

Watlington Parish Council

Winter Plan

The focus of this Winter Plan is on maintaining access to the town and ensuring that people can move safely about the main areas.

The Parish Council has no salting authority over roads but will do what we can with the limited resources available to ensure that pedestrian access to the core shopping areas is kept clear. Once the core has been made safe a wider area such as medical facilities, primary school & library may be considered for treatment if manpower and supplies suffice.

Government [guidelines](#) state that you can clear snow and ice from pavements yourself. It is unlikely that you'll be sued or held responsible if someone is injured on a path or pavement if you've cleared it carefully. A snow-clearer nonetheless does have a duty to clear with reasonable care so as not to create a new and worse risk.

It is the responsibility of all property owners to ensure safe walking conditions over their own property between pavement and front door before opening their doors to the public. We hope that friends and neighbours will all rally round to help out vulnerable residents with path-clearing and checks on their well-being; remember, paths and drives are your own responsibility.

The plan, in essence, is that nobody in the Parish should feel isolated or abandoned in the event of severe winter weather, especially through snow or ice. Residents who are likely to need assistance should contact the Parish Office to register for contact in severe weather.

The Parish Council has a Parish Emergency Plan accessible to the emergency services and to individuals who can provide assistance if necessary, which contains contact details and other important information. This Plan is not publically available to protect personal information.

It is important to remember that in an "emergency" it is the Emergency Services (Police, Fire Ambulance) who are your primary guaranteed responder, but this Winter Plan enables the Parish Council to be able to supplement and help out on a day-by-day basis.

Priority Routes

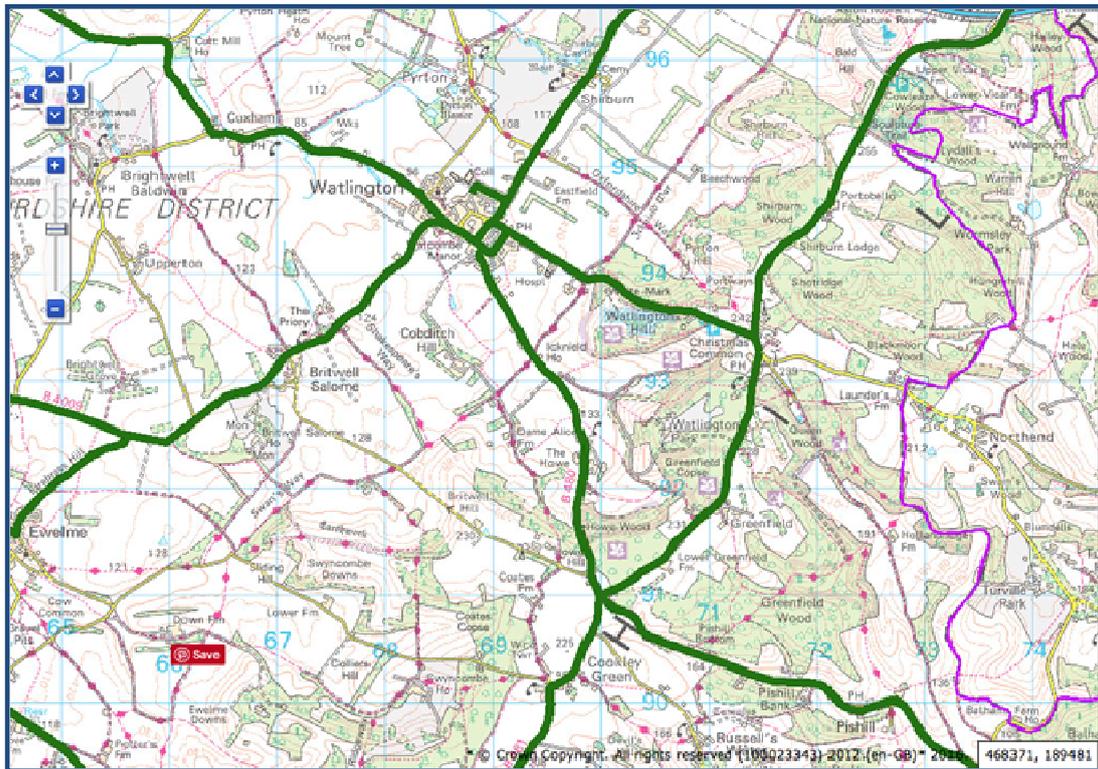
The County Council is responsible keeping the priority routes open, as shown in green on the map below, in accordance with the processes detailed on their [website](#). The priority routes predominantly through routes. The individual streets in town gritted by the county are:

- Cuxham Road, Watlington
- Brook Street, Watlington
- Couching Street, Watlington
- Shirburn Street, Watlington
- Hill Road, Watlington
- Ingham Lane, Watlington
- Britwell Road, Watlington
- Spring Lane, Watlington
- Howe Road, Watlington
- Love Lane, Watlington

and the local roads covered are:

- B480 for Stonor or Cuxham
- B4009 for Lewknor or Benson
- B481 for Nettlebed
- the unnumbered road from the B481 through Christmas Common to the A40

These routes maintain vehicle access to the schools on Love Lane, shops and services on Couching Street/Shirburn Street and medical centre on Hill Road. None of the side streets in town are gritted by the county, making access/egress for all drivers difficult after heavy snow.



