



DEVON COUNTY COUNCIL

Environment Directorate

Devon's Bridge Strategy

Contact your Local service Group

Devon's Bridge Strategy

The County Council's strategy for bridge maintenance gives priority for assessment and strengthening to bridges on the higher category routes within the freight strategy, together with those bridges on the other routes which are considered to be at greatest risk from the increased loading criteria, taking account of environmental considerations. It is the intention that all Principal Road bridges should be capable of meeting the 40 tonne vehicle loading requirements without the need for any imposed restriction and therefore some strengthening or replacement will be required.

On non Principal Roads the strategy takes account of the importance of the route within the Devon Road Network and the commercial, industrial and tourist economy and access to amenity and recreational facilities, including local communities and farms. Rural areas depend on adequate access but sometimes, on the more minor routes, a permanent traffic restriction may be imposed in lieu of strengthening. This only happens following local consultation with parish councils, bus and freight operator's, and local businesses etc., and where a suitable alternative route is available. A similar strategy is adopted for the maintenance of retaining walls.

There is on-going consultation with Railtrack, and other owners where appropriate, with regard to the assessment and strengthening of bridges not in the County Council's ownership.

The Programme of work on bridges will eventually move away from assessment, strengthening and rebuilding to the rehabilitation of those structures that, whilst passing the assessment, still need work on them to prolong their life. The programme will also have to increasingly address the new challenges which Devon's network is facing from climate change, e.g. increased frequency of flooding.