



Councillor Matt Furniss  
Cabinet Member for Highways, Transport and Economic Growth  
Surrey County Council  
11 Cockshot Hill  
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17 February 2026

Dear Cllr Matt Furniss,

I am writing in both my capacity as the Member of Parliament for Surrey Heath, and as a daily commuter and road user, regarding the serious concerns many residents have raised with me about potholes, road safety, and the quality and durability of recent repairs across Surrey.

Over recent weeks – following prolonged rainfall and flooding – I have received a sharp rise in correspondence about worsening road conditions across Surrey Heath, including on key routes such as the A322 and A30. Residents are increasingly clear that the road network is deteriorating faster than it is being maintained, and that the current approach is failing to keep pace with the rate of decline.

Surrey Heath has high levels of car dependency, averaging 1.7 cars per household<sup>1</sup>, and many residents have limited practical alternatives for commuting, school runs, caring responsibilities, or simply getting to work safely and reliably. In that context, the condition of the road network is not a peripheral issue. It is core infrastructure. It directly affects public safety, household finances, and public confidence in Surrey County Council's ability to deliver basic services.

To quantify the scale of concern, I ran a short public survey over just one week. It received 1,635 responses. That level of engagement in such a short window is itself an indication of how widespread frustration has become.

The findings are stark:

- 96% of respondents described the overall condition of local roads as “poor” or “very poor.”
- 96.3% said road conditions have become “worse” or “much worse” since the start of the current council term in 2021.
- 97.5% said they are “very” or “extremely concerned” about road conditions in daily life.
- 80.5% cited road safety concerns or near misses, including drivers swerving to avoid severe potholes and in some cases crossing the centre line.
- 50.7% reported vehicle damage or repair costs linked directly to road defects – including tyres, wheel alignment, and suspension damage.

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<sup>1</sup> [Surrey County Council – Local Transport Plan \(LTP4\)](#)

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These are not marginal numbers. They indicate a near-total collapse in public confidence and a clear sense among residents that Surrey County Council is not meeting the standard they have a right to expect.

What is especially concerning is the extent to which residents describe being forced to “drive differently” because of potholes – scanning the road surface in dark or wet conditions, braking sharply, swerving around defects, and losing attention from normal hazard awareness. That is a serious and avoidable road safety issue, particularly on routes used heavily by families, school traffic, cyclists and pedestrians.

The survey also highlights deep dissatisfaction with responsiveness and repair quality. When asked about confidence that potholes are dealt with promptly and to a sufficient standard, 91.8% said they were “not very confident” or “not at all confident.” Constituents repeatedly describe a cycle of short-life patch repairs, rapid deterioration, and repeated interventions at the same locations. Residents are also deeply frustrated that, when contractors attend a site, it is not uncommon for only one of several potholes in the same location to be repaired, leaving adjacent defects untouched. That approach is plainly inefficient, increases repeat disruption, and is likely to be more costly over time.

At a time when many households are under severe cost-of-living pressure, it is simply not acceptable for residents to be routinely paying for avoidable vehicle repairs caused by road defects that have been repeatedly reported, repeatedly patched, and repeatedly left to fail again.

Finally, the survey points to avoidable barriers in the reporting system. While many residents do report defects, 23.1% said they were not aware of how to report a pothole, and a further 48.9% described the reporting process as only “fairly clear” or “neither clear nor unclear.” Given how much Surrey County Council relies on public reporting to target interventions, this is a basic communications and accessibility failure.

In light of these findings, I would be grateful for a clear response to the following:

- **Proactive identification and urgent repair:** What immediate steps is Surrey County Council taking to proactively increase the identification, prioritisation and repair of potholes across Surrey’s road network, including inspection frequency, rapid-response capacity, and clear timescales for intervention on the most heavily used routes?
- **Repair quality, inspection and accountability:** What engineering standards are applied to pothole repairs, what post-repair inspection regime is in place, and what KPIs are used to monitor repair durability, repeat failure rates, and rework at the same locations?
- **Contractors, contractual enforcement and value for money:** Which contractors are currently responsible for pothole repairs in Surrey Heath, what contractual performance standards and warranty periods apply, and what mechanisms are being used to enforce

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accountability when repairs fail prematurely – including financial clawback, remedial work requirements, or penalties – in order to protect public funds?

- **Flood resilience and long-term durability:** What practical measures are being taken to improve resilience to persistent rainfall and flooding, including drainage performance and surface integrity, on key arterial roads in Surrey Heath?
- **Reporting accessibility and public awareness:** What specific steps will Surrey County Council take to make pothole reporting clearer, easier, and more widely understood across the county?

Given the strength of feeling locally, I would welcome a meeting with you and local councillors at the earliest opportunity. Residents in Surrey Heath want more than reassurance: they want to see a credible plan, clear standards, and evidence that the current cycle of repeated failure is being broken.

Thank you for your time. I look forward to your prompt response.

Yours sincerely,

Dr Al Pinkerton MP  
Member of Parliament for Surrey Heath