

# Press Release

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## For Immediate Release

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## MAJOR WORK S TO IMPROVE ISLAND ROADS

A MASSIVE programme of work to improve the quality of Island roads is to be carried out by the Isle of Wight Council in the coming year.

The 2008/09 work will be the first stage of a three-year programme to resurface Island roads in advance of the Private Finance Initiative that will see unprecedented investment to bring the rest of the Island's highways network up to standard from 2011.

Highways across the Island will be resurfaced and improved in the coming year in a schedule compiled after taking into account criteria including the measured skid resistance and the accident records of the various stretches.

The work will cost around £5 million - including an extra £1.75 million of extra money allocated this year to address what is a clear priority for residents.

The news comes as the IW Council also looks to strengthen its engineering services department with a re-organisation of - and some new key appointments in - the highways section.

These plans are designed to ensure the council's highways section is able to make most effective and efficient use of the recently announced and ongoing investment.

Cllr Tim Hunter-Henderson, IW Council cabinet member for environment and transport, said the £5 million programme demonstrated the authority was not prepared to wait for the £325 million PFI money before it began to address the issue of the Island's roads.

"The PFI is fantastic news and will make a tremendous difference to the entire road network. Nevertheless we realise that there are stretches of Island roads that need attention now and that is why we are carrying out this extensive work this year and over the next two years.

"This level of investment will begin to make a real difference and all road users will benefit not just motorists but cyclists as well. It is also important for the Island's tourism industry that roads are of a good standard.

"This is a real commitment to improving the quality of our highways."

### **Notes for editors**

A full list of the works is available on request.