



Client Success Story

Lincolnshire County Council streamlines both long- and short-term highway maintenance with Confirm enquiry forms

Client

Lincolnshire County Council

Challenge

Lincolnshire County Council (LCC) needed to improve and expedite its operational and financial highways management processes, from initial defect reporting through to completion confirmation of the final repair.

Results

- Over five years, the council saved more than £1.5m after using Confirm to replace old office systems.
- The council also saved more than £3m of non-cash related savings due to improved efficiencies of its operations.
- The use of Confirm Connect enables highways inspectors' maintenance teams to spend longer in the field, without returning to the office between jobs to complete paperwork.

Summary

- Highways Officers can allocate resources to each reported issue while having insight into ongoing and future projects.
- Lincolnshire County Council has reported both time and resource savings when carrying out maintenance and repairs since adopting the new reporting system, from Brightly Software, a Siemens company.
- The enquiry form system, within Brightly's Confirm asset management solution for local government, allows Highways Officers in Lincolnshire to address reports made by the public by creating forward planning briefs (FPB).
- FPB lists are automatically updated in the system, which streamlines the resource management process and ensures that issues are resolved in a timely manner.

How It works

Members of the public in Lincolnshire are able to report road-related issues – for example, potholes, flooding or a fallen tree – to the council. Highways Officers in Lincolnshire County Council can then create FPBs to set up a job for each reported issue. FPBs enable timeframes and budgets to be allocated to a job, and the system issues task orders to contractors who will execute the repairs. FPBs also enable the council to efficiently store vast amounts of information about jobs in a centralised system, including where and when they are taking place, and their completion status.

Richard Fenwick, Head of Highways Asset Management at Lincolnshire County Council, explains: “When a job gets raised, we calculate target costs for our service team. When the job is completed, we can look back and compare the estimate against what it ended up costing.”

He adds that when a FPB has been set up, an action officer (for example, a Highways Officer) is assigned, and they can set and update the job status according to its progress.

Confirm's enquiry form system allows jobs to be viewed and filtered according to their status, date, priority level and electoral division, and it provides a visual map view showing the location of upcoming projects. Job information, as well as the map, can be viewed by all users of the system within the council, for example, Highways Officers. It can be shared with teams within the council who are not linked to the highways management team, as well as external parties, such as contractors, thanks to Confirm's capability to integrate with numerous other software such as Power BI.



New and improved approach

Lincolnshire County Council started using Confirm for its asset management in 2010 and recently a few years ago, it rolled out the FPB system to centralise information about ongoing and future jobs, as well as and improveing collaboration.

Fenwick explains: “Before we started using enquiry forms for our ongoing and future schemes, job information was stored in spreadsheets – typically one per team. This meant that within a certain area, the Programme Leader for carriageways, the Surfaces Treatments Manager and the Highways Manager would each have a spreadsheet of schemes. If a local manager wanted to know what was happening in that area, they would have to ask and review each of those spreadsheets.”

The new approach, he says, is more efficient and consistent, saving the council more than £1.5m over five years.

It ensures that only one job per issue is reported, rather than duplicates. For example, if a pothole is reported and an FPB is created for it, officers and contractors will see it in the system and will be aware that it’s being resolved.

“The more areas using one source of truth, the better,” says Fenwick.



Brightly gives us a single hub for all our asset information. It has also helped us identify holes within our data, so we know what else to capture when conducting condition assessments.

Richard Fenwick

Head of Highways Asset Management,
Lincolnshire County Council

Efficiency First

The new system hugely saves on time, because officers and/or contractors in the field can view and update jobs on-site – with a phone or tablet, for example – and seamlessly move between jobs, rather than having to report to an office after each one to update relevant paperwork. The map view also enhances the logistics of repairs by enabling jobs to be addressed in order, based on proximity. For example, pot holes can be repaired from East to West of a route, rather than in no particular order.

Fenwick says: “We’ve had examples of people reporting a pothole in the morning and it’s been repaired before the end of the day. In cases like that, a Highways Officer was working in close proximity to the reported issue; they’ve been instantly notified of it and have been able to take care of it later that day.”

Fenwick says a key benefit of Confirm is its capability to be tailored to meet the needs of Lincolnshire County Council’s highways management team. Indeed, this particular system was purpose-built to enable better monitoring of current and future jobs, as well as related resource planning, yet other local authorities in the UK are using the software differently.

Fenwick says: “It’s a tool that is flexible enough to be shaped around the needs of us and our contractors. It’s a comprehensive, data-driven solution with a user-friendly interface that enables information to be viewed and extracted easily.”

Looking forward, Lincolnshire County Council is working with Brightly to enhance the system by enabling it to show logged jobs as far three years in advance. This will enable Highways Officers to better manage their resources – including budgets – across longer time periods.

Ultimately, by continuing to respond to reports in a timely and cost-efficient manner, Lincolnshire County Council is further improving the public’s trust in its capabilities, while a facilitating safe, thriving community.

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