

# Impact Assessment

Reduce All Activity Around Verge Maintenance  
from the start of April 2024



Impact Assessments (IA) are a process of assessing how our proposals and decisions might impact upon different types of people and communities and developing proposals in line with relevant legislation.

This is a legal requirement, and ensures the Council considers key legislation, including Equalities, Welsh language, Future Generations, Socio-economic Duty and Risk when developing proposals.

It will also help the Council make the best possible decisions for the people of Powys.

## 1. Proposal Information

<b>Author Name</b>	Lyn Parry
<b>Head of Service</b>	Lyn Parry – Acting for Operational Highways / Matt Perry – acting Director
<b>Portfolio Holder</b>	Jackie Charlton
<b>Proposal title</b>	Reduce all activity around verge maintenance from the start of April 2024
<b>Description of proposal</b>	Reduce all activity around verge maintenance from the start of April 2024 which will include a reduction of grass cutting sites to encourage biodiversity and rewilding of verges. Trial areas will be set up across the county to monitor this to determine if this can be rolled out across all areas in the future and help with future budget management. The reduction around verge maintenance will also include a reduction in weed spraying, litter picking and tree maintenance. Trunk roads are not the responsibility of Powys County Council and any issues would need to be directed to WG.

## 2. Savings and Consultation

### Profile of savings delivery

2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028+	Total Savings
0	173,000	Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text.

### Further information

Click or tap here to enter text.

### Consultation requirements

<b>Consultation required?</b>	No
<b>Union consultation date</b>	Click or tap to enter a date.
<b>Staff consultation date</b>	Click or tap to enter a date.

**Public consultation date**

Click or tap to enter a date.

**Consultation plan (or justification where no consultation is required)**

This would need to be communicated with the public as there is no doubt the service will be receiving more complaints around a reduction in verge maintenance. Trial areas for rewinding of verges would need to be agreed with local members. A social media strategy would be a means of communicating this reduction especially around the biodiversity and rewinding of verges.

### 3. Impact on other service areas, geographical areas, and data protection

#### 1a. Impact on other service areas

There would be an impact on the helpdesk in dealing with an increase in requests around a reduction in verge maintenance due to an increase in complaints especially around safety.

#### 1b. Impact on geographical locations

All areas across Powys would be equally affected by this proposal.

#### 1c. Data protection impact assessment

**Will the proposal involve processing the personal details of individuals?**

No

**Is Powys County Council the data controller?**

Yes

**Further information**

Click or tap here to enter text.

### 4. Impact on well-being goals including Welsh language and equalities

#### 1d. A prosperous Wales

**Impact**

None

<b>Impact Rating</b>	Neutral
<b>Mitigation</b>	Click or tap here to enter text.
<b>Mitigated Rating</b>	Choose an item.

### 1e. A resilient Wales

<b>Impact</b>	Increase in Biodiversity, rewilding of verges and a reduction in carbon emissions
<b>Impact Rating</b>	Good
<b>Mitigation</b>	Click or tap here to enter text.
<b>Mitigated Rating</b>	Choose an item.

### 1f. A healthier Wales

<b>Impact</b>	None
<b>Impact Rating</b>	Neutral
<b>Mitigation</b>	Click or tap here to enter text.
<b>Mitigated Rating</b>	Choose an item.

### 1g. A Wales of cohesive communities

<b>Impact</b>	None
<b>Impact Rating</b>	Neutral
<b>Mitigation</b>	Click or tap here to enter text.
<b>Mitigated Rating</b>	Choose an item.

## 1h. A globally responsible Wales

<b>Impact</b>	Increase in biodiversity, rewilding of verges and a reduction in carbon emissions
<b>Impact Rating</b>	Good
<b>Mitigation</b>	Click or tap here to enter text.
<b>Mitigated Rating</b>	Choose an item.

## 1i. A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language

### Using Welsh

<b>Impact</b>	None
<b>Impact Rating</b>	Neutral
<b>Mitigation</b>	Click or tap here to enter text.
<b>Mitigated Rating</b>	Choose an item.

### Promoting Welsh

<b>Impact</b>	None
<b>Impact Rating</b>	Neutral
<b>Mitigation</b>	Click or tap here to enter text.
<b>Mitigated Rating</b>	Choose an item.

### Sports, Art & Recreation

<b>Impact</b>	None
<b>Impact Rating</b>	Neutral
<b>Mitigation</b>	Click or tap here to enter text.
<b>Mitigated Rating</b>	Choose an item.

