

# Highway Network Management Section

## Road and Street Works Permit Scheme

### Year 2 Review

1 April 2021 – 31 March 2022

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## 1. Executive summary

The Traffic Management Act 2004 (TMA) was introduced to give local authorities the tools to tackle congestion and disruption on the highway network and laid the legislative groundwork for the introduction of permit schemes by highway authorities.

The development of the council's Permit Scheme (the Scheme) was completed at the end of 2019 by the Highway Network Management Section (HNMS). It was approved by the Cabinet in January 2020 and commenced on 30 April 2020. The HNMS is responsible for the implementation of the Scheme policy and its operation. This review covers Year 2 of the Scheme.

The overarching objectives and aims of the Scheme are to: manage and maintain the integrity of the local highway network; maximise the safe and efficient use of road space; provide reliable journey times and timely information to the travelling public; contribute to the reduction in carbon emissions from the whole-life cycle of local roads; and support the accelerated digital rollout in County Durham.

Since the introduction of the Scheme, the HNMS has introduced IT functionalities that enable the provision of real-time road closure updates and effective communication of road works information to stakeholders on an outward facing platform.

In addition, the HNMS plans to: implement any outcomes from the Department for Transport's (DfT's) Street Manager and permit scheme regulations review; pursue enhanced proactive and collaborative planning with digital works promoters and Durham County Council's (DCC's) Highways Assets and Operations teams; facilitate an accelerated rollout of electric vehicle (EV) infrastructure; pursue more proactive management of events impacting on the highway network; and introduce additional inspections and enforcement technology.

The civil engineering sector is experiencing a significant shortage of skilled and experienced engineers and, like many employers, the HNMS is having difficulty attracting new entrants. Achieving a full organisational establishment is essential for the effective and efficient operation of HNMS activities to deliver a high quality and timely service for all works promoters. The HNMS plans to pursue a proactive recruitment strategy to fill all vacant posts.

The findings from the Scheme Year 2 review demonstrate that it has effectively contributed towards achieving its objectives and aims. Notwithstanding the above, the number of Fixed Penalty Notices (FPNs) issued, particularly for road works, is considered an important area for improvement. This Year 2 FPNs showed a static outcome in the rate (1 per 10 permits) for street works and an increase in the rate (4 to 6 per 10 permits) for road works.

The financial position of the Scheme is sound in that in Year 1 there was a surplus of £329,961; in Year 2 a surplus of £290,035; with a projected surplus in Year 3 of £15,945; and thereby, giving an accumulated actual surplus in Year 2 of £619,955 and a projected surplus in Year 3 of £635,940.

The HNMS proposes (subject to statutory consultation and approval) to increase staffing levels within HNMS to improve scheme compliance of the street works promoters (digital utility installers) and to ensure that fee levels do not exceed the prescribed costs and, in accordance with legislation, the operational surplus is reduced. It is forecast that with staff increases and

current inflation, the Scheme's finances are expected to balance income and expenditure within the next few years.

However, forecasts will be reviewed each year in the light of the actual outturn figures to ensure the council does not bear any financial burden from the Scheme and also street works promoters do not overpay for the permit service.

## 2. Introduction

The Traffic Management Act 2004 (TMA) was introduced to give local authorities the tools to tackle congestion and disruption on the highway network and laid the legislative groundwork for the introduction of permit schemes by highway authorities.

The primary benefits of a permit scheme are to facilitate:

- A reduction in both the number of road and street works and their duration through proactive management of activities on the highway to minimise disruption. This supports economic growth and reduces carbon emissions;
- An improvement in the quality and timeliness of information that is available to the public and stakeholders; and
- More proactive and collaborative planning and working between works promoters.

The development of the Scheme was completed at the end of 2019 by the Highway Network Management Section (HNMS). It was approved by the Cabinet in January 2020 and commenced on 30 April 2020. This review covers Year 2 of the Scheme.

Following the UK's commitment to a target of net zero emissions by 2050, the UK government announced that no new petrol or diesel cars or vans will be sold from 2030 onwards. As such, it anticipates a significant increase in the sale of electric cars and outlined plans to increase the number of public EV chargers by 300,000 by 2030 as part of its Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Strategy. The HNMS is committed to playing its part in facilitating an accelerated rollout of EV chargepoints to contribute towards the UK government's EV infrastructure target.

The infrastructure sector, of which the road and street works sector is a part, has a duty to contribute towards reducing UK emissions to support the delivery of the net zero target by 2050. In March 2022, the Highway Authority and Utilities Committee (HAUC(UK)) published a document entitled 'Investigating Opportunities to Minimise the Impact of Street and Road Works on Climate Change'.

In addition, the rollout of digital connectivity has been highlighted as an important part of the UK government's Levelling Up agenda. In 2021, the Department of Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) launched 'Project Gigabit', a £5 billion government infrastructure project to enable and deliver fast, reliable digital connectivity for the UK.

In recognition of the important role played by the HNMS in addressing climate change and facilitating advancement of digital connectivity for its communities, a reduction in carbon emissions from road and street works; and digitalisation have been identified as additional priorities in Year 2 of the Scheme.

### 3. Permit Scheme aims

The aims of the Scheme are to:

- Manage and maintain the integrity of the local highway network;
- Maximise the safe and efficient use of road space; and
- Provide reliable journey times.

The Year 2 review of the Scheme has highlighted the following newly published documents, which have been considered when reviewing and updating the Scheme aims. These documents are:

- North East Transport Plan (NETP);
- HAUC(UK) 5-Year Vision for Street and Road Works in the UK; and
- HM Treasury National Infrastructure Strategy.

The vision of the NETP is 'moving to a green, healthy, dynamic and thriving North East' including:

- Carbon neutral North East;
- Overcome inequality and grow our economy;
- Healthier North East;
- Appealing sustainable transport choices; and
- Safe, secure network.

HAUC(UK)'s 5-year vision for change is defined by five main themes. These are:

- Digitalisation;
- Innovation;
- Skills and workforce;
- Collaboration; and
- Environment and decarbonisation.

HM Treasury National Infrastructure Strategy outlines the UK government's plan to level up the whole of the UK by implementing the next stage of the digital revolution and ensuring that people can travel around their communities on well-maintained local roads with minimal disruption.

In view of these documents, two additional aims were identified for the Scheme in Year 2. These are to:

- Contribute to a reduction in carbon emissions from the whole lifecycle of local roads; and
- Support an accelerated digital rollout in County Durham.

## 4. Permit Scheme objectives

### 4.1. Ongoing objectives

To fulfil the aims of the Scheme in Year 1, four objectives were created (**table 1**). The outcome of these objectives is set out in **section 9**.

Reference	Objective	Description
OB1	Minimise disruption	Reduce the number of works in the highway and their duration through proactive management of activities to minimise disruption.
OB2	Accurate information	Ensure accurate information is available to stakeholders through improved quality and timeliness of activities on the highway network.
OB3	Proactive and collaborative planning	Encourage road and street works promoters to effectively forward plan and work together where possible.
OB4	Parity	Ensure road and street works promoters are treated fairly and equitably.

