



Cyngor Bwrdeistref Sirol

Blaenau Gwent

County Borough Council

DX: 43956 Ebbw Vale

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Our Ref./Ein Cyf

Your Ref./Eich Cyf

Contact:/Cysylltwch â

Date 6th July 2021

Caroline Saunders
Senior Coroner for Gwent
Gwent Coroner Services
The Civic Centre
Godfrey Road
Newport
NP20 4RU

Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council
Central Depot
Barleyfield Ind. Est.
Brynmawr
NP23 4YF

Dear Ms Saunders

Re: Response to Senior Coroners Report – Lynne Pamela Lawrence 17th May 2021

I write in response to a Regulation 28 report provided by Caroline Saunders – Senior Coroner for the area of Gwent following an investigation that was opened on the 13th October 2020 into the death of Lynne Pamela Lawrence.

During the course of the inquest, evidence revealed matters giving rise to concern in relation to the footway condition outside Alma Street, Brynmawr and although the Coroner could not conclude the unevenness of the pavement caused the fall it is considered to be a factor which could put people's lives at risk.

Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council - Highway Authority have investigated this matter and considered the Coroners opinion and I would advise as follows: -

“As a Highway Authority the council has a duty to meet the requirements of the following legislation: The Highway Act 1980: this places a duty upon Highway Authorities to maintain highways, maintainable at public expense, and to keep them safe for public use”.

To assist authorities in meeting their duties National Guidance is provided and the methods adopted are based upon the contents of the following “Well-Managed Highway Infrastructure: A Code of Practice (CoP), UK Roads Liaison Group, 2016”. The Code is designed to promote the adoption of an integrated asset management approach to highway infrastructure based on the establishment of local levels through risk-based assessment. The Authority has developed their own levels of service based on the above Code, along with adopting the County Surveyors

Mae'r Cyngor yn croesawu gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg a Saesneg a byddwn yn cyfathrebu gyda chi yn eich dewis iaith, dim ond i chi rhoi gwybod i ni pa un sydd well gennych. Ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn creu unrhyw oedi.

The Council welcomes correspondence in Welsh and English and we will communicate with you in the language of your choice, as long as you let us know which you prefer. Corresponding in Welsh will not lead to any delay.

Municipal Offices
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Ebbw Vale
NP23 6XB

Swyddfeydd Bwrdeisiol
Canolfan Dinesig
Glyn Ebwy
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Society Wales (CSSW) principles (adopted 2018) as identified within the Blaenau Gwent Highways Maintenance Plan (HMP), therefore provides guidance to when developing the council's approach in accordance with local needs, priorities and affordability.

The Highway Authority deploys Highway Inspector's to undertake a regime of inspections to monitor the condition and repair needs of the public highway, they have received and passed accredited training programmes for specific competency in highway inspections to allow them to assess the condition of the public highway.

Details of asset hierarchy, inspection and repair regimes are adopted by the Council and implemented. For the purpose of managing maintenance Councils allocate a hierarchy level to each road and footway to establish inspection frequencies and repair regimes. The most significant factor affecting the risk presented to users is the level of use. As no footfall data is available in many situations across the council, officer judgement is used to estimate footfall for different footways in order to apply the CSSW principles.

From a nationally consistent approach the following table gives an indication of the principles adopted by CSSW, as follows;

Code of Practice Footway Network Hierarchy Category	CSSW Footway Hierarchy	Footfall Level (indicative)
City Centre Pedestrian Area	FHVHU	> 10,000 (15,000 used for calculations)
Town Centre Pedestrian Area	FH1	5,000 - 10,000
Footway Outside Public Facilities	FH2	1,000 - 5,000
Link Footway (between estates / areas)	FH3	500 - 1,000
Housing Estate Footway	FH4	< 500
Little Used Rural Footway	FH5	< 100

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The footway outside ■ Alma Street, Brynmawr (Lower Alma Street) is considered to have a low footfall and inspected on a 6 monthly basis, the purpose of inspections are to identify defects that have the potential to cause harm to users and to identify defects that require repair in order to prevent escalation of deterioration and increased (avoidable) maintenance needs.

Defect types identified and the intervention levels that are prescribed for each defect category in the footway is a guidance and minimum standards created by considering risk to users, see below;

Safety Defects Table

Asset Type	Defect Type	Hierarchy	Dimensional Criteria		CSSW National Minimum Standard	
			Depth/Height	Extent	Depth/Hieght	Extent
Carriageways	Pothole	CHSR, CH1 and CH2	> 50mm	Any Size	> 50mm	Maximum horizontal dimension greater than 150mm
	Pothole	CH3, CH4 and CH5**	>50mm	Any Size	>75mm	Maximum horizontal dimension greater than 150mm
Footways	Pothole	All	> 25mm	Any Size	> 40mm	Maximum horizontal dimension greater than 75mm
	Crack or Gap	All	> 25mm	Any Size	> 40mm	Maximum horizontal dimension greater than 75mm
	Trip	All	> 25mm	Any Size	> 40mm	Maximum horizontal dimension greater than 75mm
	Rocking Slabs	All	> 30mm	N/A	> 40mm	N/A
Kerbing	Dislodged, Loose, Missing, Damaged - Causing a trip hazard	All	> 25mm	N/A	> 40mm	N/A

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Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council has chosen to exceed the CSSW national minimum standards for safety and maintenance defects intervention as shown in the Safety Defects table above. A method has been developed under CSSW's Highways Asset Management Plan (HAMP) project designed to allow all authorities to adopt the risk-based approach recommended by the new code of practice (CoP).

Highway Inspections prior to the accident in July 2020 and post accident in January 2021 have not identified defects approaching this standard >25mm. A further assessment on receipt of the Regulation 28 report has been undertaken and although the footway reconstruction has raised paving <16mm (photo's attached) they are not at a standard that the Highway Authority would intervene or consider a risk to the highway user and as such there are no proposals for BGCBC Highway Authority to take remedial works actions at this location.

Blaenau Gwent CBC is fully committed to the national inspection regime and the importance of it when it comes to preventing accidents across the highways infrastructure.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

**Head of Service
Environment & Community Services
Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council**

CC [REDACTED] – Chief Executive BGCBC

Photo's taken immediately outside number [REDACTED] Alma Stree Brynmawr 4th June 2021





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