## 1j. A more equal Wales

### Age

<b>Impact</b>	None
<b>Impact Rating</b>	Neutral
<b>Mitigation</b>	Click or tap here to enter text.
<b>Mitigated Rating</b>	Choose an item.

### Disability

<b>Impact</b>	It may affect residents walking along uncut verges
<b>Impact Rating</b>	Poor
<b>Mitigation</b>	Could a 1metre strip be cut as a walkway.
<b>Mitigated Rating</b>	Good

### Gender Reassignment

<b>Impact</b>	None
<b>Impact Rating</b>	Neutral
<b>Mitigation</b>	Click or tap here to enter text.
<b>Mitigated Rating</b>	Choose an item.

### Marriage or Civil Partnership

<b>Impact</b>	None
<b>Impact Rating</b>	Neutral
<b>Mitigation</b>	Click or tap here to enter text.
<b>Mitigated Rating</b>	Choose an item.

## Race

<b>Impact</b>	None
<b>Impact Rating</b>	Neutral
<b>Mitigation</b>	Click or tap here to enter text.
<b>Mitigated Rating</b>	Choose an item.

## Religion or belief

<b>Impact</b>	None
<b>Impact Rating</b>	Neutral
<b>Mitigation</b>	Click or tap here to enter text.
<b>Mitigated Rating</b>	Choose an item.

## Sex

<b>Impact</b>	None
<b>Impact Rating</b>	Neutral
<b>Mitigation</b>	Click or tap here to enter text.
<b>Mitigated Rating</b>	Choose an item.

## Sexual Orientation

<b>Impact</b>	None
<b>Impact Rating</b>	Neutral
<b>Mitigation</b>	Click or tap here to enter text.
<b>Mitigated Rating</b>	Choose an item.

## Pregnancy and Maternity

<b>Impact</b>	None
<b>Impact Rating</b>	Neutral
<b>Mitigation</b>	Click or tap here to enter text.
<b>Mitigated Rating</b>	Choose an item.

## Socio-economic Duty

<b>Impact</b>	None
<b>Impact Rating</b>	Neutral
<b>Mitigation</b>	Click or tap here to enter text.
<b>Mitigated Rating</b>	Choose an item.

### 1k. Evidence

We have reduced the grass cutting regime previously from 4 cuts down to 3 full cuts but now only carry out 2 safety cuts and just one full cut in September

## 5. Impact on key guiding principles & workforce

### 1l. Sustainable development principles

#### Long-term

<b>Impact</b>	A reduction in verge maintenance will improve biodiversity, rewilding of verges and provide a reduction in carbon emissions across the county but may lead to an increase in complaints being received and the service acting on these to ensure safe passage for residents as part of the 1980 Highways Act
<b>Impact Rating</b>	Unknown
<b>Mitigation</b>	Click or tap here to enter text.
<b>Mitigated Rating</b>	Choose an item.



## Collaboration

<b>Impact</b>	Currently in partnership with 3 wildlife trusts and biodiversity officer and will also look at the reduction of our RVNR sites cutting regime. Maybe reduce the number of sites and carry out better management of the remaining ones.
<b>Impact Rating</b>	Neutral
<b>Mitigation</b>	Click or tap here to enter text.
<b>Mitigated Rating</b>	Choose an item.

## Involvement (including Communication & Engagement)

<b>Impact</b>	None
<b>Impact Rating</b>	Neutral
<b>Mitigation</b>	Click or tap here to enter text.
<b>Mitigated Rating</b>	Choose an item.

## Prevention

<b>Impact</b>	None
<b>Impact Rating</b>	Neutral
<b>Mitigation</b>	Click or tap here to enter text.
<b>Mitigated Rating</b>	Choose an item.

## Integration

<b>Impact</b>	None
<b>Impact Rating</b>	Neutral
<b>Mitigation</b>	Click or tap here to enter text.
<b>Mitigated Rating</b>	Choose an item.

### 1m. Impact on the workforce

<b>Impact</b>	None
<b>Impact Rating</b>	Neutral
<b>Mitigation</b>	Click or tap here to enter text.
<b>Mitigated Rating</b>	Choose an item.

### 1n. Impact on payroll

<b>Impact</b>	None
<b>Impact Rating</b>	Neutral
<b>Mitigation</b>	Click or tap here to enter text.
<b>Mitigated Rating</b>	Choose an item.