**Table 1:** Ongoing objectives from Year 1 of the Scheme.

### 4.2. Additional objectives

To fulfil the aims of the Scheme, two additional objectives were introduced in Year 2 of the Scheme (**table 2**).

Reference	Objective	Description
OB5	Reduction in carbon emissions from road and street works	Achieve a reduction in carbon emissions from road and street works activities by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reducing the occupancy of road and street works in the highway; and</li> <li>• Promoting the first-time completion of permanent reinstatements.</li> </ul>
OB6	Digitalisation	Ensure sufficient staffing resource is available to facilitate an accelerated digital rollout in County Durham.

**Table 2:** Additional objectives.

## 5. Review of actions

### 5.1. Implemented actions

Since the introduction of the Scheme, the HNMS has implemented the following actions to meet its defined objectives. **Actions 1** and **2** are now complete.

#### **Action 1:** Live Link

Live Link, a functionality of One.Network, enables traffic authorities to send real-time road closure updates to satnavs and consumer mapping services, influencing motorists' behaviour and providing timely and accurate information to the public.

The benefits delivered by Live Link contribute to Scheme objectives **OB1** and **OB2**.

#### **Action 2:** Content Management

Content Management, a functionality of One.Network, enables the HNMS to communicate highway works information to the public more effectively in plain English.

The benefits delivered by Content Management contribute to Scheme objectives **OB1** and **OB2**.

### 5.2. New and evolved actions

In view of the HNMS' goal of continuous improvement of the Scheme, it has identified and set the following new and evolved actions for completion during Year 3 of the Scheme. As of 31 March 2022, these actions are ongoing.

#### **Action 3:** National Street Gazetteer

The National Street Gazetteer (NSG) contains definitive infrastructure information for streets in England and Wales. Numerous organisations and local authorities use it assist them to work efficiently on, and travel around, our national highway network.

Additional street data (ASD) has been added to the NSG to assist with the coordination of road and street works, including:

- Bus lanes;
- Regular markets;
- Primary winter gritting routes;
- Parking bays (pay & display and permit);
- Controlled pedestrian crossings;
- Additional height, weight and width restrictions on Durham County Council's (DCC's) highway network;
- School crossing patrols; and
- Shrinkable clay areas.

The HNMS' extensive work on the NSG resulted in a Platinum Award for Street Data Quality and Improvement in the Geoplace Exemplar Awards 2022.



The HNMS looks forward to updating the NSG with additional information to continuously improve the quality, completeness and scope of the data it provides. Its work on the NSG contributes to Scheme objective **OB2**.

#### **Action 4:** Street Manager and permit scheme changes

Street Manager is a digital service provided by the Department for Transport (DfT) for planning, managing and recording road and street works.

The DfT has proposed a number of legislative changes to improve communication between highway authorities, utility companies and road users. This includes:

- Phasing of works within a permit;
- Mandatory use of Street Manager for notices relating to section 58 restrictions;
- Requirement for works start and stop notices to also apply at weekends, on bank holidays and for 'works for road purposes' carried out by highway authorities;
- Introduction of performance-based works inspections;
- Amendments to the criteria for designating roads as traffic sensitive; and
- Amendment to the definition of a major permit to remove works which would normally be planned or known about at least six months in advance of the date proposed for the works.

The HNMS looks forward to working collaboratively with road and street works promoters to implement the legislative amendments to permit schemes introduced by the DfT. These planned outcomes are expected to contribute to Scheme objectives **OB1**, **OB2**, **OB3**, **OB4** and **OB6**.

#### **Action 5:** Traffic monitoring

To optimise its traffic monitoring capabilities, the HNMS plans to explore the creation of a traffic monitoring control area to enable it to anticipate and/or react in a timely manner to real time events on the highway network, bringing together the many tools at its disposal.

These planned outcomes are expected to contribute to Scheme objective **OB2**.

#### **Action 6:** Greater use of New Roads and Street Works Act 1991 section 58 and 58A powers

The HNMS plans to expand its use of New Roads and Street Works Act 1991 (NRSWA) section 58 and 58A powers to protect the highway following substantial road and street works (e.g., resurfacing or reconstruction). These powers support a reduction in carbon emissions from road and street works by maximising the lifespan of the highway asset.

The HNMS intends to work with DCC's Highway Assets and Operations teams to introduce a robust system for the use of these powers and improve the consistency of their application.

These planned outcomes are expected to contribute to Scheme objectives **OB1** and **OB5**.

#### **Action 7:** Proactive and collaborative planning with digital works promoters and DCC's Highways Assets and Operations teams

The HNMS encourages work promoters to release their long-term works programmes with as much advance notice as possible to enable identification of joint working opportunities.

Given the anticipated accelerated digital and EV chargepoint rollout in County Durham, having an awareness of digital works promoters' long-term works programmes assists the HNMS and DCC's Highway Assets and Operations teams to coordinate the timing of works and ensures that the highway can be protected from any planned works following any major maintenance schemes.

These planned outcomes are expected to contribute to Scheme objectives **OB1**, **OB3**, **OB4**, **OB5** and **OB6**.

#### **Action 8:** Electric vehicle (EV) infrastructure

The HNMS looks forward to playing a role in facilitating an accelerated rollout of EV infrastructure to support the target pledged by the UK government in its Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Strategy.

The HNMS will continue to keep under review its staffing resource to enable the timely coordination of the installation and maintenance of EV chargepoints to ensure safety; minimise inconvenience to the travelling public, particularly for vulnerable road users; and protect the structure of the street and the apparatus in it.

These activities are expected to contribute to Scheme objectives **OB1**, **OB2**, **OB3** and **OB5**.

#### **Action 9:** Coring programme

The HNMS is planning to implement a highway reinstatement coring programme in accordance with the DfT's Street Works Inspections (Coring) to:

- Determine whether statutory undertakers' reinstatements comply with the DfT's Specification for the Reinstatement of Openings in Highways (SROH);
- Drive improvements in reinstatement compliance; and
- Protect the integrity of the council's highway asset.

These planned outcomes are expected to contribute to Scheme objectives **OB1** and **OB5**.

#### **Action 10:** Events on the highway

The HNMS plans to engage more proactively with organisers of public events on the highway by enhancing its use of the One.Network functionality, thereby contributing to Scheme objectives **OB1**, **OB2** and **OB3**.

#### **Action 11:** Enhanced site inspections and permit enforcement

The HNMS Procedure for Use of Body Worn Video for site inspections and permit enforcement has been updated to reinforce compliance with data protection legislation including GDPR and the Data Protection Act 2018.

The HNMS looks forward to introducing new body worn video technology with the ability to support the automatic upload of data to the Cloud when it becomes available in 2023.

These outcomes are expected to contribute to Scheme objectives **OB1** and **OB4**.

## 6. Organisational structure

### 6.1. Recruitment

The civil engineering sector is experiencing a significant shortage of skilled and experienced engineers and technicians and, like many employers, the HNMS is having difficulty attracting new entrants.

