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## Staying power proves pothole repair product

Engineers using Colas' Colpatch pothole repair material are singing the praises of the cold mix product for 'staying in the hole' – outperforming alternatives.

Highway authorities interviewed by Modern Asphalts are claiming to have 'got on top' of pothole issues, through concentrated efforts aided by a high performing repair product. The material – Colas' Colpatch – is giving engineers certainty that once carried out, their pothole repairs will last.

This has been mostly, but not exclusively, in Scotland thus far, although the benefits of Colpatch relate only in small part to geography. The crucial attribute is the product's durability in all weather, gained from its composition and reported 'tenacious bond' to the bottom and sides of any pothole.

Colpatch is manufactured in 6mm and 10mm aggregate sizes and supplied by Colas in bagged or bulk form throughout Britain. The material is a cold mix product incorporating 'MACFIX technology' – a binding additive that gives the pothole repair material its properties for greater storage and durability.

Colpatch has storage capability of up to two years according to Colas, so is ideal for locations where use of hot mix materials is difficult – such as the islands of Argyll & Bute

where Colpatch is contributing to a concerted pothole repair programme. It is also being used in areas within easy reach of hot mix asphalt plants.

"Colpatch is forming our first line of defence for responding to potholes," says Dumfries & Galloway Council's Maintenance Manager Iain Black. "We buy and use it in

**"Our operatives and technical officers are saying Colpatch has a tenacious bond and is worth paying for because it stays in place."** Stewart Clark, Argyll & Bute

bulk because we use so much of it. The material behaves as well or better than hot mix – particularly in wet weather and in winter."

Such resilience and suitability for use in cold and wet weather is making Dumfries & Galloway Council "master of its own destiny" with regard to pothole repairs, Black says. The council's engineers have the material on hand

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for use throughout the year for repairing reported potholes responsively and to a planned effort.

"We have hillsides being cleared of timber and minor roads taking a lot of forestry trucks and so a problem of roads suffering the effects of heavy traffic and very variable weather. We have got on top of potholes lately though, through focused efforts and with some additional funding," Black says.

The council could send out its highway maintenance crews via the nearest plants to pick up hot mix material at a number of points during the day, says Black, but it does not need to. "With Colpatch stored at the depot we save a lot of time and the crews can go out with a truck full of material and stay out all day fixing pothole problems.

"We know the results will be the same or better because in cold weather hot mix cools quickly in contact with the pothole and does not adhere well to the surface," Black adds. "I find Colpatch as good as any macadam or hot mix asphalt."

Others that have seen Colas' product in use include Argyll & Bute Council's Contracts Manager Stewart Clark. "It is a tighter, more homogenous material in comparison to others," he says.

"We can use hot mix material on the islands, but when lorry loads of material are needed there is a risk of substantial waste, especially in winter. So cold mix is generally the way to go. Our operatives and technical officers are saying Colpatch has a tenacious bond and is worth paying for because it stays in place."

Argyll & Bute has a capital programme of



repair work under way worth around £1.5M, says Clark. "It is no secret here that we have had major issues with potholes mainly due to conditions of freeze and thaw, particularly on Mull. The difficulties are challenging, but we are on top of the problems."

Argyll & Bute's Technical Officer for the islands Coll, Tiree and Mull is Kaz Bailey. She says: "Previously we have used K160 or an

equivalent delay set material for filling potholes, but we carried out a trial on Mull using Colas' material and it was far superior. The operatives like it and it lasts longer."

The flexibility provided by Colas' product is a significant advantage, says Bailey: "The weather here is very unpredictable and often not ideal for patching work, although sometimes the work just has to be done.

"Ideally we like to treat potholes then overlay with surface dressing, but we have to have the right weather. It is useful to have a material that can be stored and then when laid will stay solid until conditions are right for overlaying."

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