town Council staff.

Misused or damaged grit bins must be reported to Town Clerk or Head Groundsman.

## **12. Contact Details**

**Town Clerk:** Catherine Hubbard

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**Head Groundsman:** Adam Dodson

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**Adam Dodson (Head Groundsman)**