### 1o. Welsh language impact on Staff

<b>Impact</b>	None
<b>Impact Rating</b>	Neutral
<b>Mitigation</b>	Click or tap here to enter text.
<b>Mitigated Rating</b>	Choose an item.

### 1p. Impact on apprenticeships

<b>Impact</b>	None
<b>Impact Rating</b>	Neutral
<b>Mitigation</b>	Click or tap here to enter text.
<b>Mitigated Rating</b>	Choose an item.

## 1q. Evidence

Click or tap here to enter text.

## 6. Likelihood and risks

### Risk 1

Increase in complaints

<b>Likelihood score</b>	4	<b>Impact score</b>	3	<b>Risk rating</b>	12
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### Mitigation

Good communication and understanding of the proposed reduction in grass cutting. A social media strategy would be a means of communicating this reduction especially around the biodiversity and rewilding of verges.

<b>Residual likelihood score</b>	3	<b>Residual impact score</b>	2	<b>Residual risk rating</b>	6
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### Risk 2

Increase of invasive species such as ragwort and Japanese Knotweed due to not cutting to present frequency on verges which will increase the use of pesticides to control this which goes against our current policy on use of pesticides to control invasive species. .

<b>Likelihood score</b>	2	<b>Impact score</b>	3	<b>Risk rating</b>	6
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### Mitigation

Leave the present grass cutting schedule in place.

<b>Residual likelihood score</b>	1	<b>Residual impact score</b>	1	<b>Residual risk rating</b>	2
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### Risk 3

Not having the correct equipment to cut to the new schedule thus the service requiring investment in this which would remove any potential savings.

<b>Likelihood score</b>	2	<b>Impact score</b>	4	<b>Risk rating</b>	8
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#### Mitigation

Leave the present grass cutting schedule in place

<b>Residual likelihood score</b>	1	<b>Residual impact score</b>	2	<b>Residual risk rating</b>	2
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#### Risk 4

Costs of dealing with ad hoc complaints under the highways act for safe passage due to reduction of grass cutting programme.

<b>Likelihood score</b>	3	<b>Impact score</b>	3	<b>Risk rating</b>	9
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#### Mitigation

Ensure all complaints are dealt with within the defect categorisation raised.

<b>Residual likelihood score</b>	2	<b>Residual impact score</b>	3	<b>Residual risk rating</b>	6
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#### Risk 5

Increase in road traffic accidents due to lack of visibility at junctions etc. And costs associated in dealing with these if liable.

<b>Likelihood score</b>	3	<b>Impact score</b>	4	<b>Risk rating</b>	12
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#### Mitigation

Ensure all complaints are dealt with within the defect categorisation raised to protect liability.

<b>Residual likelihood score</b>	2	<b>Residual impact score</b>	3	<b>Residual risk rating</b>	6
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## 7. Overall summary and judgement

### Outline assessment

Although there is a financial benefit in this reduction of verge maintenance it doesn't come without risk. The current grass cutting schedule is at a bare minimum as it is. We currently carry out 2 safety cuts in May and July as that is when we currently get the most complaints and when the grass is at a height requiring cutting. The 3<sup>rd</sup> cut which is carried out in September onwards is then a full width cut, and this then also helps us control the growth of unwanted invasive species as well as briers, saplings etc. Should the proposal go through we would still have to act when the service receives complaints to ensure safe passage as part of the highways act and to ensure clear visibility when drivers are pulling out of junctions etc. Some residents however also currently complain that we cut our verges to much so this reduction would help address some of their concerns. There may also be an issue that the current grass cutting equipment is not suitable for the new regime of grass cutting so an investment may be required to buy new equipment to cope. Our current equipment is purchased based on the current cutting regime so further investment in larger equipment may be required to cope with the new cutting regime due to verges being cut less. Costs in dealing with ad hoc complaints and road traffic accidents which if proved are PCC fault due to not complying with the defect categorisation raised when reported could also remove any potential savings. This will however improve biodiversity on our roadside verges, and this provides a good structure on which to achieve that.

#### Cabinet reference

Click or tap here to enter text.

## 8. Additional evidence

Click or tap here to enter text.

## 9. Monitoring arrangements

Currently monitor around the number of complaints we receive throughout the grass cutting season.

#### Review date

01/04/2025