

# Case Study

## BRINGING LOCATION TO LIFE

# Environment Roads and Facilities Digital Transformation Project



## CONWY COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

### THE CHALLENGE

In 2013, Conwy County Borough Council realised that it would benefit greatly by bringing three departments together - Highways and Infrastructure, Environmental Services and Property Services - under one banner: the Environment Roads & Facilities Department. Multiple systems made this an ambitious project. The new department's remit would include almost every aspect of the council's front-line services.

Highway maintenance, street cleansing, parks, parking, street lighting, streetworks, traffic engineering, road safety, harbours, bridges and structures, allotments, bereavement services, facilities management, school transport, fleet management, tramway, flood risk management and consultancy services.

To deliver the tangible savings projected, the IT systems needed rationalisation. Many of the services were street and asset based, but limited location data was in use, resulting in inconsistent records and a reduced transparency and efficiency. It was clear that a robust asset management system, able to serve as many services as possible.



### THE SOLUTION

The Environment Roads and Facilities (ERF) Digital Transformation Project undertook a business-wide review. It was decided that the existing Highways Asset Management system should be the basis for a new departmental system, underpinned by an accredited BS 7666 gazetteer - the Local Street Gazetteer (LSG). The ERF's impact has been significant:


- **Customer Services:** Combining the resources and systems of three departments, every request is now linked and spatially referenced to either a USRN, or an individual asset. This makes it easy to enhance operational reports monitoring performance. Bespoke reports update managers on the status of requests. These are easily grouped by request type, street, town and geographical information - allowing rapid filtering by relevant service.
- **Mobile Technology:** Conwy County uses mobile technology for highway inspections and works ordering. Therefore, a logical solution with zero cost, would be to roll out mobile customer service inspections, allowing requests to be issued in real time from the back office, reducing paper processes, travel time and improving communication. With a full, location-ref-

erenced audit trail, all events and actions are logged against the lifecycle of the request, allowing everyone access to the history and current status of the request.

- **Financial Management:** Service savings needed to be calculated accurately, which meant integrating financial information into the system. (Mechanisms were already in place for raising works orders, but these didn't record the plant, labour and materials involved. Expenditure couldn't be broken down to individual jobs.) The solution involved the introduction of a new, location-oriented coding structure that connected expenditure to type of works and asset. Directly validated via the USRN, this now plays an important role in breaking down budgets and expenditure to the road classification and network within local government.
- **Street Lighting:** The existing Street Lighting Inventory needed migration into the main asset management system. A large data cleansing project was undertaken, every asset was checked and reviewed, and spatial analysis then linked each street lighting asset to the nearest USRN.
- **Gully Maintenance:** The current asset management system lent itself easily to the management of gully maintenance, linking each gully to a USRN that allowed inspections

and customer service requests to be held in one place. In addition, this approach enables external contractors to use location based information when doing works - verifying locations using the USRN - despite their own systems being ostensibly incompatible.

- **Open Spaces:** The Open Spaces section of the ERF encompasses a wide range of assets and services. Litter bins, dog fouling, fly tipping, parks and gardens, etc. Every Open Space operation is now managed and linked using the USRN, giving greater consistency and ease of reporting across the departments.
- **Customer Portals:** By 2016, departmental data had already been aligned and linked directly to the Local Street Gazetteer and USRN, across a wide range of front-line public services. The Customer Service Advice Team clicks on a map, zooms to a location, and can see at a glance what data is held. Data cleansing is undertaken on a daily basis, allowing ERF to become more confident about the information available. More recently, this has led to the commissioning of a main, customer-facing ERF portal - allowing the public to report on every centrally-managed service. Running in parallel, a further Street Lighting asset based portal has also been deployed and further customer interface portal had been deployed for Management of Flood Risk assets and related requests.



*Perhaps the most important outcome for Conwy County is the way in which location-linked Customer Portals have been embraced and adopted by the public. This demonstrates the Council's commitment to listening and resolving problems, and to being transparent and effective in the management of assets and allocation of resources.*

## THE RESULTS

Following the setup of the combined Environment Roads & Facilities Department, every request for Conwy County's operational services are now recorded against a USRN. Service delivery has significantly improved across the board.

