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Client Success Story

Dorset County Council fast-tracks highway maintenance by deploying a mobile asset management solution

Client

Dorset County Council

Vitals

- Governs six districts along the southern coast of England
- 2,653 square kilometers; home to approximately 772,000 people

Challenges

Dorset needed to ensure that roadways are maintained for tourists, residents, and businesses. Staff need visibility into maintenance and conditions of the roadways, as well as "street furniture" such as drains, signs, gullies and verges.

Results

Members of the public can not only log inquiries 24x7, but they get resolution much more quickly. Within seconds, the investigator knows about the inquiry. Within an hour, that person may be able to investigate the problem, update the record and assign the work to a crew.

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Overview

Situated along the southern coast of England, Dorset is a picturesque county with a storied history. Three-quarters of the county's coastline is included in the Jurassic Coast Natural World Heritage Site because of its geologic and paleontological significance, and more than half the county has been designated an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty by the British government.

Points of interest in Dorset County include Corfe Castle, vanquished by Oliver Cromwell's army in 1646, and excavated remains of Maiden Castle, an Iron Age hill fort. Seventy-five percent of the Dorset County coastline has been awarded UNESCO World Heritage status. It should come as little surprise that tourism is the county's predominant industry.

Business challenge

One key responsibility of the Dorset County Council is ensuring that roadways are well-maintained for tourists, residents, businesses and everyone else. Thus, staff need visibility into maintenance and conditions of the roadways, as well as "street furniture" such as drains, signs, gullies and verges.

Paul Moon, the council's infrastructure and technology manager, is responsible for providing those insights. "We need to know exactly what we have, what condition it's in, what needs to be done to it and where we need to spend money," he says.

Previously, the county used an asset management system that did not work on mobile devices. "Resident concerns would be entered into the system, then a paper record would be created," Moon says. "Highway engineers, inspectors and operational works crews would have to drive to the depot to collect the paper." (See Figure 1.)

"At the work sites, they would record what they did," Moon continues, "then they would drive the paper back to the depot, where eventually the paper record would be entered into a system by administrative staff. There was a lot of waste."

The council began looking for a solution to support more efficient processes. "We needed a system that would fully support mobile working," Moon says. "We also needed better mapping and better reporting, and we wanted to make sure it was asset management- centric."

Among all their options, the Brightly Confirm enterprise asset management solution best met these criteria.

> " Confirm creates quality in contract meetings and enables continuous improvement of operations. "
>
> **Emma Howarth**
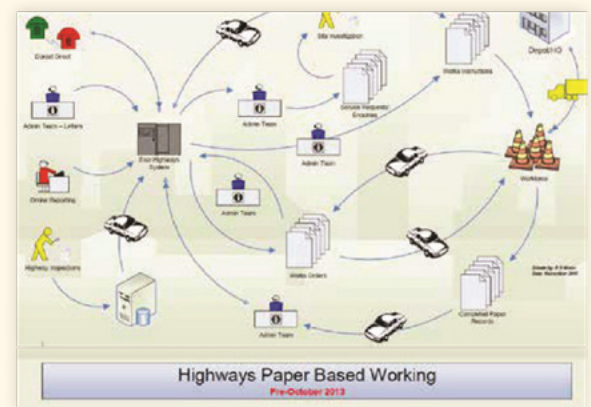> Service Delivery Manager

Figure 1: Before implementation of the Brightly Confirm Enterprise Asset Management solution, every highways repair in Dorset County consumed a great deal of paper, driving time and staff busy work.

Solution

Dorset County Council deployed the Confirm software, along with the Confirm Workzone and Confirm Connect modules.

Now residents can report concerns online, identifying on a map exactly where each problem lies. Inspectors will immediately receive an alert, and Confirm Connect enables them to access all relevant data in the field. If the asset requires work, maintenance staff will see it in the work schedules on their mobile devices, and mapping functionality makes clear where problematic assets are located.

After completing an inspection or repair, field staff can remotely upload their record of the work. (See Figure 2.) Meanwhile, dashboards provide instantaneous access to performance data, helping managers and staff spot productivity issues.

"The reporting in Confirm has revolutionized the way we work by giving everyone accurate, up-to-date information at the press of a button," Moon says.

Benefits

Efficiency gains have far exceeded expectations. "Confirm Workzone has enabled us to improve the productivity of our workforce enormously," Moon says. "The reduction in paperwork from Confirm Connect mobile connectivity has enabled us to redeploy three administrative staff members, and productivity has substantially increased for our field staff because we've eliminated the time traveling to and from depots."

At the same time, the council is providing better service to residents. Members of the public can not only log inquiries 24x7, but they get resolution much more quickly," Moon says. "Within seconds, the investigator knows about the inquiry. Within an hour, that person may be able to investigate the problem, update the record and assign the work to a crew.

"With the previous paper-based process, it took six to eight weeks, on average, for works records to be nentered into the system," Moon adds. "Using Confirm Connect, the same data records are available within Confirm approximately 45 seconds after the works are completed on the ground. This has resulted in more accurate information and faster response times for our customers, the highways users."

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> What I like about the Confirm solution is that Brightly is always wanting to move forward. That's immensely important for us as customers.
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Paul Moon
Infrastructure and Technology Manager,
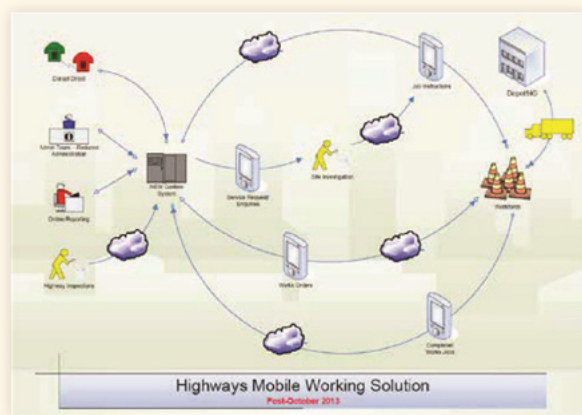Dorset County Council

Figure 2: Using Confirm, Confirm Connect and Confirm Workzone, Dorset County Council has streamlined asset management processes. Now mobile devices instantly upload information, saving considerable time that staff used to spend completing, transporting and managing paper-based records.

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Building on these benefits, Dorset County recently completed the transition from an on-premises deployment of Confirm software to a software-as-a-service model. The local county government is undergoing fundamental organizational changes, which are likely to cause considerable upheaval to the already depleted information and communications technology (ICT) department.

"As a highway service, we need to keep the highways safe and in good condition," Moon says. "We moved our asset management system off-site so that we wouldn't have to worry about things like resilience, support or updates."

All in all, Moon says, Brightly has proven to be an excellent partner to Dorset County Council. "What I like about the Confirm solution is that Brightly is always wanting to move forward, and they allow us to be part of that travel," he says. "We work with them to have our ideas incorporated into the product going forward. That's immensely important for us as customers."

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