



Richard Foord

Fighting for Honiton & Sidmouth

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Cllr James McInnes
Devon County Council
County Hall
EX2 4QD

Dear James,

I am writing to you regarding the state of Devon's crumbling road network. I urge you to make road repairs a top priority for your administration.

Road maintenance is one of the key issues that local residents raise with me every week. Given that you are the designate leader of Devon County Council – which is responsible for our roads – I wanted to raise their concerns with you.

Devon's roads have been slipping into a state of chronic disrepair for several years. Communities across our countryside have seen the number of potholes on the road multiply, as our roads become ever more pock-marked and difficult to navigate.

Potholes are not only disruptive; they are also dangerous. Striking a pothole can cause hundreds of pounds of damage to someone's car or cause them to have to swerve out of the way – putting pedestrians, cyclists, and other drivers at risk of a collision.

Little wonder that the value of pothole compensation claims filed has ballooned to a staggering £1million in just eight months. This is a result of the 'managed decline' of several roads that is being overseen by Devon County Council.

Without an urgent change of course, this will only get worse.

Your predecessor, Cllr John Hart, himself acknowledged that the situation was unacceptable and whilst efforts were made to redirect resources to meet this challenge, they have proven woefully insufficient.

If anything, people have only seen our roads be further eroding away before us.

This is a result of years of cuts to Local Authority budgets from this Conservative Government in Westminster. They have slashed the spending power of councils, causing the almost £200 million backlog of road repairs here in Devon.

The £12 million for repairs that was announced recently falls well short of what is needed, something that you yourself recognised in a recent media interview.

As the Leader of Devon County Council, it is your job to speak up for residents across our county and ensure we get the funding we need to properly fix our roads. This is something I hope you will be vocal about, and publicly commit to being the Council's priority.

Recent years have shown that Ministers are not committed to seriously tackling the issue. They don't get out of Westminster enough and see too much of its smooth surfaces. They have little idea of the experience of those of us who rely on our rural roads.

As you take up the top job in local government in Devon, you will have the chance to shake things up. I hope you will work with me to force action from Ministers and ensure that people don't have to drive on roads that are plagued with potholes.

I look forward to your reply and hope you will agree that it's time for Devon County Council to demand better from the Government.

Kind regards,



Richard Foord