The HNMS has carried out an ongoing recruitment drive, bringing in additional staff to fill many roles within its organisational structure. However, there are still a number of positions that remain vacant.

The onboarding of new starter civil engineering degree and HNC apprentices continued for the academic year commencing September 2021. The HNMS believes that apprentices can make a significant contribution by bringing along with them energy and enthusiasm and, if supported, may become a major asset.

As of 31 March 2022, there are currently 7 vacant positions (including 2 business support posts) in the HNMS organisational structure. It is proposed also to increase staffing levels to improve scheme compliance of the street work promoters. Achieving a full organisational establishment is essential for the effective and efficient operation of HNMS activities and achieving Scheme objectives **OB1**, **OB2**, **OB3** and **OB6**.

**Figure 3** displays the HNMS organogram as of 31 March 2022.

## 6.2. Organogram

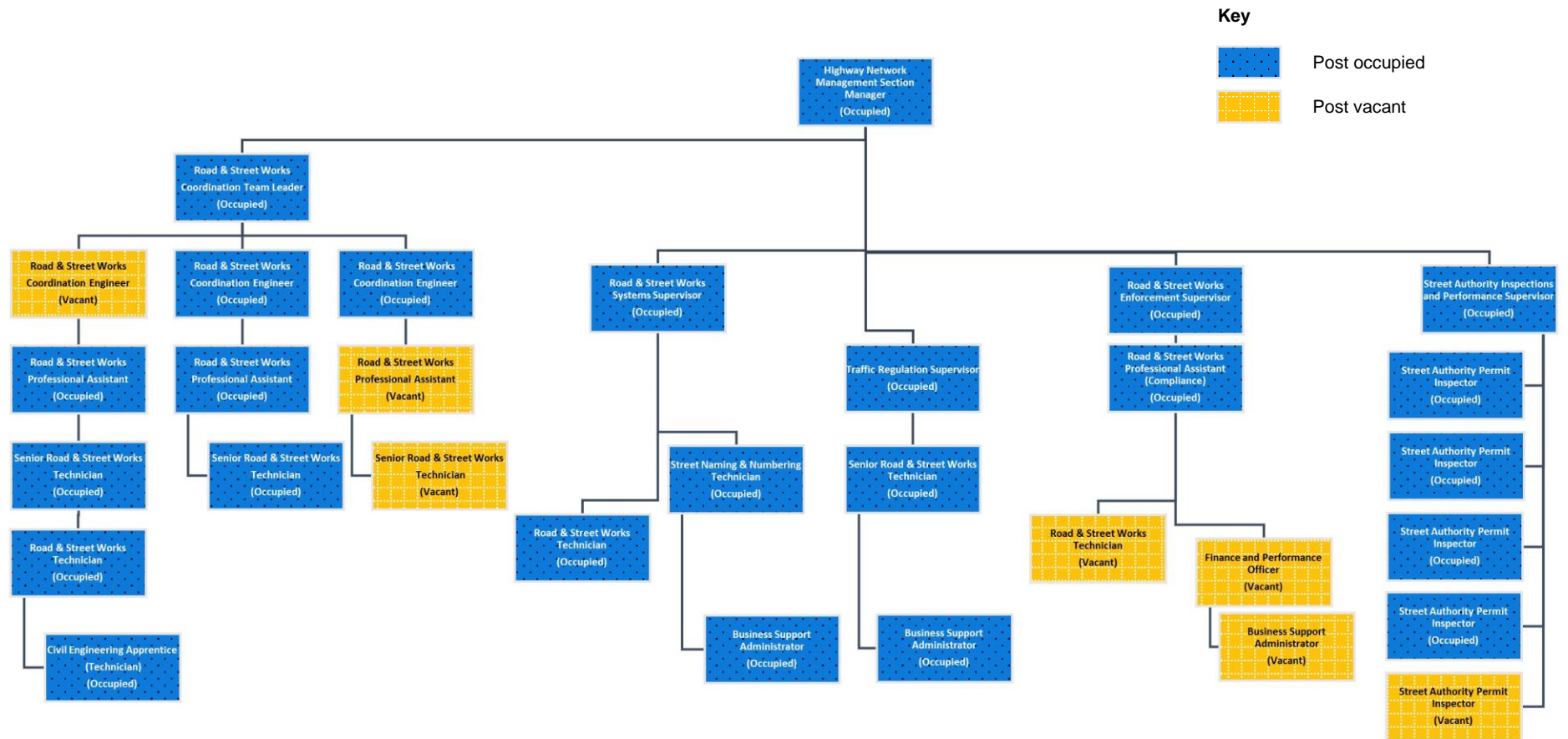


Figure 1: HNMS organogram as of 31 March 2022.

## 7. Training and development

The HNMS supports its staff to gain the necessary experience and academic qualifications to enable them to successfully achieve professional registration with civil and highway engineering institutions.

The many opportunities offered to staff enable them to develop the attributes and qualities of a professionally qualified civil engineer based on the standards required by the Engineering Council.

All HNMS staff are trained, qualified and competent to industry standard to ensure that they have the knowledge and skills necessary to fulfil their roles.

All staff undertake the LANTRA National Highways Sectors Scheme (NHSS) 12D M7 training for managers, designers and technical officers. These quality management schemes are designed to ensure that the design of temporary traffic management is undertaken to industry and nationally recognised standards.

The HNMS enables all staff to undertake the IHE's Professional Certificate in Temporary Traffic Management Engineering, an industry benchmark that has received endorsement from National Highways.

All staff are supported to successfully undertake the New Roads and Street Works Act 1991 (NRSWA) Street Works Supervisor training to enable their entry onto the Street Works Qualifications Register (SWQR).

## 8. Equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI)

The HNMS takes seriously its duties under the Equality Act 2010 and considers them high priorities.

In addition, it prioritises the needs of vulnerable road users in its coordination of the Scheme (as per the hierarchy of road users in the Highway Code). Road users most at risk from road traffic are pedestrians, in particular children, older adults and disabled people, cyclists, horse riders and motorcyclists.

Furthermore, it is dedicated to playing a role in the promotion of inclusive temporary traffic management design and removal of barriers to the independent mobility of disabled and older people (in accordance with the social model of disability). It uses these concepts in its planning and implementation across all projects and day to day management.

## 9. Permit Scheme performance

It is a requirement to evaluate the Scheme’s performance against the DfT’s statutory key performance indicators.

The key performance indicator figures outlined below are publicly available through the DfT’s Street Manager platform.

