

Plea to fix dangerously decaying Sleaf roads

LOCHABER TIMES News Feb 6, 2025 by Jamie Wills

Pleas have been made to the Highland Council to fix decaying rural roads in southern Skye, where potholes and erosion have been labelled 'absolutely critical and potentially dangerous' by the local community council.



Sleaf Community Council has said the roads in the south of Skye are becoming dangerous to drive on. Photograph: Sleaf Community Council



One of the potholes that is causing serious issues for the community. Photograph: Sleaf Community Council.

Sleaf Community Council (SCC) has highlighted the dangers and lack of recent investment in its roads prior to the Highland Council's upcoming Isle of Skye and Raasay Committee (ISRC) meeting.

Photographs collected by SCC from local residents show roads strewn with potholes and weathered edges.

"Everyone's eyes are on the A roads, but the problem we've got is the roads off them where we live," said SCC Chairman Dr Andy Williamson.

"You're talking 10 centimetre deep chunks out of the middle of the road. But instead of resurfacing, they're patching. Cumulatively, year on year, it's getting worse.

"When cars are concentrating on potholes and swerving everywhere, one of them is going to come off the road, or they're going to take out a cyclist or a pedestrian, or the kids walking to school. Do we have to wait for that to happen?"

Residents are also suffering economic consequences, Dr Williamson said, noting one person had already had three windscreens replaced, while accelerated wear and tear is not claimable on most insurance plans.

He added that SCC appreciated that budgets were tight at council level, and Sleaf is not unique in suffering poor roads, but that it had to raise its concerns because 'it's going from a problem to a crisis, and we're trying to highlight that before it becomes a serious crisis'.



Angus MacDonald MP has called for immediate action to deal with the problem.

MP for Inverness, Skye, and West Ross-shire Angus MacDonald joined the calls for immediate action to address the problem.

"It's not just inconvenient to drive over potholes - it's downright dangerous. Every day, residents in these communities face serious risks of injury. The answer isn't endless patching; it's proper funding, and it's needed now," Mr MacDonald said.

"The Isle of Skye is a global tourist destination, with an extraordinary number of vehicles using our roads every year. Despite this, we are not provided with the additional funding needed to maintain our infrastructure and handle the higher-than-average traffic levels. Residents are left to bear the brunt of the damage while being overlooked in funding allocations."

The ISRC is due to meet on Monday February 17, at which a proposed prioritised area roads capital programme is to be discussed by its members.

SCC is hoping not only that resources are granted but that communication improves so any solution includes local input.

SCC has been critical of both the Highland Council and Eilean a' Cheò councillor Ruaridh Stewart for failing to respond to its previous communications.

"We're not expecting to solve everything, but we need it to be dramatically improved. And we need our community to feel like it is being listened to as well. We want to be part of that solution," Dr Williamson said.

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