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Will Surrey potholes outwit AI?

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Surrey County Council will now use AI to detect potholes to help speed up road repairs across the county.

Computer vision cameras fitted to dashboards inside highways vehicles will spot and photograph potholes which will then be automatically recorded for repair. Future enhancements will see other defects such as missing signs and foliage overgrowth also programmed for repair.

Highways Inspectors will no longer need to step onto the road to manually carry out inspections which will make the process safer and more efficient. Potholes that don't need immediate attention will also be regularly tracked to ensure they are dealt with when needed.

Matt Furniss, Cabinet Member for Highways, Transport and Economic Growth, said, "*We have some of the country's busiest roads and we're working incredibly hard to improve them, with nearly £300m allocated to repairing and improving Surrey's roads and pavements over the next five years (2023 – 2028).*

"*Adopting this technology will mean we can proactively log and fix potholes, helping to ensure we have well-maintained roads across the county for our residents.*

"*We're also resurfacing more roads and pavements than ever with 100 miles of roads and 30 miles of pavements resurfaced by our highways teams from April – December 2024 alone. This will make our highway network more resilient which will reduce the number of potholes that develop on our roads in the first place.*

"*I'm also pleased that we are pioneering AI technology to detect potholes as championed by the government just this week.*"

Connell McLaughlin, CEO of Route Reports said, "*We're thrilled to formalise this long-term partnership with Surrey County Council, who were among our earliest supporters and collaborators in developing Route Reports' AI road maintenance platform.*

"*Their feedback and hands-on involvement played a key role in refining our defect detection technology to ensure it meets the real-world needs of the community. This partnership exemplifies how innovative solutions and local expertise can come together to make roads safer, more efficient, and more sustainable.*"

Surrey County Council is the first local authority in the UK to move away from manual inspections and solely use video and AI technology to log and programme pothole repairs. The council has worked with provider, Route Reports, to trial and develop the software.

Residents can also report and track road and pavement issues on **Surrey County Council's website**.

Image: Pothole in Woodcote Road Epsom

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