

Street Manager New Burden Survey

Research Report

November 2020



Contents

- Summary 1
 - Background..... 1
 - Key findings 1
- Introduction..... 3
- Methodology 3
 - Technical notes 4
- Street Manager new burden survey..... 5
 - Using Street Manager alongside other systems..... 5
 - Access to historical data 6
 - Reviewing permit fees..... 7
 - Operating street works management systems in the future 7
 - Costs..... 8
 - Comments..... 10
- Annex A: Questionnaire..... 11

Summary

Background

Since July 2020, all authorities have had to transition onto the Street Manager software to manage their street works. During Autumn 2020 the Local Government Association (LGA) conducted an online survey of councils with responsibility for street works to understand the impact of Street Manager, and whether or not there were any costs or resources needed to implement the new system. In particular, the LGA wished to know whether councils were required by legislation or local need to maintain their existing street works management systems alongside Street Manager and the cost implications if this was the case. Overall, the survey achieved 51 responses, which gave a response rate of 34 per cent.

Key findings

- Most councils (96 per cent/49 respondents) said they ran a street works management system alongside Street Manager.
- Eight out of 10 (80 per cent/39 respondents) said this was to meet the legislative requirements of the Highway Act 1980, New Roads and Street Works Act 1998 or the Traffic Management Act 2004.
- Ninety-four per cent (46 respondents) of those that ran two systems linked them together automatically. All but one of these (98 per cent/45 respondents) used an application programming interface (API).
- Just over a third (34 per cent/17 respondents) said they were fairly or very likely to review permit fees in light of the fact that Street Manager does not identify conflicts in requests for permits and so requires extra resources, and just over two-fifths (44 per cent/22 respondents) said they were not very likely or not at all likely to review them.
- Just over eight out of 10 councils (82 per cent/41 respondents) said they were using, or intended to use, additional modules of a third-party provider (eg Elgin/one.network) to mitigate the limited co-ordination functionality of Street Manager.
- Just over a third of councils (35 per cent/17 respondents) said that, once Street Manager had the required functionality to meet their statutory duties, they would see out contracts for their existing systems and then solely use Street Manager. Another five respondents (10 per cent) said they would dispense with their existing systems immediately.
- Councils paid annually on average about £44,000 in fees for the street works management system they were running alongside Street Manager.
- On top of this, the average additional annual costs of running Street Manager alongside their existing council system(s) was around £26,000. The costs

included maintaining a connection between the two systems, such as with an API, accessing historical data and using additional modules to mitigate the limited co-ordination functionality of Street Manager.

- When considering these costs together the average annual cost for councils was around £68,000, with county councils' costs notably higher at about £84,000.
- Additionally, councils estimated the cost of training staff to use Street Manager, up to the end of the 2021/22 financial year, to be about £8,000 on average.

Introduction

Since July 2020, all authorities have had to transition onto the Street Manager software to manage their street works. During Autumn 2020 the Local Government Association (LGA) conducted a survey of councils with responsibility for street works to understand the impact of Street Manager, and whether or not there were any costs or resources needed to implement the new system. In particular, the LGA wished to know whether councils were required by legislation or local need to maintain their existing street works management systems alongside Street Manager and the cost implications if this was the case.

Methodology

An online survey was sent to the officer responsible for highways in all county councils, unitary authorities, metropolitan districts and London boroughs in England. The survey was available to complete during October and November 2020. Overall, we received 53 responses, which gave a response rate of 35 per cent.

Table 1 and **Table 2** provide a breakdown of responses by authority type and region. Whilst these results should strictly be taken as a snapshot of the views of this group of respondents, rather than as representative of all councils, this level of response means that the results are likely to provide a good indication of the position of the sector more widely.

Type of authority	Total number	Number of responses	Response rate %
County	25	14	56%
London borough	33	12	36%
Metropolitan district	36	8	22%
Unitary	57	17	30%
All	151	51	34%

Table 2: Response rate by region

Region	Total number	Number of responses	Response rate %
Eastern	11	6	45%
East Midlands	9	2	22%
London	33	13	36%
North East	12	4	33%
North West	23	5	22%
South East	19	6	32%
South West	15	10	67%
West Midlands	14	4	29%
Yorkshire and Humber	15	3	20%

Technical notes

- Where tables and figures report the base, the description refers to the group of people who were asked the question. The number provided refers to the number of respondents who answered each question. Please note that bases vary throughout the report.
- Throughout the report percentages in figures and tables may add to more than 100 per cent due to rounding.
- Where the response base is less than 50, care should be taken when interpreting percentages, as small differences can seem magnified. Therefore, in this report absolute numbers are reported alongside the percentage values.

