



**INSTITUTE OF
HIGHWAY
ENGINEERS**

May 1, 2025, Local Election Briefing

Highway Maintenance

Local elections are taking place on Thursday 1 May 2025 and will shape the priorities and funding for highways and maintenance across key local authorities. Decisions on local roads, maintenance funding, pothole repairs, and infrastructure investment fall under the jurisdiction of local councils and Mayoral Combined Authorities. These elections will decide who has control over budgets and infrastructure planning.

The Local Elections will take place in 24 of England's 317 councils and are made up of:

- 14 county councils
- Eight unitary authorities
- One metropolitan district
- The Isles of Scilly, which has a unique governance structure.

Key Considerations

- Local highways are a critical public asset: England's local road network spans over 185,000 miles, representing 97% of the road network.
- In 2023/24, the backlog of road repairs in England was estimated at over £14 billion, with many authorities struggling to meet basic maintenance needs.
- The Department for Transport (DfT) provides an annual Highways Maintenance Block and Pothole Fund, but local discretion determines how funds are prioritised.
- Combined Authorities with transport powers can direct City Region Sustainable Transport Settlements (CRSTS) and devolution funds toward road upgrades, resurfacing schemes, and new infrastructure.

Spotlight on Key Areas Up for Election

Cambridgeshire

Authority budget of £660 million.

Paul Bristow (Conservative):

- Scrapping of Cambridge congestion charge
- A10, A14 and M11 upgrades
- Prioritise resurfacing and pothole repair across Peterborough and market towns

Ryan Coogan (Reform UK):

- “Great East Road” initiative for major trunk upgrades
- Freeze on new active travel schemes
- Reopen closed local roads and reduce parking restrictions

Greater Lincolnshire

First mayoral election, with £720 million in devolved funding.

Andrea Jenkyns (Reform UK):

- Prioritise rural roads and strategic routes: A15, A16, A52, A17
- Endorse traditional road investment, opposing Net Zero road pricing
- Calls for “back to basics” – resurfacing, drainage, and pothole filling

Rob Waltham (Conservative):

- Strategic upgrades to A46, A16 and A15
- Connectivity for market towns
- Commitments to rural maintenance and winter resilience

Hull & East Yorkshire

New Combined Authority with £13.3 million annually.

Luke Campbell (Reform UK):

- Broad focus on “improving roads” and infrastructure uplift
- No detailed manifesto, but emphasis on business-led investment in highways

Mike Ross (Liberal Democrats):

- Commit to routine maintenance improvements
- Integration of transport investment with green infrastructure
- Promote use of recycled materials in road surfacing

West of England

Budget of £380 million including CRSTS funding.

Mary Page (Green Party):

- Major expansion of local rail and bus networks
- Support for low-traffic neighbourhoods and green streetscapes
- Shift in highways strategy from car-centric to sustainable mode prioritisation

Helen Goodwin (Labour):

- Targeted road upgrades where congestion is highest
- Focus on pothole repair and road safety in urban centres
- Expand road safety audits and asset condition monitoring



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Documents of reference

- <https://committees.parliament.uk/publications/46261/documents/232494/default/>
- <https://www.asphaltuk.org/alarm-survey-page/>
- [https://researchbriefings.files.parliament.uk/documents/CBP-9975/CBP-9975.pdf#:~:text=Funding%20for%20the%20maintenance%20of%20local%20roads,their%20road%20networks%20to%20an%20adequate%20standard.&text=This%20is%20funded%20by%20the%20Department%20for,Communities%20\(DLUHC\)%20through%20the%20revenue%20support%20grant.](https://researchbriefings.files.parliament.uk/documents/CBP-9975/CBP-9975.pdf#:~:text=Funding%20for%20the%20maintenance%20of%20local%20roads,their%20road%20networks%20to%20an%20adequate%20standard.&text=This%20is%20funded%20by%20the%20Department%20for,Communities%20(DLUHC)%20through%20the%20revenue%20support%20grant.)
- <https://www.andrea4mayor.co.uk>
- <https://www.robwaltham.uk>
- <https://yougov.co.uk/politics/articles/52069-combined-authority-mayoral-elections-2025-where-does-voting-intention-stand>
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- <https://www.instituteforgovernment.org.uk/explainer/local-and-mayoral-elections-2025>
- <https://www.westofengland-ca.gov.uk/news/candidates-confirmed-for-1-may-election/>
- <https://whocanivotefor.co.uk/elections/>
- <https://media.rac.co.uk/rac-pothole-breakdowns-double-in-first-three-months-of-2025>

If you have any questions on this briefing document, please contact the Institute of Highway Engineers Policy and Engagement Officer Cyrena Lafronte at

Cyrena.Lafronte@theihe.org