### 9.1. DfT’s key performance indicators

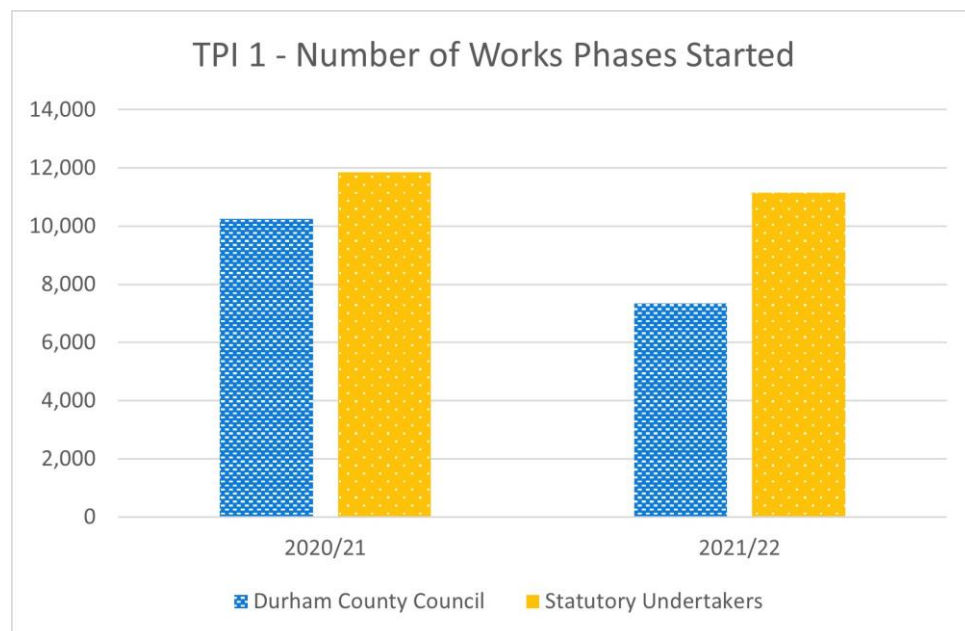
#### 9.1.1. TPI 1 – Number of works phases started

**Figure 2** shows that the number of works phases started by DCC has decreased from 10,258 to 7,349 and the figure for statutory undertakers has decreased from 11,857 to 11,144 giving a percentage split, of the total number of permits, of 40% and 60% respectively.

The decrease in number of works phases started for DCC can be attributed to procedural improvements whereby permit applications are now only submitted in cases where there is a requirement for a permit to work.

The decrease in number of works phases started for statutory undertakers can be attributed to more proactive planning and working supported by the HNMS.

Overall, these figures indicate progress towards achieving Scheme objectives **OB1**, **OB3** and **OB5**.



**Figure 2:** TPI 1 – Number of works phases started.

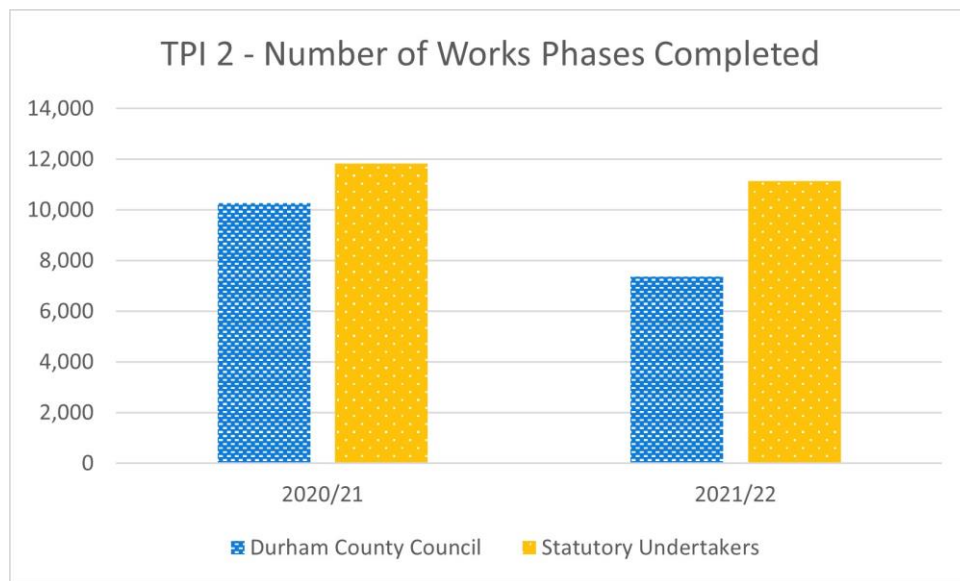


**9.1.2. TPI 2 – Number of works phases completed**

**Figure 3** shows that the number of works phases completed by DCC has decreased from 10,272 to 7,385 and the figure for statutory undertakers has decreased from 11,833 to 11,150.

The decrease in number of works phases completed for DCC and statutory undertakers can be attributed to the reduction in number of works phases started (in **TPI 1**).

Overall, these figures indicate progress towards achieving Scheme objectives **OB1**, **OB3** and **OB5**.



**Figure 3:** TPI 2 – Number of works phases completed.

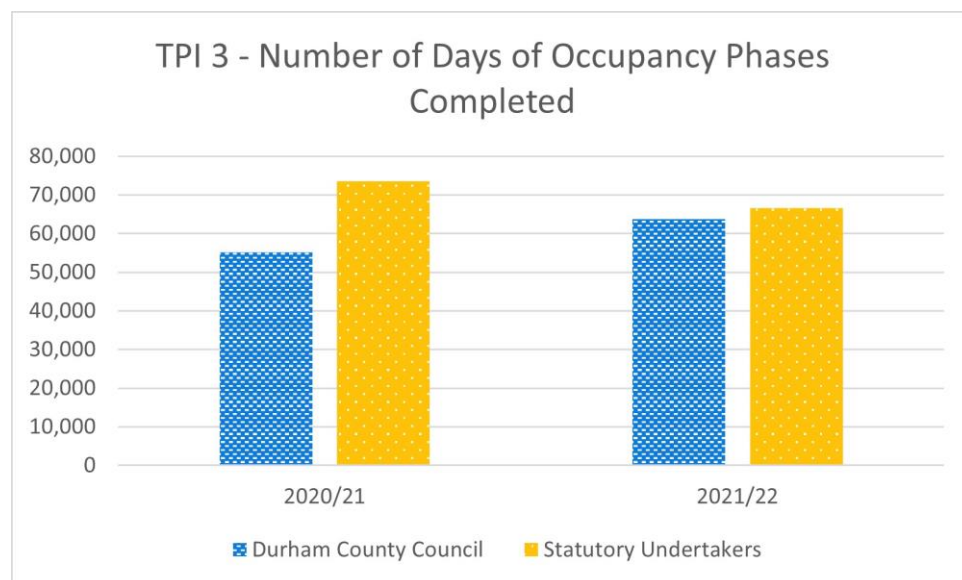


**9.1.3. TPI 3 – Number of days of occupancy phases completed**

**Figure 4** shows that the number of days of occupancy phases completed by DCC has increased from 55,160 to 63,744 (despite the reductions in **TPI 1** and **TPI 2**) and the figure for statutory undertakers has reduced from 73,606 to 66,629. The combined change is an increase of 1,607 days.

The reduction in number of days occupancy phases completed by statutory undertakers can be attributed to more proactive planning and working supported by the HNMS.

The HNMS intends to work collaboratively with all works promoters to reduce the number of days of occupancy phases they complete in future years. The planned outcome is expected to contribute towards achieving Scheme objectives **OB1**, **OB2**, **OB3** and **OB5**.



