



# Highways Act 1980

## 1980 CHAPTER 66

### PART IV

#### MAINTENANCE OF HIGHWAYS

##### *Enforcement of liability for maintenance*

#### **56 Proceedings for an order to repair highway.**

- (1) A person (“the complainant”) who alleges that a way or bridge—
  - (a) is a highway maintainable at the public expense or a highway which a person is liable to maintain under a special enactment or by reason of tenure, enclosure or prescription, and
  - (b) is out of repair,may serve a notice on the highway authority or other person alleged to be liable to maintain the way or bridge (“the respondent”) requiring the respondent to state whether he admits that the way or bridge is a highway and that he is liable to maintain it.
- (2) If, within 1 month from the date of service on him of a notice under subsection (1) above, the respondent does not serve on the complainant a notice admitting both that the way or bridge in question is a highway and that the respondent is liable to maintain it, the complainant may apply to the Crown Court for an order requiring the respondent, if the court finds that the way or bridge is a highway which the respondent is liable to maintain and is out of repair, to put it in proper repair within such reasonable period as may be specified in the order.
- (3) The complainant for an order under subsection (2) above shall give notice in writing of the application to the appropriate officer of the Crown Court and the notice shall specify—
  - (a) the situation of the way or bridge to which the application relates,
  - (b) the name of the respondent,
  - (c) the part of the way or bridge which is alleged to be out of repair, and

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*Status: This version of this provision has been superseded.*

*Changes to legislation: Highways Act 1980, Section 56 is up to date with all changes known to be in force on or before 16 April 2024. There are changes that may be brought into force at a future date. Changes that have been made appear in the content and are referenced with annotations. (See end of Document for details) View outstanding changes*

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- (d) the nature of the alleged disrepair;  
and the complainant shall serve a copy of the notice on the respondent.
- (4) If, within 1 month from the date of service on him of a notice under subsection (1) above, the respondent serves on the complainant a notice admitting both that the way or bridge in question is a highway and that the respondent is liable to maintain it, the complainant may, within 6 months from the date of service on him of that notice, apply to a magistrates' court for an order requiring the respondent, if the court finds that the highway is out of repair, to put it in proper repair within such reasonable period as may be specified in the order.
- (5) A court in determining under this section whether a highway is out of repair shall not be required to view the highway unless it thinks fit, and any such view may be made by any 2 or more of the members of the court.
- (6) If at the expiration of the period specified in an order made under subsection (2) or (4) above a magistrates' court is satisfied that the highway to which the order relates has not been put in proper repair, then, unless the court thinks fit to extend the period, it shall by order authorise the complainant (if he has not the necessary power in that behalf) to carry out such works as may be necessary to put the highway in proper repair.
- (7) Any expenses which a complainant reasonably incurs in carrying out works authorised by an order under subsection (6) above are recoverable from the respondent summarily as a civil debt.
- (8) Where any expenses recoverable under subsection (7) above are recovered from the respondent, then, if the respondent would have been entitled to recover from some other person the whole or part of the expenses of repairing the highway in question if he had repaired it himself, he is entitled to recover from that other person the whole or the like part, as the case may be, of the expenses recovered from him.
- (9) Where an application is made under this section for an order requiring the respondent to put in proper repair a footpath or bridleway which, in either case, is a highway maintainable at the public expense and some other person is liable to maintain the footpath or bridleway under a special enactment or by reason of tenure, enclosure or prescription, that other person has a right to be heard by the court which hears the application, but only on the question whether the footpath or bridleway is in proper repair.

**Status:**

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**Changes to legislation:**

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**Changes and effects yet to be applied to the whole Act associated Parts and Chapters:**

Whole provisions yet to be inserted into this Act (including any effects on those provisions):

- s. 79(15)(aa) inserted by [2023 asc 3 Sch. 13 para. 54\(b\)](#)
- s. 90B(1A) inserted by [2015 c. 20 Sch. 10 para. 15\(3\)](#)
- s. 90C(2)(2A) substituted for s. 90C(2) by [2015 c. 20 Sch. 10 para. 16\(3\)](#)
- s. 90FA inserted by [2015 c. 20 Sch. 10 para. 20](#)
- s. 118ZA(5)(a) words inserted by [2015 c. 20 s. 25\(3\)](#)
- s. 120(3ZA) inserted by [2000 c. 37 Sch. 6 para. 13\(6\)](#)
- s. 121E(1A)(1B) inserted by [2015 c. 20 s. 23\(5\)](#)
- s. 146(6) inserted by [2015 c. 20 s. 24\(6\)\(d\)](#)
- s. 147(1A) inserted by [2015 c. 20 s. 24\(3\)](#)
- s. 147(5A) inserted by [2015 c. 20 s. 24\(5\)](#)
- s. 203(2)(b)(ia) inserted by [S.I. 2023/908 reg. 6\(2\)\(b\)](#)
- s. 219(1)(a)(i)(ii) inserted by [S.I. 2023/908 reg. 6\(3\)](#)
- s. 220(1A) inserted by [S.I. 2023/908 reg. 6\(4\)\(b\)](#)
- s. 223(1A) inserted by [S.I. 2023/908 reg. 6\(5\)\(b\)](#)
- s. 223(5A) inserted by [S.I. 2023/908 reg. 6\(5\)\(d\)](#)
- s. 223(5B)-(6) s. 223(6) renumbered as s. 223(5B)(6) by [S.I. 2023/908 reg. 6\(5\)\(e\)](#)
- s. 322(5)(ab) inserted by [2004 c. 18 s. 64\(2\)](#)
- s. 325(2B) inserted by [2015 c. 20 Sch. 10 para. 21](#)
- Sch. 6 para. 1(3ZA) inserted by [2015 c. 20 Sch. 7 para. 8\(2\)\(b\)](#)
- Sch. 6 para. 2(2ZA)-(2ZE) inserted by [2015 c. 20 Sch. 7 para. 8\(3\)](#)
- Sch. 6 para. 2(4) inserted by [2015 c. 20 Sch. 7 para. 8\(4\)](#)
- Sch. 6 para. 2(5)(6) inserted by [2015 c. 20 Sch. 7 para. 8\(5\)](#)
- Sch. 6 para. 2ZZA inserted by [2015 c. 20 Sch. 7 para. 8\(6\)](#)
- Sch. 6 para. 4A(2) inserted by [2015 c. 20 Sch. 7 para. 8\(7\)\(c\)](#)
- Sch. 6 para. 5(ba) inserted by [2015 c. 20 Sch. 7 para. 8\(8\)](#)
- Sch. 6 para. 4A(1) words renumbered as Sch. 6 para. 4A(1) by [2015 c. 20 Sch. 7 para. 8\(7\)\(a\)](#)
- Sch. 6 para. 4A(1) words substituted by [2015 c. 20 Sch. 7 para. 8\(7\)\(b\)](#)
- Sch. 6 Pt. 1 para. 2B(4) inserted by [2015 c. 20 s. 25\(6\)](#)