

Gritting teams work round the clock

Wednesday, Dec 01 2010

Stockton Council gritting teams have now been working round the clock for a week to keep the Borough's main roads open.

Blizzard conditions mean they have been focusing on the major roads and most important bus routes, as well as roads leading to outlying communities, shopping centres and industrial estates. At 235 miles, this is nearly half Stockton's road network.

Bin collections have gone ahead and the Council has continued to provide its home care services to vulnerable and elderly people despite the conditions.

And the Christmas Market Fair is set to open as planned from tomorrow until Sunday in Stockton town centre as part of the Stockton Sparkles festival, which runs until Christmas.

Praising the highways workers' efforts, Councillor Bob Cook, Stockton Council's Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Transport, said: "Our gritting teams have been out night and day for the past week and they have worked wonders in keeping our priority routes open.

"They are working first and foremost on the major roads, important bus routes and roads leading to outlying communities, shopping centres and industrial estates.

"Because of the severity of the conditions, we are carrying out extra trips to keep these clear.

"They are also gritting town centre walkways, along with pavements at bus stops and outside care homes, as well as regularly replenishing more than 300 salt bins so residents can salt their local roads and footpaths.

"Clearly it's impossible to treat every road but, when conditions allow, we do treat other routes during the day where we can.

"However, blizzard conditions mean we frequently have to focus instead on making additional trips to keep the main priority routes open."

The Council's Care For Your Area teams have battled through ice and heavy snow to carry out refuse collections and care services involving visits to residents' homes are operating despite the conditions.

Councillor Ken Lupton, Leader of Stockton Council, said: "Workers from across the Council are pulling out all the stops to keep services running, despite the severe weather.

"Many have been out around the clock keeping things moving.

"They are part of an army of Council staff working extremely hard to keep the main roads open, provide care and a host of other essential services in all weathers. They go the extra mile to do that and their extra efforts deserve our sincere thanks."

The snow has affected around half the Borough's schools today - for a full list of these closures see the Council's website at www.stockton.gov.uk/schoolclosures

NOTES TO EDITORS:

A19 and A66 trunk routes: These are the responsibility of the Highways Agency, not local councils.

At temperatures below -5o rock salt becomes less effective and at -10 even more so.

Gritting update: All primary routes in Stockton Borough were ploughed today at 2.30pm and will be ploughed and gritted again at 6pm tonight and 3am tomorrow (Thursday).

For further information on this release, please call Vince Rutland, Media Relations Manager for Stockton Council, on (01642) 526097.