With more requests being recorded and plotted accurately in the correct location first time, both online and using the back office asset management system, Conwy County Borough Council is saving significant amounts of administrative and officer time. KPIs have improved significantly in several areas.

In Street Lighting, for example, streetlamp failures being repaired within 5 calendar days rose to 89.94% during 2017/18. And the average number of days for responding to a streetlamp issue dropped from 4.75 days (2014-15) to 2.56 days during the same period.

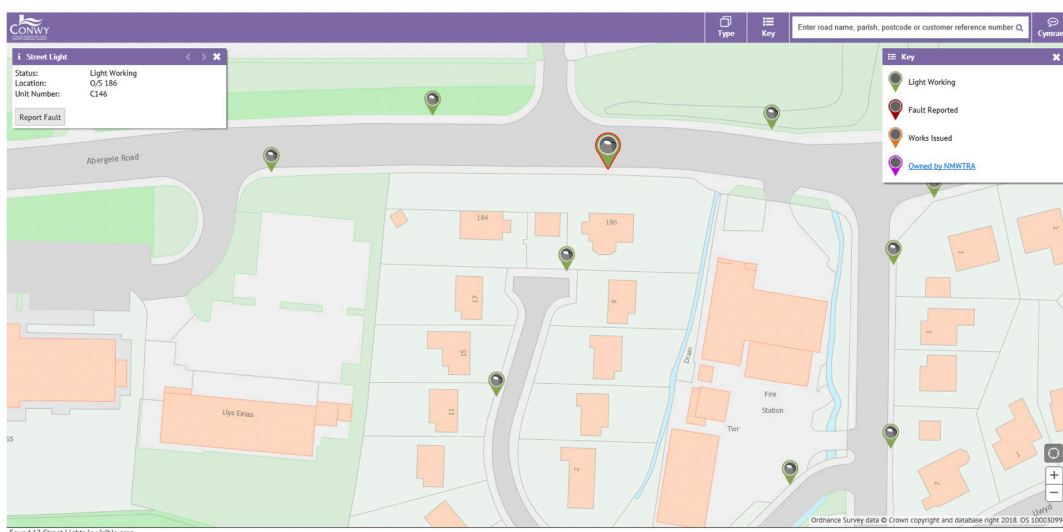
In the first full year of the Customer Portal going live, 47.2% of all Street Lighting requests were reported online. This channel shift away from phone enquiries delivers an annual saving of over £25,000 in staffing levels.

The rationalisation of IT systems has led to further software and licenses savings: previously retained services would have incurred costs in the region of £50,000 per annum.

However, perhaps the most important outcome for Conwy County is the way in which location-linked Customer Portals have been embraced and adopted by the public. This demonstrates the Council's commitment to listening and resolving problems, and to being transparent and effective in the management of assets and allocation of resources.

## Bringing Street Lighting Location to Life

Street Lighting Asset based portal , shows all street lighting units themed by their operational status



### Conwy's Street Lighting Portal utilises the UPRN

When customers submit a request, the service correlates activities with contractors' availability; it updates other, integrated systems; and emails the customer with confirmation of the job's status.

# We are GeoPlace

## Bringing location to life

We are GeoPlace, the team managing a central hub of around 44 million addresses and over 1.39 million streets in the UK.

We take feeds of address and street data from local authorities in England and Wales, central government, Ordnance Survey and Royal Mail. We also take data from Scotland, Northern Ireland, Isle of Man and the Channel Islands via the Improvement Service, Land & Property Services, Isle of Man Government and Digimap respectively.

This data goes through a rigorous validation process, which includes 364 Address data checks and 550 Street data checks, before being accepted into the National Street Gazetteer and National Address Gazetteer.

Overall, we update around 2 million records every month. The information in our database is also enriched with attributes from other datasets to enhance detail and quality - it's an ongoing process of co-operation and collaboration.

The end result is a unified, authoritative source for all addressing and street data in the UK.

Our Gazetteers are prized and respected national assets. They make it easier for central and local government, commerce, organisations and individuals to access Unique Property Reference Numbers (UPRNs) and Unique Street Reference Numbers (USRNs) with confidence.



GeoPlace is a public sector limited liability partnership between the Local Government Association and Ordnance Survey



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