

Response :

Dear Cllr Anthony Davies / Cllr. Dai Thomas,

I refer to your enquiry below and would respond as follows.

With respect to the question raised by the Clerk of Llandybie Community Council ~ "what type of herbicides are used by the County in its weed control treatment of hedgerows, roadside verges and general maintenance ?" ~ I would initially advise we generally use herbicides on hard surface areas with extremely low amounts on roadside verges where invasive non-natives species may be growing such as Japanese Knotweed or Himalayan Balsam. We do not use herbicides in hedgerows as this is deemed private land.

I would advise that annual application of herbicide in the public highway has reduced by 50% over the past couple of years and we also actively minimise the use of herbicide. Application of herbicide on our public highway network is targeted to weeds only. Nomix DUAL is applied by our highways operatives primarily on hard surface areas only in towns and villages ie. tarmac and concrete (not soil), which are not intended to bear vegetation. Herbicide is applied directly to the weeds and this targeted approach significantly reduces the volume of product used as compared to 'blanket' spraying techniques which we do not undertake. Furthermore, we do not apply herbicide to wild flowers or verges in rural areas / countryside in general and focus our limited and targeted use of herbicide on hard surfaces in urban areas.

I would also advise that Glyphosate has been subject to safety reviews by the EU and the HSE, and all glyphosate products currently on sale within the UK are deemed safe to human health. Welsh Government and our supplier Nomix have also confirmed that our herbicide product meets strict regulatory standards and does not pose a threat to human or animal health and the environment. The Welsh Government information note from August 2018 states that the current approval for use of Glyphosate lasts until 15 December 2022 and that use beyond that date would be subject to a further decision. The Welsh Government further advises that pesticide users in Wales are conforming to the standards expected under the UK National Action Plan for the Sustainable Use of Pesticides and EU law.

The regulatory authorities undertake ongoing scientific research to make sure such chemicals are safe to use and have no long-lasting effect on the environment. Glyphosate has been subject to safety reviews by the EU and the HSE, and all glyphosate products currently on sale within the EU are deemed safe to human health. The HSE has previously stated that "The UK has a rigorous approvals process for pesticides. The main aim of the process is to protect the health of people, creatures and plants and to safeguard the environment. All companies wishing to obtain approval for their pesticides are required to submit substantial data dossiers to support their applications. The extensive range of studies undertaken on pesticides is aimed at establishing acceptable

safety for people, animals and the wider environment. This process has been applied to glyphosate which has been approved as safe and efficacious for a number of years now. In addition to the UK process, all pesticides are subject to the regular EU wide initial approval and review programme for active substances. The review programme makes sure that the data supporting their approvals meets modern safety standards. Neither the EU's assessment of glyphosate as an active substance nor the UK's assessments of applications for authorisation of products which contain it have found the substance unacceptable for use."

Our continued use of herbicide products containing Glyphosate beyond this summer 2022 will be subject to the ongoing review by government and other regulatory bodies and the authority will be required to continue to comply with legislation.

With respect to other methods of weed control, we have looked at alternatives, but these have proved to be impractical, ineffective, expensive, and present more dangers to operatives and the general public. Use of Nomix DUAL enables us to reduce the number of applications per season, and achieve an overall reduction of Glyphosate applied per season up to 70% vs. conventional herbicides. We have also trialled alternative herbicide products however DUAL has been the most effective means of controlling weeds in hard surface areas which are not meant to bear weeds.

cofion / regards,

Darren King

Rheolwr Y Gwasanaethau Priffyrdd / Highway Services Manager
Uned Gwasanaethau Priffyrdd / Highway Services Unit
Is-Adran Priffyrdd a Thrafnidiaeth / Highways & Transport Division
Adran Yr Amgylchedd / Environment Department
Dwi'n dysgu Cymraeg
I'm learning Welsh

Diolch / Thanks.

Uned Gwasanaethau Democrataidd / Democratic Services Unit

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