

## growing pains

tackling the problem of weed growth on footpaths and kerbs

### HOW DO WE TACKLE RAGWORT?

- Ragwort is designated a noxious weed in The Weeds Act 1959 and where it grows on highway verges we have a duty to deal with the problem
- Where isolated patches occur these are hand pulled and removed from the site
- Larger areas where there is a continuing problem are cut twice before the end of June each year for a period of 5 years by which time the problem should be eradicated

### What's the future?

### There is no quick or simple solution.

The use of chemical treatments is likely to become more restrictive to protect the environment. The problem is therefore likely to get worse

The only other solution is the labour intensive and expensive manual clearance of weeds but this would divert funds from structural repairs to footways, cycleways and carriageways.

The problem would be much reduced if residents with street frontages pulled weeds along their own frontage before they became well established.

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#### Postal Address:

#### East Highways Division

Stirling Way, Witchford, Ely CB6 3NR  
Telephone 0845 045 5212

#### Fenland Highways Division

Hereward Hall, County Road, March PE15 8ND  
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#### West Highways Division

Stanton House, Stanton Way, Huntingdon PE29 6XL  
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#### South Highways Division

Station Road, Whittlesford, Cambs CB2 4NL  
Telephone: 0845 045 5212

#### Street Works Coordination Manager: 01354 753814

Traffic Delays and Street Works information  
Email: [highways@cambridgeshire.gov.uk](mailto:highways@cambridgeshire.gov.uk) – (for non-urgent enquiries)

#### Traffic Signals Hotline: 01223 718602

Fax: 01223 718538 between 8am and 5pm

Accident and Traffic Data: Telephone: 01223 716878

Highways Agency are responsible for Trunk Roads - contact:

Information Line: Telephone 08457 50 40 30

Email: [www.highways.gov.uk](http://www.highways.gov.uk)

#### Postal Address:

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 Cambridgeshire  
County Council  
Environment and Transport



TRAVELWISE

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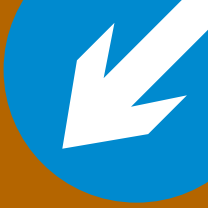
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### What's the problem?

There are two main issues:

- Weed growth against kerblines, on the back of footways and in the surface of lightly used rural footways
- Growth of noxious weeds in grass verges which may spread to agricultural land

### WHY CAN'T WE JUST SPRAY MORE OFTEN?

- We are restricted in the main to using non-residual weed treatments which act through the leaves and are only effective when the weeds are actually growing



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### CAN'T WE USE MORE OR STRONGER CHEMICALS?

- The use of residual weed treatments is not permitted with the exception of Diuron which can only be used in the early Spring and the indications are that this may be outlawed in the near future

### What do we do at present?

### WE CURRENTLY CARRY OUT 3 TREATMENTS A YEAR:

- The first treatment is carried out early in the season. The backs of footways are sprayed with a mixture of residual and non-residual treatment and kerb lines are sprayed with a non-residual treatment
- On the second and third sprays a non-residual treatment is used
- All footways within villages are walked and checked but only weeds that are physically present are treated as the products used attack through the leaves. This means that weeds which sprout between the treatments will continue to grow until the next treatment



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### WHEN DO WE DO IT?

- Treatments start early Spring and 3 treatments are carried out between then and the Autumn

### WHAT DO WE USE?

- The first treatment uses a mixture of Diuron/Glyphosate for back of footways and Glyphosate only along kerblines
- The second and third treatments use Glyphosate only

### WHAT HAPPENS TO NEW SURFACES?

- Where new footways or cycleways are constructed or existing ones are resurfaced they are weed sprayed in advance but this is only effective on weeds which are active at the time of spraying.
- The bitumen used as binder in asphalts and macadams acts as a nutrient to dormant weed roots which may lie below the new surface and they then eventually force their way through the new surface
- Weeds which do grow through are sprayed to try and eradicate the problem
- New surfaces are inspected towards the end of the contractor's maintenance period and if the problem still exists the weed roots may need to be dug out and the surface reinstated

