



INTRODUCTION

Leaders in the utilities sector across Worcestershire joined together to uncover and solve system wide challenges with mains replacement work across the County. Partners from the following organisations came together with a common goal to reduce duplication, improve communications between partners and to achieve better outcomes for partners and road users:

Worcestershire County Council

National Grid Gas

Balfour Beatty

Severn Trent Water

Morgan Sindall



OBJECTIVE



To improve the co-ordination of work between the partner organisations

To reduce the impact on road users of mains replacement programmes

To improve the processes to improving the experience of road users?

Reduce levels of handoff, duplication and other waste within the system.



OUTCOMES



The project delivered some tangible benefits for everyone involved:

- Forward Planning notices are now completed by National Grid. This has reduced the likelihood of wasted time on schemes that are cancelled.
- Severn Trent Water are using a Daily Diary to communicate schemes behind schedule to the Council Streetworks Team (as soon as they happen) and to identify notices that can be closed.
- Collaboration has reduced the likelihood of penalties due to overstays saving £48,000 per year in Worcestershire alone, across the region Severn Trent Water expect to saving over £120,000
- National Grid and Balfour Beatty have created a pre-enablement team to reduce the likelihood of overstays and extensions. Based on historic data for Worcestershire they expect to save £45,000 per year in Worcestershire alone. Regionally, this will save £540,000

- Joint site visits and walk offs to minimise defects and improve quality (£37,500 annual cost reduction for Worcestershire County Council)

- Reducing costs by sharing Traffic Management services (for defect and other appropriate repairs) has generated a £20,000 annual saving for Worcestershire County Council and an additional £20,000 for Worcestershire Highways

While many of the above benefits sit with the utility companies, additional drivers for the project were to improve the quality of work conducted and to minimise the impact of these schemes on the community. Partners are also enjoying additional benefits such as:

- Reducing the number of temporary reinstatements
- Clearer information to residents
- Making scheme duration more predictable, and in many cases reducing the duration of works and minimising disruption to the public
- A reduction in calls into Worcestershire County Council “you’ve just dug this street up...” “what’s happening on my street” “Why are they still here?”



SUSTAINABILITY



The partners on this project are commitment on an on-going and sustainable approach to improvements in Worcestershire. Many of the partners are now working together on larger schemes:

- Severn Trent water and National Grid have identified 3 joint opportunities in the next twelve months. They are now looking at between 3 and 7 years ahead to identify more opportunities.
- Partners have introduced video and photography into planning so that partners can conduct joint approach to assessing need on site before work commences: identifying opportunities to work together and reducing defect liability

“This Partnership project has significantly improved joint liaison and working between Severn Trent Water, National Grid and ourselves the County Council as Highways Authority and Network Control manager for Worcestershire. Bringing our three major organisations together to review works and, jointly improve our Lean and efficient works on major and medium schemes has reduced costs, and also provided for improved coordination and reduced impacts for residents in the County. This alongside, improving the quality of finished works on the highway, there are benefits for all to see”

Ian Bamforth
Worcestershire County Council – Highways
Manager