

U.K. village makes theme park from its potholed roads

20th January 2025



Roads in the U.K. are in such a dire condition that one village has decided to mock them by setting up a "pothole theme park". Pothole Land opened last week near the remote Welsh community of Pontfadog. Visitors to the park get to

experience the thrills of driving along one of the UK's thousands of badly potholed roads. Park officials promise the park's potholes are "the deepest, longest and widest in Wales". They added motorists will get to navigate "two kilometres of potholes, with very little actual road to spoil the fun". Some of the potholes that scar the road are almost 50 cm deep. One villager joked that, "they're not potholes, they're bomb craters".

Decades of underinvestment have left British roads in an alarming state of disrepair. It is almost impossible to go on a journey without having to negotiate cratered roads, and thus risk damage to your car. A Pontfadog resident lamented that no repairs had been done to his village's roads in over five years. Another villager complained about repairs to her car. She said: "The cost to our cars is phenomenal." Parts of the road are almost impassable. The conditions are so atrocious that refuse collection drivers often refuse to drive to the village. The U.K. government has set aside £1.6 billion (\$1.95 billion) over the next two years to provide "immediate fixes" and to repair seven million potholes.

Sources: bbc.com / gov.uk / yahoo.com

Writing

Roads are the most important part of a country's infrastructure. Discuss.

Chat

Talk about these words from the article.

roads / village / community / thrills / promise / potholes / motorists / bomb craters / underinvestment / journey / car / resident / cost / refuse collection / government

True / False

- 1) Villagers in Wales started a theme park to celebrate its potholed roads. T / F
- 2) Visitors to Pothole Land can experience thrills on a jet-coaster. T / F
- 3) Some of the potholes in the theme park are nearly half a metre deep. T / F
- 4) A villager likened the potholes in his village to bomb craters. T / F
- 5) The article said the UK has not invested enough in roads for a century. T / F
- 6) A villager said his village had seen no road repairs in over five years. T / F
- 7) Garbage collectors never visit the village with potholed roads. T / F
- 8) The UK said it would repair seven million of its potholes over two years. T / F

Synonym Match

(The words in **bold** are from the news article.)

- | | |
|----------------------|-----------------|
| 1. dire | a. drivers |
| 2. setting up | b. save |
| 3. remote | c. disturbing |
| 4. motorists | d. isolated |
| 5. scar | e. complained |
| 6. alarming | f. establishing |
| 7. negotiate | g. damage |
| 8. lamented | h. garbage |
| 9. refuse | i. terrible |
| 10. set aside | j. get round |

Discussion – Student A

- a) What do you think about what you read?
- b) Why do you think the UK has not invested in its roads?
- c) What damage do poor roads do to an economy?
- d) Are potholed roads a signal that we should abandon our cars?
- e) Should we cycle instead of drive?
- f) Would you like to drive in the UK?
- g) Why do you think the UK has over seven million potholes?
- h) What questions would you like to ask the theme park?

Phrase Match

- | | |
|---|-----------------------|
| 1. Roads in the U.K. are in such a dire | a. fun |
| 2. near the remote | b. almost impassable |
| 3. experience the thrills | c. craters |
| 4. spoil the | d. underinvestment |
| 5. bomb | e. Welsh community |
| 6. Decades of | f. condition |
| 7. in an alarming | g. roads |
| 8. having to negotiate cratered | h. drivers |
| 9. Parts of the road are | i. of driving |
| 10. refuse collection | j. state of disrepair |

Discussion – Student B

- What are roads like in your country?
- What do you think of a pothole-themed park?
- What damage can potholes do?
- What's your favourite theme park?
- How important are smooth, well-maintained roads?
- What do you think of driving?
- Do you know of any bad roads?
- What advice do you have for motorists negotiating potholes?

Spelling

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- the remote Welsh tmiconuym
- experience the lhlsir of driving
- Park sacofiifl
- tsirosmot will get to navigate two kilometres
- bomb tecasrr
- saceedd of underinvestment
- an alarming state of rearsdipi
- having to iotngetea cratered roads
- The cost to our cars is aponnlmeeh
- conditions are so irotoasuc
- seurf collection

Answers – Synonym Match

1. i	2. f	3. d	4. a	5. g
6. c	7. j	8. e	9. h	10. b

Role Play

Role A – Potholes

You think potholes are the biggest problem with / on roads. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what is wrong with their things. Also, tell the others which is the least problematic of these (and why): congestion, pedestrians and cyclists, or poor lighting.

Role B – Congestion

You think congestion is the biggest problem with / on roads. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what is wrong with their things. Also, tell the others which is the least problematic of these (and why): potholes, pedestrians and cyclists, or poor lighting.

Role C – Pedestrians and Cyclists

You think pedestrians and cyclists are the biggest problem with / on roads. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what is wrong with their things. Also, tell the others which is the least problematic of these (and why): congestion, potholes or poor lighting.

Role D – Poor Lighting

You think poor lighting is the biggest problem with / on roads. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what is wrong with their things. Also, tell the others which is the least problematic of these (and why): congestion, pedestrians and cyclists, or potholes.

Speaking – Roads

Rank these with your partner. Put the biggest problems at the top. Change partners often and share your rankings.

- | | |
|--------------------|-------------------|
| • Potholes | • Pedestrians |
| • Congestion | • Unclear signs |
| • Lack of markings | • Uneven surfaces |
| • Lack of drainage | • Poor lighting |

Answers – True False

1	F	2	F	3	T	4	T	5	F	6	T	7	F	8	T
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Answers to Phrase Match and Spelling are in the text.