Street Manager new burden survey

This section contains analysis of the full results from the survey.

Using Street Manager alongside other systems

Most councils (96 per cent/49 respondents) said they ran a street works management system alongside Street Manager.

Table 3: Does your authority currently run another street works management system alongside Street Manager?

	Per cent	Count
Yes	96%	49
No, we only use Street Manager	6%	2
Don't know	0%	0

Base: all respondents (51)

Councils that ran a street works management system alongside Street Manager were asked why they operated two systems. Eight out of 10 (80 per cent/39 respondents) said this was to meet the legislative requirements of the Highway Act 1980, New Roads and Street Works Act 1998 or the Traffic Management Act 2004. Just over half of councils (51 per cent/25 respondents) said one of the reasons they ran another system was to meet other requirements their authority had.

The main non-legislative reasons given for running two systems were a need for integration with other council systems, and a lack of functionality of Street Manager, to support performance management and to provide access to historical data.

Table 4: Why do you run another street works management system alongside Street Manager?

	Per cent	Count
To meet legislative requirements for the Highway Act 1980, New Roads and Street Works Act 1998 or Traffic Management Act 2004	80%	39
To meet other requirements your authority has	51%	25
Other reason	33%	16
Don't know	0%	0

Base: respondents who ran another street management system alongside Street Manager (49)

Note: respondents could tick more than one response

Where councils were running a street works management system alongside Street Manager, 94 per cent (46 respondents) linked the two systems together automatically. All but one of these (98 per cent/45 respondents) used an application programming interface (API) and one council used both an API and a user interface.

Table 5: Are you linking your other street works management system to Street Manager using an API connection or a user interface or by some other means?

	Per cent	Count
API	94%	45
User interface	6%	0
Other means	0%	1

Base: respondents who automatically linked their other street management system with Street Manager (46)

Just over eight out of 10 councils (82 per cent/41 respondents) said they were using, or intended to use, additional modules of a third-party provider (eg Elgin/one.network) to mitigate the limited co-ordination functionality of Street Manager.

Table 6: Is your authority using, or is it intending to use, additional modules of a third-party provider (e.g. Elgin/) to mitigate the limited co-ordination functionality of Street Manager?

	Per cent	Count
Yes	82%	41
No	16%	8
Don't know	2%	1

Base: all respondents (50)

Access to historical data

Councils were asked about any impact the lack of historical data in Street Manager had on their ability to co-ordinate works and network management duties. Forty councils provided a response.

Access to historical data was seen as very important to councils for a number of reasons. The main reasons were co-ordination of works, carrying out inspections, correcting historical defects, investigating insurance and third-party claims and responding to FOI requests and customer enquiries. Exclusion of historical data from Street Manager therefore was reported as having an impact by most commenters, with several specifying a high impact.

“Without this information category B and C inspections could not accurately take place, and the enforcement of guarantee periods to ensure poorly reinstated excavations are rectified without additional cost to the local / highway authority.”

Most comments highlighted the need to maintain a separate system to access historical data to mitigate the issue, which had its own impacts for example on costs and staff time. One council commented, for example:

“This has caused problems where defects were already running, where remedial permits arrive on the system with a new permit number we have to

match them with original defect to cross reference them to progress the defect. This takes additional time to for us carry out this function, which is a loss to the service.”

A smaller number of comments reported a low or no impact, but each of these also stated that this was because the use of a separate system alongside Street Manager.

Reviewing permit fees

Given that Street Manager does not identify conflicts in requests for permits, and therefore additional resources are required to assess them, councils were asked how likely or not they were to review permit fees. Just over a third (34 per cent/17 respondents) said they were fairly or very likely to review permit fees, and just over two-fifths (44 per cent/22 respondents) said they were not very likely or not at all likely to review them.

Table 7: We are aware that Street Manager does not identify conflicts in requests for permits, and therefore additional resource are required to assess them. Specifically, in light of this, is your authority likely or not to review Permit Fees?

	Per cent	Count
Very likely	18%	9
Fairly likely	16%	8
Not very likely	36%	18
Not at all likely	8%	4
Already reviewed Permit Fees in light of this	4%	2
Don't know	18%	9

Base: all respondents (50)

Operating street works management systems in the future

Councils were asked how they intended to operate street works management systems in the future. Just over a third of councils (35 per cent/17 respondents) said that, once Street Manager had the required functionality to meet their statutory duties, they would see out contracts for their existing systems and then solely use Street Manager. Another five respondents (10 per cent) said they would dispense with their existing systems immediately, once Street Manager had the required functionality.