**Figure 4:** TPI 3 – Number of days of occupancy phases completed.

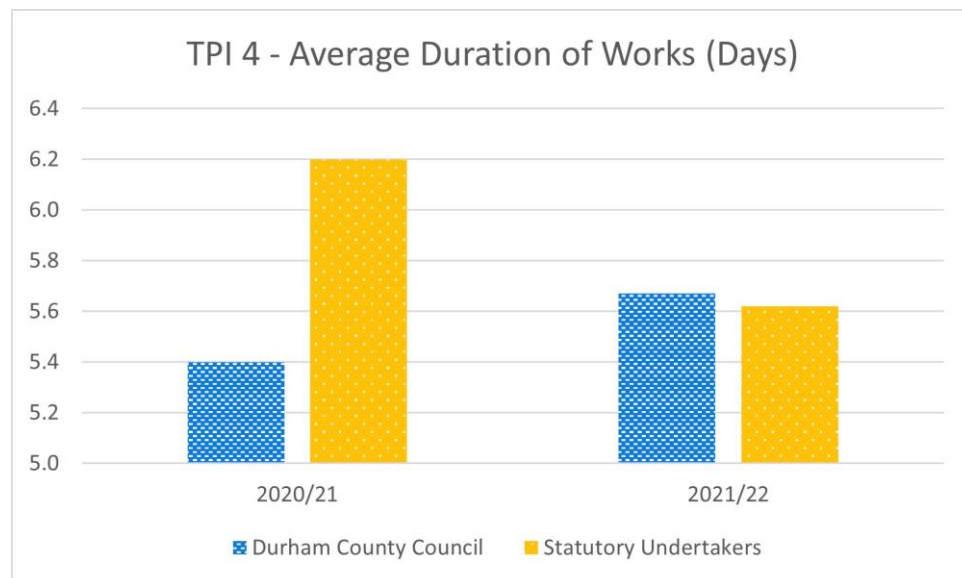
**9.1.4. TPI 4 – Average duration of works (days)**

**Figure 5** shows that the average duration of works for DCC has increased from 5.4 days to 5.7 days and the figure for statutory undertakers has reduced from 6.2 days to 5.6 days.

The increase in average duration of works (days) for DCC can be partially attributed to procedural improvements whereby permit applications are now only submitted in cases where there is a requirement for a permit to work, which has led to the removal of a classification of works that were typically of a shorter duration.

The reduction in average duration of works (days) for statutory undertakers can be attributed to more proactive planning and working supported by the HNMS.

The HNMS intends to work collaboratively with all works promoters to reduce their average duration of works in future years. The planned outcome is expected to contribute towards achieving Scheme objectives **OB1**, **OB2**, **OB3** and **OB5**.

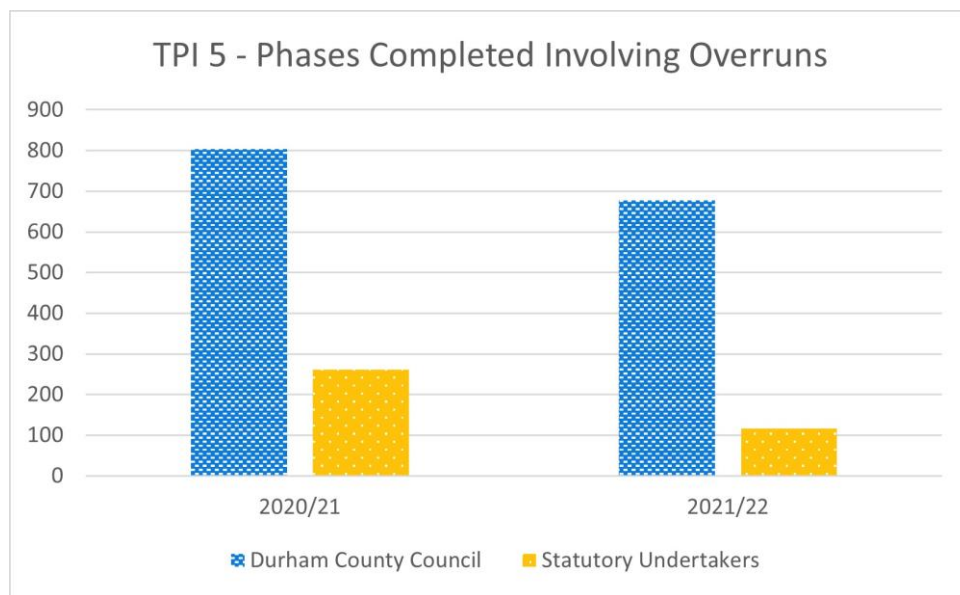


**Figure 5:** TPI 4 – Average duration of works (days).

**9.1.5. TPI 5 – Phases completed involving overruns**

**Figure 6** shows that the number of (works) phases completed involving overruns for DCC has decreased from 804 to 678 (which equates to an increase from 8 to 9 permits in 100) and the figure for statutory undertakers has decreased from 261 to 117 days (which equates to a decrease from 2 permits to 1 permit in 100). An overrun is a situation in which works have continued beyond expiration of the permit.

The HNMS intends to work collaboratively with all works promoters to reduce the proportion of phases involving overruns. The planned outcome is expected to contribute towards achieving Scheme objectives **OB1**, **OB2**, **OB3** and **OB5**.



**Figure 6:** TPI 5 – Phases completed involving overruns.

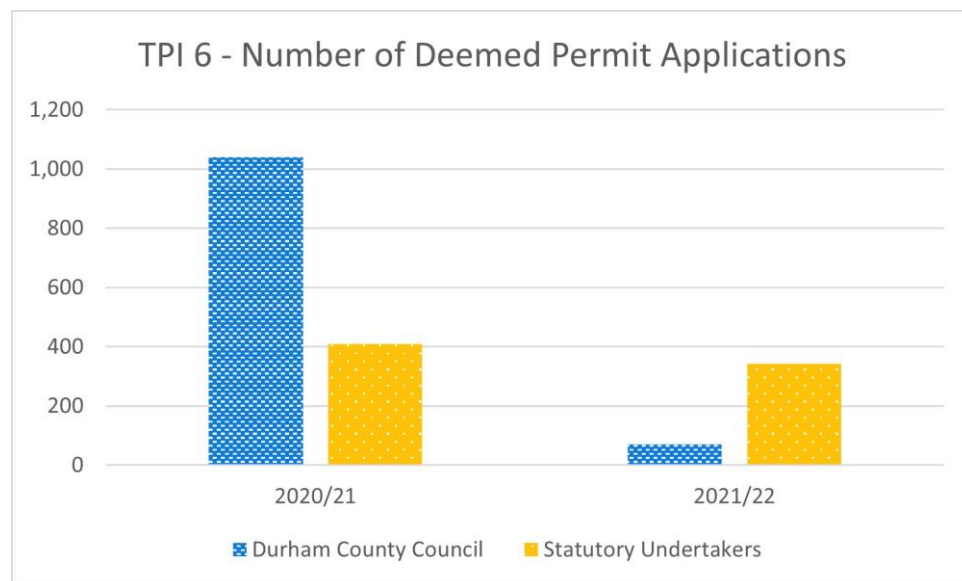
**9.1.6. TPI 6 – Number of deemed permit applications**

A permit is deemed (automatically granted) when the HNMS fails to provide a response within the statutory timeframe.

