

Winter Gritting Transcript

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2QuxXsQY20g&feature=youtu.be>

[Text: Mark Readman, Highways Services Manager]

[Mark is stood in front of a pile of gritting salt]

Mark Readman: Our winter service starts in October every year and it goes through to April the following year.

[Various footage of the gritting operations]

During this time we monitor the weather forecast very closely, this gives us the opportunity to react to any snow events or ice events. It gives us chance to prepare and get all of our operations in place.

[Text: Neil Summerson, Highways Contracts Manager]

[Neil is sat in an office with weather maps behind him]

Neil Summerson: When we make our decisions of which routes to treat we require reliable information. That information is taken from our ice alert stations which are spread around the county.

[Video footage of the ice station monitoring the weather and maps]

The ice alert stations provide us with real time information and as well as that we have forecasted information that's updated every six hours.

[Various footage of the gritting depot, preparing for spreading and also gritters out on the roads]

We have a dedicated team of drivers, 75 in total. The guys all work for Durham County Council, they work on a 3 shift rota; AM, PM and standby. We also have a full provision of sub contractor trailer gritter drivers who also support the winter maintenance service.

[Text: Gary Lawson, Gritter Driver]

[Gary is stood in front of a yellow gritter outside of a depot]

Gary Lawson: I've worked here since 1983, been involved in the gritting since 1985.

[Various footage of getting the gritters ready and then out on the roads]

A typical day, yeah the alarm clock goes off half past three, four o'clock ish, cup of coffee, a bite, set away into work, get some instructions, quick check around the gritter, load up to the routes your going to do and then start your route and drive round your route yeah.

It's very quite til about seven o'clock, that's when most people are getting up and about and we're usually heading back into the yard finished for them.

[Neil is sat in an office with weather maps behind him]

Neil Summerson: We have people on 24 hour standby and they are reliable to be able to respond within 1 hour if there's any sudden changes to the forecast.

[Various shots of the county with gritters out on the road]

Mark: In total we have 38 routes countywide. We have 17000 kilometres of priority one network and that is treated in most events. That consists of the A and B class rounds in the main. Each route is treated in two and a half hours.

[Neil is sat in an office with weather maps behind him]

Neil: We have our Durham County Council website which is linked to the gritting manager and in there at lunchtime we upload the information and the map goes purple if we have a pre salt on and then 15 minute delay after the vehicles started if we are treating. The priority one network then goes green after the vehicles have driven past the GPS tracking point.

[Various shots of the different types of gritters]

Mark: In total we have 37 power gritters, 33 trailer gritters. We also have 6 snow blowers.

[Various images and footage of salt bins in the county being used and filled up]

County wide we have 2600 salt bins, these are strategically placed for self help during bad weather and some of the unclassified and housing estate roads you can help yourself to the salt in those bins and treat your own access roads. These bins are replenished regularly during the winter season, they are filled prior to the season but we have a team replenishing and filling the bins up on a regular basis.

To have your bin replenished you can go online to find out the details and report your bin online.

[Text: www.durham.gov.uk/winterinfo]

[Text: Find out more]