Just over two-fifths (44 per cent/21 councils) said they would continue with another street works management system even when Street Manager has the required functionality to meet their statutory duties.

Table 8: Which of the following statements best describes how your authority intends to operate street management systems in the future?

	Per cent	Count
Once Street Manager has the required functionality to meet our statutory duties, we will dispense with our other system immediately and solely use Street Manager	10%	5
Once Street Manager has the required functionality to meet our statutory duties, we will see out our contract for our other system and then solely use Street Manager	35%	17
We will continue with another street management system even when Street Manager has the required functionality to meet our statutory duties	44%	21
Don't know	10%	5

Base: respondents who ran another street management system alongside Street Manager (48)

Councils who indicated that they would continue to use their existing street works management system, even if Street Manager had the required functionality to meet their statutory requirements, were asked why this was the case.

A number of non-legislative reasons were given, which included the general usability of their existing system compared to Street Manager and the lack of integration of Street Manager with other systems required for effective management of the highways service. Comments included the need for various specific integration requirements, including asset management, enquiries and work management, the local street gazetteer, and other statutory network management duties. For example, a metropolitan district in the West Midlands said:

“Streetworks is not an isolated module and is part of highway asset management as a whole. Removing the links between Streetworks and other modules would mean that our network management duties could not be fulfilled as efficiently or effectively as they currently are.”

Costs

Councils were asked whether or not they had incurred any costs because of the requirement to use Street Manager. First, those that were running another street works management system were asked to provide the annual fees they paid for it. Thirty-five councils provided a figure. The total fees for the respondent councils was £1.5 million, which was an average of about £44,000 per authority.

Table 9: What are the annual fees for your other street works management system?

	Sum (£)	Mean (£)	Median (£)
Counties	487,000	48,700	46,500
Unitary authorities	450,684	37,557	13,645
Metropolitan districts	281,390	46,898	43,550
London boroughs	328,607	46,944	42,000
All councils	1,547,681	44,219	42,290

Base: respondents who ran another street management system alongside Street Manager (35 councils – 10 counties, 12 unitary authorities, six metropolitan districts, seven London boroughs)

Councils were also asked to detail any additional costs of running Street Manager alongside their existing council systems. The costs included maintaining a connection between the two systems, such as with an API, accessing historical data and using additional modules to mitigate the limited co-ordination functionality of Street Manager. The total annual additional cost reported by the respondents in this survey was £996,000, and an average of around £26,000. County councils' annual costs were notably higher than average at about £41,000.

Table 10: Additional costs of maintaining Street Manager alongside other street works management system

	Sum (£)	Mean (£)	Median (£)
Counties	445,700	40,518	50,000
Unitary authorities	301,690	23,207	20,000
Metropolitan districts	86,489	14,415	11,995
London boroughs	162,000	20,250	17,250
All councils	995,879	26,207	17,250

Base: respondents who ran another street management system alongside Street Manager (38 councils – 11 counties, 13 unitary authorities, six metropolitan districts, 8 London boroughs)

When the annual fees for councils' existing street works management systems were combined with the additional costs of running it alongside Street Manager, the total annual cost for councils who responded to this survey was around £2.4 million. The average for all respondents was around £68,000, but again the costs for county councils was higher than average at about £84,000.

Table 11: Total costs of running a street works management system alongside Street Manager

	Sum (£)	Mean (£)	Median (£)
Counties	922,700	83,882	71,000
Unitary authorities	732,374	56,336	56,000
Metropolitan districts	303,779	60,756	56,029
London boroughs	433,607	72,268	67,225
All councils	2,392,461	68,356	58,826

Base: respondents who ran another street management system alongside Street Manager (35 councils – 11 counties, 13 unitary authorities, five metropolitan districts, six London boroughs)

Finally, councils were asked to provide all costs associated with training staff to use the new Street Manager system up until to the end of the 2021/22 financial year. Costs included courses and staff time. Thirty-two councils provided a figure. The average for all councils was around £8,000, but the cost for counties was notably higher at about £23,000.

Table 12: How much, if anything, has your council already spent (and will it spend) on staff training for the new Street Manager system (until the end of 2021/22)?

	Sum (£)	Mean (£)	Median (£)
Counties	164,080	23,440	15,000
Unitary authorities	44,250	4,023	3,375
Metropolitan districts	32,800	4,686	5,000
London boroughs	13,157	1,880	657
All councils	254,287	7,946	3,875

Base: all respondents (32 councils – seven counties, 11 unitary authorities, seven metropolitan districts, seven London boroughs)

Comments

At the end of the questionnaire respondents were asked whether they had any additional comments regarding the implementation of Street Manager. Thirty councils provided a comment, the vast majority of which were negative.