**Figure 7** shows that in Year 2 of the Scheme, 71 DCC permits deemed as well as 342 statutory undertaker permits. The combined figures represent approximately 1.8% of all permit applications.

The significant reduction in deemed permit applications can be attributed to the onboarding of additional staff to the HNMS to increase its capacity to coordinate proposed road and street works to ensure safety; minimise inconvenience to the travelling public, particularly for vulnerable road users; and protect the structure of the street and the apparatus in it. Achieving a full organisational establishment is essential for the effective and efficient operation of HNMS activities to deliver a high quality and timely service for all works promoters.

Overall, these figures indicate progress towards achieving Scheme objectives **OB1, OB3** and **OB5**.



**Figure 7:** TPI 6 – Number of deemed permit applications.

**9.1.7. TPI 7 – Number of phase 1 permanent registrations (reinstatements)**

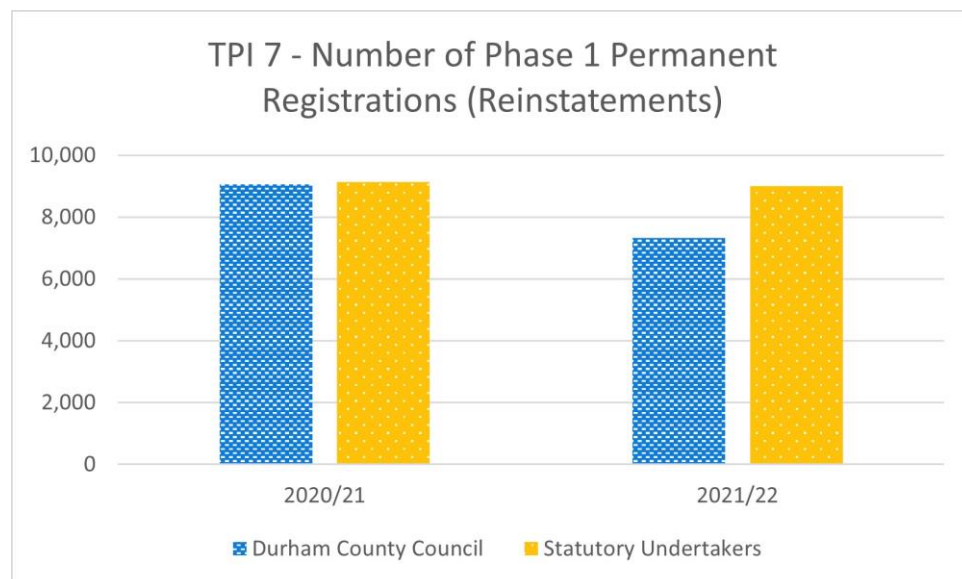
It is desirable for a permanent reinstatement of the highway excavation to be completed to reduce disruption for the travelling public and carbon emissions from road and street works activities.

**Figure 8** shows that the number of phase 1 permanent registrations (reinstatements) for DCC has decreased from 9,069 in Year 1 to 7,330 in Year 2; and the figure for statutory undertakers has decreased from 9,138 in Year 1 to 8,998 in Year 2.

The reduction in the actual number of phase 1 permanent registrations (reinstatements) for DCC and statutory undertakers can be attributed to a reduction in number of works phases started and completed (in **TPI 1** and **TPI 2**, respectively).

The figure for number of phase 1 permanent registrations (reinstatements) for DCC equates to an increase from 88.4% to 99.7% of all reinstatements and the figure for statutory undertakers equates to an increase from 77.1% to 80.7%.

Overall, these figures indicate progress towards achieving Scheme objectives **OB1**, **OB3** and **OB5**.



**Figure 8:** TPI 7 – Number of phase 1 permanent registrations (reinstatements).

## 9.2. Authority performance indicators

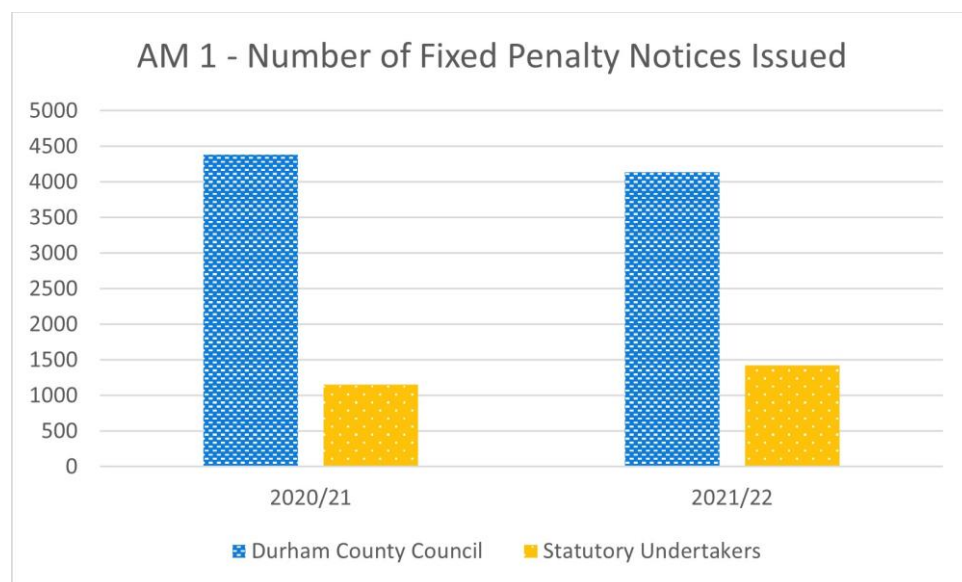
In addition to the DfT’s TPIs, the success of the Scheme is evaluated using the council-defined Authority Measures (AMs) presented below.

### 9.2.1. AM 1 – Number of fixed penalty notices issued

**Figure 9** shows that the FPNs issued to DCC in Year 2 were 4,135, which equates to 6 FPNs per 10 permits (from 4 FPNs per 10 permits in Year 1). The number of FPNs issued to statutory undertakers in Year 2 was 1,423, which equates to 1 FPN per 10 permits (from 2 per 10 permits in Year 1).

The number of FPNs issued is considered an important area for improvement as it contributes towards achieving Scheme objective **OB2**.

Furthermore, the UK government has indicated that the requirement to provide accurate information for road works will become a statutory obligation in April 2023.