Core Areas

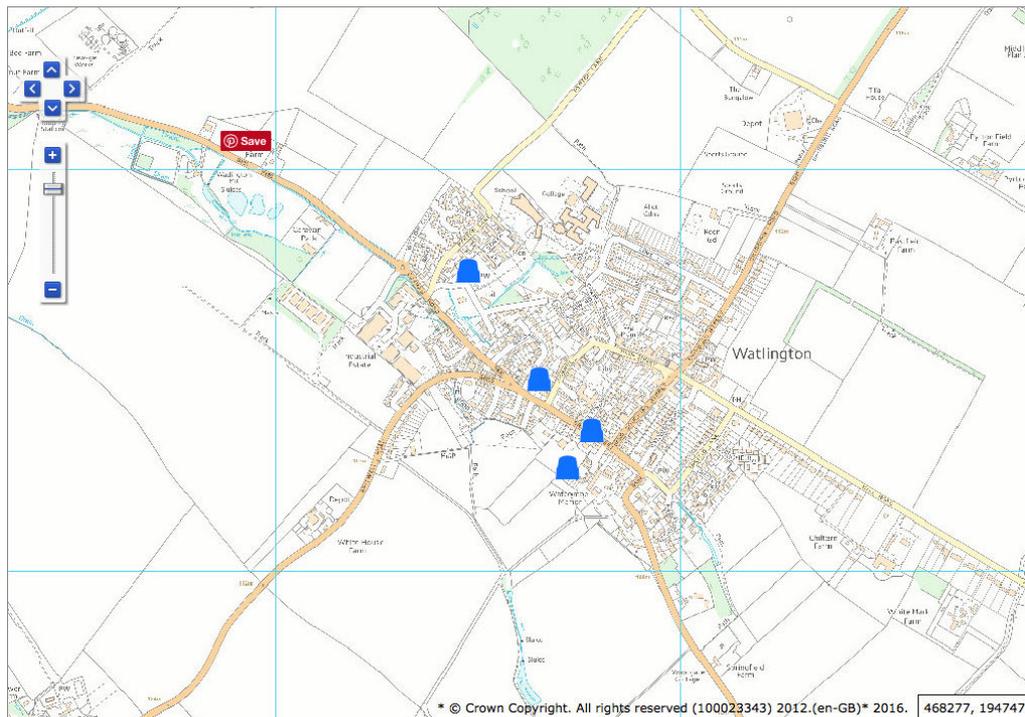
The core areas in town for pedestrian access are listed below and will be given priority in any pavement gritting carried out by the Parish Council. These core areas will be regularly reviewed and updated as part of the annual review of this Winter Plan.

- High Street
- Area around the Town Hall and in Couching St (access to pharmacy and Co-op)
- Hill Road Car Park
- Gorwell (access to the fire station)
- Old School Place (access to the Parish Office only)
- Church Street (access to the public conveniences only)

Grit Bins

Grit bins are provided for residents to use on public roads and pavements and not for use on private driveways. The bins have been sited in their location for a specific reason. It could be a criminal offence for it to be used for other than its intended use. If you believe grit is being stolen from a bin please take a note of the registration and description of the vehicle and let the local police know on their non emergency number 101.

Location of grit bins



Self-help guidance

Oxfordshire County Council provide a comprehensive [snow guide](#) and we have provided some additional guidance on general "Dos" and "Don'ts" when clearing snow and ice yourself.

Do	Don't
Move snow to a porous surface such as a grass verge or garden	Use water to melt snow and ice, if there is a risk it will refreeze <i>and turn to black ice</i>
Use salt if possible - it will melt the ice or snow and stop it from refreezing overnight (but don't use the salt from salting bins as this is used to keep roads clear)	Move snow to a location where it will create another risk e.g. another part of the pavement, road or where people are likely to walk
Use ash and sand if you don't have enough salt - it will provide grip underfoot	Use excessive salt, grit or other materials so as to create a new or worse risk once the snow / ice has melted
Spread salt/grit evenly and at an appropriate spread rate	Use the salt from salting bins as this is used to keep roads clear
Clear any excess salt or grit once the snow or ice has melted	Park or abandon cars on pavements so pedestrians are forced to walk in the road
Do it early in the day - it's easier to move fresh, loose snow	
Pay extra attention when clearing steps and steep pathways - using more salt may help	
Take care not to over-exert yourself	

Winter Preparedness at Home

- If you have elderly or disabled neighbours discuss emergency help arrangements with them before the onset of bad weather

- Make sure you have reasonable stocks of food in the house
- Arrangements for school closures are decided by the relevant head teacher. The best place to get the most up to date information on school, and school bus, emergency planning arrangements is on the relevant school's website.
 - Watlington Primary School <http://www.watlington.oxon.sch.uk>
 - Icknield Community College <http://www.icknield.oxon.sch.uk>
 - Use Watlington Volunteer Drivers to get to hospital appointments – Phone 07765154120

Communications

The Parish Council will endeavour to keep residents informed of disruption to services, such as buses and refuse collection, on Parish Council noticeboards, website and Facebook page.

The Parish Emergency Plan contains details of communication channels in the event of an emergency. Contact the Parish Office or a Parish Councillor if you require assistance.

Calling Winter Volunteers

The Council is always seeking volunteers who are at the ready to help clear snow and ice from the pavements. If you are able to help or know of anyone who would be interested in joining the scheme, please contact the Parish Office for further information:

Alternatively, if you own a 4x4 vehicle and would be prepared to help if needed, perhaps taking an elderly person to hospital, please contact the Parish Office with your details so we can add you to our list of people to contact in an emergency.