The main criticism of Street Manager was the decision to release it as a minimum viable product. This this meant that it was not fit for purpose and did not meet the basic needs of councils to manage street works, or more widely the highways service. Consequently, existing systems had to be maintained and resource was required to “plug the gap” between systems. This was further complicated the by the necessity of repeated updates to Street Manager. One council said:

“The launch of street manager in its MVP state has had far reaching implications in terms of cost, duplication of systems and is heavily resource dependent in terms of ongoing training due to the continual releases and updates. The concept of a system is excellent, however having to use multiple platforms to fill the gaps in Street Manager is inefficient and exposes [highways authorities] to a potential risk of failure to meet its Networks Management duty.”

It was also felt that the timing of the release was a mistake, taking place as it did during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Annex A: Questionnaire

Street Manager Survey

Q1 Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey. The results will be used to help us understand whether or not there is any burden from the introduction of Street Manager. You can navigate through the questions using the buttons at the bottom of each page. Use the 'previous' button at the bottom of the page if you wish to amend your response to an earlier question. If you stop before completing the return, you can come back to this page using the link supplied in the email and you will be able to continue where you left off. To ensure your answers have been saved, click on the 'next' button at the bottom of the page that you were working on before exiting.

All responses will be treated confidentially. Information will be aggregated, and no individual or authority will be identified in any publications without your consent. Identifiable information may be used internally within the LGA but will only be held and processed in accordance with our [privacy statement](#). We are undertaking this survey to aid the legitimate interests of the LGA in supporting and representing authorities.

If you would like to see an overview of the questions before completing the survey online, you can access a PDF here: [DOWNLOAD](#)

Q2 Does your authority currently run another street works management system alongside Street Manager?

- Yes
 - No, we only use Street Manager
 - Don't know
-

Only respond to this question if you answered “yes” to Q2

Q3 Why do you run another street works management system alongside Street Manager?

Tick all that apply

- To meet legislative requirements for the Highway Act 1980, New Roads and Street Works Act 1998 or Traffic Management Act 2004
- To meet other requirements your authority has (Please specify)

- Other reason (Please specify)

- Don't know

Only respond to this question if you answered “yes” to Q2

Q4 What are the annual fees for your other street works management system?
Please write numbers in full using only numeric characters (enter 1000 rather than 1,000 or 1k). Write '0' if there is no fee. If you don't know the amount, please select Don't Know.

- £ _____
- Don't know

Only respond to this question if you answered “yes” to Q2

Q5 Does your council link its other street works management system automatically to Street Manager?

- Yes
- No

Only respond to this question if you answered “yes” to Q5

Q6 Are you linking your other street works management system to Street Manager using an API connection or a user interface or by some other means?

- API
 - User interface
 - Other means (please specify)
-

Don't know

Only respond to this question if you answered “API” to Q6

Q7 What additional costs, if any, are there for the provision of the API process to link your street works management system to Street Manager? *Please write in. Please use '000' not 'k'. Write '0' if there is no charge or if it is included in fees you have already provided in your responses above. If you don't know the amount, please select Don't know.*

- £ _____
- Don't know

Only respond to this question if you answered “API” to Q6

Q8 Is this a one-off cost or an annual cost?

- One-off
 - Annual
 - Other (Please specify)
-

Don't know

Only respond to this question if you answered “user interface” to Q6

Q9 What additional costs, if any, are there for the provision of a user interface to link your street works management system to Street Manager? *Please write in. Please use ‘000’ not ‘k’. Write ‘0’ if there is no charge or if it is included in fees you have already provided in your responses above. If you don't know the amount, please select Don't know*

- £ _____
- Don't know

Only respond to this question if you answered “API” to Q6

Q10 Is this a one-off cost or an annual cost?

- One-off
- Annual
- Other (Please specify)

- Don't know

Only respond to this question if you answered “other” to Q6

Q11 What additional costs, if any, are there for automatically linking your street works management system to Street Manager using other means? *Please write in. Please use ‘000’ not ‘k’. Write ‘0’ if there is no charge or if it is included in fees you have already provided in your responses above. If you don't know the amount, please select Don't know*

Only respond to this question if you answered “other” to Q6

Q12 Is this a one-off cost or an annual cost?

- One-off
 - Annual
 - Other (Please specify)
-

Don't know

Only respond to this question if you answered “yes” to Q5

Q13 What fee, if any, is charged by your provider to manage the connection process (in addition to any fees you have already reported)? *Please write in. Please use '000' not 'k'.*

Write '0' if there is no charge or if it is included in fees you have already provided in your responses above.