**Figure 9:** AM 1 – Number of fixed penalty notices issued.

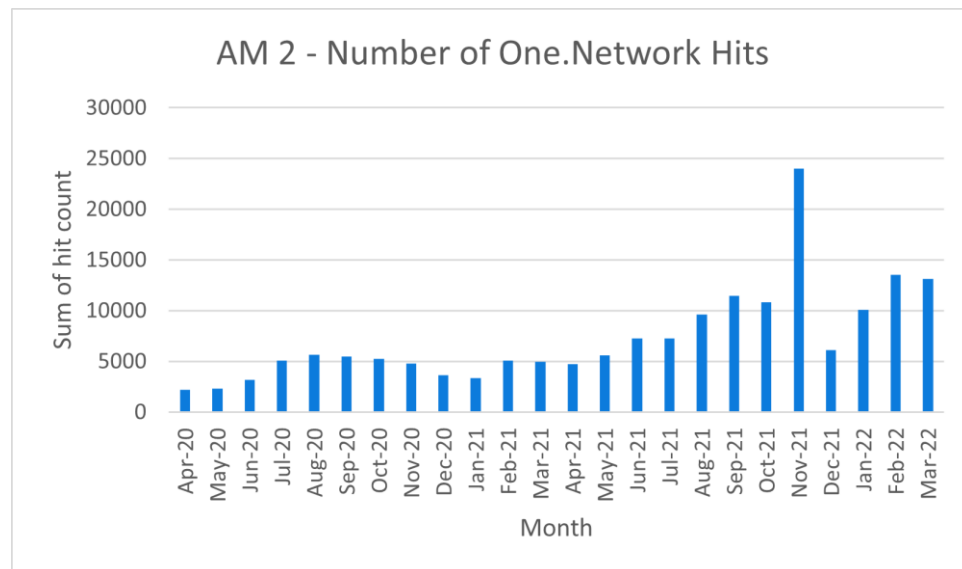
**9.2.2. AM 2 – Number of One.Network ‘hits’**

**Figure 10** shows that the number of One.Network ‘hits’ has steadily increased since the start of the last Scheme year. Consequently, it is becoming increasingly important that the data that it provides to road user stakeholders is highly accurate.

The significant rise or ‘spike’ in One.Network hits in November 2021 can be attributed to the Durham Lumiere winter light festival. The decline in the December 2021 figure reflects the suspension of the vast majority of road and street works over the festive period.

The number of hits for Year 1 of the Scheme was 151,445, which increased to 160,585 in Year 2 (an increase of 6%).

Overall, these figures indicate progress towards achieving Scheme objective **OB2**.



**Figure 10:** AM 2 – Number of One.Network hits.



### 9.2.3. AM 3 – Number of digital permit applications granted

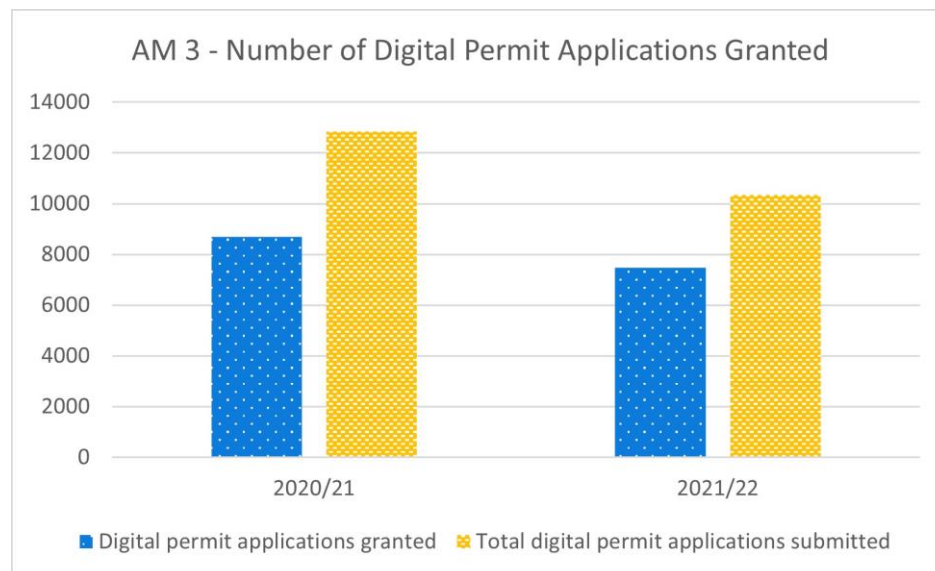
**AM 3** has been introduced to evaluate the Scheme’s performance in relation to the new objective **OB6**.

**Figure 11** shows that the number of digital permit applications granted in Year 1 was 8,684 (which equates to 68% of the total number of digital permit applications submitted).

The number of digital permit applications granted in Year 2 was 7,471 (which equates to 72% of the total number of digital permit applications submitted).

Due to the accelerated digital rollout (announced as part of the UK government’s Levelling Up agenda) and EV chargepoint rollout (announced as part of the UK government’s Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Strategy), the HNMS anticipates a significant increase in demand for coordination of proposed road and street works in future years to ensure safety; minimise inconvenience to the travelling public, particularly for vulnerable road users; and protect the structure of the street and the apparatus in it.

Achieving a full organisational establishment is essential for the effective and efficient operation of HNMS activities to deliver a high quality and timely service for all works promoters. The HNMS plans to pursue a proactive recruitment strategy to fill all vacant posts.



**Figure 11:** AM 3 – Number of digital permit applications granted. (The figure for total digital permit applications submitted excludes any permit phases cancelled before granted.)



#### 9.2.4. **AM 4** – Number of Live Link ‘hits’

Live Link is a functionality of One.Network available for use by the DCC Operations team whilst on site. It enables them to send real time updates on emergency incidents, including road closures, on the highway network that it identifies and/or actions directly to satnavs and consumer mapping services, such as Google Maps and Apple Maps.

The benefits of providing accurate, real-time information to the public and stakeholders via Live Link include the way it influences road user behaviour by allowing motorists to alter their planned routes in response to incidents, thereby minimising disruption on the highway and reducing motorists’ frustration.

The HNMS plans to continuously promote its use and intends to implement **AM 4**, a measure of number of Live Link ‘hits’, in Year 3 of the Scheme to assess its impact on objectives **OB1** and **OB2**.

#### **9.2.5. AM 5 – Reducing carbon emissions from road and street works activities**

As mentioned in the HAUC(UK) document 'Investigating Opportunities to Minimise the Impact of Street and Road Works on Climate Change', there is currently no industry-recognised metric for carbon emissions from road and street works activities.

As of 31 March 2022, the HAUC(UK) is embarking on research with a view to formulating a carbon calculator.

When an industry-recognised carbon calculator becomes available, the HNMS intends to introduce **AM5**, which will measure the impact of the Scheme on **OB5**.

## 9. Permit Scheme financial performance

### 9.1. Permit fee structure

The HNMS charges a fee for:

- the assessment/issue of a permit;
- an application for a permit, where the Scheme requires a provisional advance authorisation (PAA) to be obtained as part of that application; and
- each occasion on which there is a variation of a permit or the conditions attached to a permit.

The HNMS does not charge a fee for:

- the issue of a permit to internal DCC works promoters; and
- any permit or permit variation that has deemed.

