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## **Parking damage to grass verges.**

To: **Joint Transportation Board – 11 April 2013**

By: **KCC Highways and Transportation**

Classification: **Information Only**

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**Summary:** This report informs Members on parking damage to grass verges.

### **For Information**

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#### **1.0 Introduction and Background**

1.1 The Chairman presented a petition to Mr Rivers from the residents of Birdwood Avenue which requested that their grass verges be tarmaced. Members reported that similar problems, caused by cars parking on the verges, had occurred elsewhere. It was agreed that it would be helpful to consider the problem on a district-wide basis.

1.2 It was agreed that a report be brought to a future Joint Transportation Board meeting on problems relating to parking damage to grass verges

#### **2.0 The problem**

2.1 Many housing areas were built before car ownership levels were a consideration. The estate roads are relatively narrow and there is little opportunity for suitable off road parking. The result is wide spread abuse of the verge/footway, in order not to obstruct the carriageway. This results in damage to the kerbs and the grass verges becoming rutted and muddy. There is the further risk of damage to underground statutory undertaker's plant.

2.2 There is no specific offence covering this issue, save for obstruction and police advice is that proving actual obstruction is difficult if only the verge is obstructed and the footway is freely available. Even if available, there is a view that enforcement is not a practical solution to this issue.

#### **3.0 Options**

3.1 Bollards are not an appropriate solution, merely displacing the problem, subject to vandalism and unaffordable for wide scale usage. Cost per wooden bollard installed is £64.

3.2 Removal of the grass verge, replaced with tarmac footway, suitably strengthened to take vehicle loading and the provision of a lower kerb face. For a verge of 1.6m width, the cost per metre run is £117. For similar treatment, but using grasscrete (a modular precast concrete system with earth pockets that are grass seeded) the cost per metre run is £150. Grasscrete, whilst keeping a grass strip in the street scene, does not provide the best pedestrian surface for an urban environment.

3.3 Fill any reported ruts with top soil. The cost is £2.36 per metre sq. This fulfils Kent's legal obligation to keep the highway safe. It has to be acknowledged that this repaired verge is still susceptible to vehicle damage, however, filling with unbound stone material is not an option on safety/liability grounds.

#### **4.0 Financial**

4.1 There is no funding available for the bollards and verge replacement options, unless there is a crash history related to the problem, which is not case in the Dover district. Any funding for verge replacement would have to be via a third party, such as housing association or member funding. Top soiling is funding within the normal maintenance budget.

#### **Recommendation(s)**

4.1 That Members note the information

Contact Officer:	Steve Rivers, Dover District manager, Kent County Council 08458 247800
Reporting to:	Toby Howe, Highway Manager – East Kent, Kent County Council 08458 247800