If you don't know the amount, please select Don't know.

£ _____

Don't know

Only respond to this question if you answered “yes” to Q5

Q14 Is this a one-off cost or an annual cost?

- One-off
 - Annual
 - Other (Please specify)
-

Don't know

Only respond to this question if you answered “no” to Q5

Q15 Please describe how you are currently maintaining your street works management system and Street Manager, if they are not linked in any way. *Please write in*

Only respond to this question if you answered “no” to Q5

Q16 What do you estimate the **additional** annual cost to be, of maintaining the Street Manager and your other street works system separately? *Please write in. Please use ‘000’ not ‘k’. Write ‘0’ if there is no fee or if it is included in costs already provided in your responses above. If you don't know the amount, please select Don't know. Please include all elements which incur a cost, such as staff time or costs incurred from your current system provider for a report which provides information in the correct format for Street Manager.*

- £ _____
- Don't know

Q17 How much, if anything, has your council already spent (and will it spend) on staff training for the new Street Manager system (until the end of 2021/22)? *Please write in. Please include all elements which incur a cost, such as cost of any course and staff time. Please use ‘000’ not ‘k’. Write ‘0’ if there is no training spend. If you don't know the amount, please select Don't know.*

- £ _____
- Don't know

Q18 We are aware that Street Manager does not hold historical data. What annual costs, if any, are you anticipating for accessing historical data on other systems?

Please write in. Please use '000' not 'k'.

Write '0' if there are no additional costs or they are already included in the costs you have already provided in your responses above.

If you don't know the amount, please select Don't know.

- £ _____
- Don't know

Q19 What impact, if any, would you say the lack of historical data in Street Manager has on your ability to coordinate works and manage your network management duties in terms of delay and cost to road user? *Please write in*

Q20 We are aware that Street Manager does not identify conflicts in requests for permits, and therefore additional resource are required to assess them. Specifically, in light of this, is your authority likely or not to review Permit Fees?

- Very likely
- Fairly likely
- Not very likely
- Not at all likely
- Already reviewed Permit Fees in light of this
- Don't know

Q21 Is your authority using, or is it intending to use, additional modules of a third-party provider (e.g. eLGIN) to mitigate the limited co-ordination functionality of Street Manager?

- Yes
- No
- Don't know

Only respond to this question if you answered “yes” to Q21

Q22 What costs, if any, will there be from purchasing these additional third-party modules? *Please write in. Please use '000' not 'k'. Write '0' if there are no additional costs or they are already included in the costs you have already provided in your responses above. If you don't know the amount, please select Don't know.*

- £ _____
- Don't know

Only respond to this question if you answered “yes” to Q21

Q23 Is this a one-off cost or an annual cost?

- One-off
- Annual
- Other (Please specify)

Don't know

Q24 Outside of the costs you have already shared, what additional staff and system costs, if any, are needed to plug any other gaps for those processes that Street Manager will not perform? These may be costs outside of Street Manager and EToN or any other costs of which you are aware. *Please write in. Please use '000' not 'k'. Write '0' if there are no additional costs or they are already included in the costs you have already provided in your responses above. If you don't know the amount, please select Don't know.*

- £ _____
- Don't know

Q25 Please describe these additional costs.
Please write in

Only respond to this question if you answered “yes” to Q2

Q26 Which of the following statements best describes how your authority intends to operate street management systems in the future?

- Once Street Manager has the required functionality to meet our statutory duties, we will dispense with our other system immediately and solely use Street Manager
- Once Street Manager has the required functionality to meet our statutory duties, we will see out our contract for our other system and then solely use Street Manager
- We will continue with another street management system even when Street Manager has the required functionality to meet our statutory duties
- Don't know

Only respond to this question if you answered “we will continue with another street management system even when Street Manager has the required functionality to meet our statutory duties” to Q2

Q27 Why will you continue with another street management system, even when Street Manager has the functionality to meet statutory duties? *Please write in*

Q28 Finally, do you have any other comments about the implementation of Street Manager?

Please write in

Q29 Please add or amend the details we have on record if necessary.

- Name _____
- Authority _____
- Job title _____
- Email address _____

Q30 Once you press the 'Submit' button below, you will have completed the survey.

Many thanks for taking the time to complete this survey. You are in control of any personal data that you have provided to us in your response.

You can contact us at all times to have your information changed or deleted. You can find our full privacy policy here: click here to see our [privacy policy](#)



Local Government Association

Local Government House
Smith Square
London SW1P 3HZ

Telephone 020 7664 3000

Fax 020 7664 3030

Email info@local.gov.uk

www.local.gov.uk

© Local Government Association, December 2020)