The fees charged by the HNMS are set in accordance with regulations and are structured to reflect the category and traffic sensitivity of the road. The current fee structure is shown in **figure 15**.

Category of works	Details	Road Category 0, 1 & 2 or Traffic Sensitive	Road Category 3 & 4 and Non-Traffic Sensitive
<b>Provisional advance</b>	It is suggested this fee applies only where value has been added in processing the works.	£105	£75
<b>Major works &amp; planned works</b>	Over 10 days and all major works requiring a traffic regulation order.	£196	£140
<b>Major works</b>	4 to 10 days.	£130	£74
<b>Major works</b>	Up to 3 days.	£65	£44
<b>Standard activity</b>	N/A	£130	£74
<b>Minor activity</b>	N/A	£65	£44
<b>Immediate activity</b>	N/A	£60	£39
<b>Permit variation</b>	N/A	£45	£35

**Figure 15:** Permit fee structure for each category of works and for a hierarchy of traffic sensitive and non-traffic sensitive roads. (The term 'road category' refers to the reinstatement category of the street under the New Roads and Street Works Act 1991.)

## 9.2. Permit variation fees

**Figure 16** outlines the current permit variation fees as of 31 March 2022.

Note:

1. If a permit variation moves an activity into a higher permit fee category, the promoter will be required to pay the difference in the permit fee.
2. No fee is payable if a permit variation is initiated by the permit authority.

Details relating to permit variation fees	Fee
Activities on category 0, 1 and 2 streets and on category 3 & 4 traffic sensitive streets.	£45
Activities on category 3 & 4 and non-traffic sensitive streets.	£35

**Figure 16:** Permit variation fees as of 31 March 2022.

## 9.3. Permit fee income and expenditure

**Table 5** shows, for Years 1 and 2 the actual; in Year 3 the projected; and in Year 4 the forecast, permit fee income and expenditure including operational surplus.

Fee Type	ACTUAL Year 1 2020/21	ACTUAL Year 2 2021/22	PROJECTED Year 3 2022/23	FORECAST Year 4 2023/24
<b>Income:</b> Permit fees	£771,925	£945,208	£896,766	£945,208
<b>Expenditure:</b> Staff costs	-£272,074	-£395,446	-£554,873	-£685,796
<b>Expenditure:</b> Transport	-£985	-£5,265	-£9,367	-£10,023
<b>Expenditure:</b> Supplies & services	-£168,905	-£228,890	-£277,966	-£194,457
<b>Expenditure:</b> Central support & other recharges	£0	-£25,573	-£38,615	-£40,546
<b>Expenditure:</b> Total	-£441,964	-£655,174	-£880,821	-£930,821
<b>Operational surplus</b>	£329,961	£290,035	£15,945	£14,387
<b>Accumulative surplus</b>	£329,961	£619,995	£635,940	£650,327

**Table 5:** Actual, projected and forecast permit fee income, expenditure, operational surplus and accumulative surplus.

Regulation 32 of the Traffic Management Permit Scheme (England) Regulations 2007, stipulates that permit fee income must be applied towards the prescribed costs, i.e., the costs of the Scheme relating to the activities of statutory undertakers.

A sustained annual surplus, where the income regularly exceeds the prescribed costs, indicates that the permit fees should be adjusted to provide a cost neutral financial position. The Secretary of State may direct the local highway authority to adjust permit fees to achieve this objective using his powers under section 36 of the TMA.

Therefore, given the projected accumulated surplus of £635,940 at the end of Year 3, the HNMS proposes (subject to statutory consultation and approval) to increase staffing levels within HNMS to improve scheme compliance of the street works

promoters (digital utility installers) to ensure that the operational surplus is reduced. It is forecast that with staff increases the reduction in permit fee income and current inflation, the Scheme's finances are expected to balance income and expenditure within the next few years.

As a result of staff increases, inflation and increases in staff costs as recruitment progresses; it is expected that the current financial surplus will be significantly reduced; and income and expenditure balanced to provide a sound financial position over the next few years. However, forecasts will be reviewed each year in the light of actual outturn figures to ensure the council does not bear any financial burden and street works promoters do not overpay for the permit service.

## 10. Conclusion

The findings from the Scheme Year 2 review demonstrate that it has effectively contributed towards its objectives by delivering:

- A reduction in disruption to road users caused by road and street works;
- An improvement in the quality, completeness and availability of road and street works information for stakeholders;
- A reduction in carbon emissions from highway maintenance and highway-related activities; and
- An advancement in digital connectivity for communities as part of the UK government's Levelling Up agenda.

There is a requirement to undertake a further review of the performance of the Scheme in Year 3 and thereafter on a triennial basis.

There has been an overall improvement in the performance of the street works promoters and a corresponding reduction in the performance of the road works promoter. The HNMS will use its best endeavours to work with all works promoters to drive improvement to achieve the objectives and aims of the Scheme.

The financial position of the Scheme is sound with proposed changes to staffing levels (to align with statutory requirements) in order to achieve a net zero operating cost and the removal of the accumulated surplus in funds.

## 11. References

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## 12. Contact details

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[Durham County Council website](#)

To check roadworks in County Durham, visit [Road Works](#)



## 13. Staff structure

- Highway Network Section Manager – Position Occupied
  - Road and Street Works Coordination Team Leader – Position Occupied
    - Road and Street Works Coordination Engineer – Position Vacant
      - Road and Street Works Professional Assistant – Position Occupied
        - Senior Road and Street Works Technician – Position Occupied
          - Road and Street Works Technician – Position Occupied
            - Civil Engineering Apprentice (Technician) – Position Occupied
    - Road and Street Works Coordination Engineer – Position Occupied
      - Road and Street Works Professional Assistant – Position Occupied
        - Senior Road and Street Works Technician – Position Occupied
    - Road and Street Works Coordination Engineer – Position Occupied
      - Road and Street Works Professional Assistant – Position Vacant
        - Senior Road and Street Works Technician – Position Vacant
  - Road and Street Works Systems Supervisor – Position Occupied
    - Road and Street Works Technician – Position Occupied
      - Road and Street Naming and Numbering Officer – Position Occupied
        - Business Support – Position Occupied
  - Traffic Regulation Supervisor – Position Occupied
    - Senior Road and Street Works Technician – Position Occupied
      - Business Support – Position Occupied
  - Road and Street Works Enforcement Supervisor – Position Occupied

- Road and Street Works Professional Assistant (Compliance) - Position Occupied
  - Road and Street Works Technician - Position Vacant
  - Finance and Performance Officer – Position Vacant
    - Business Support Administrator – Position Vacant
- Street Authority Inspections and Performance Supervisor – Position Occupied
  - Street Authority Permit Inspector – Position Occupied
  - Street Authority Permit Inspector – Position Occupied
  - Street Authority Permit Inspector – Position Occupied
  - Street Authority Permit Inspector – Position Occupied
  - Street Authority Permit Inspector – Position Occupied
  - Street Authority Permit Inspector – Position Vacant