

# Case Study: London Borough – Highways Reactive Repairs



## The Challenge

As part of its efficiency drive, this London Borough chose Highways reactive repairs as a pilot BPR project to “prove” our 5 step methodology. Street inspections were carried out by Highways Inspectors who then raised works orders for the external contractor to fulfill.

With litigation increasing at an alarming rate, Highways Inspectors were being diverted to retrospective investigations to the detriment of routine inspections. The overhanging claims were £2 million.

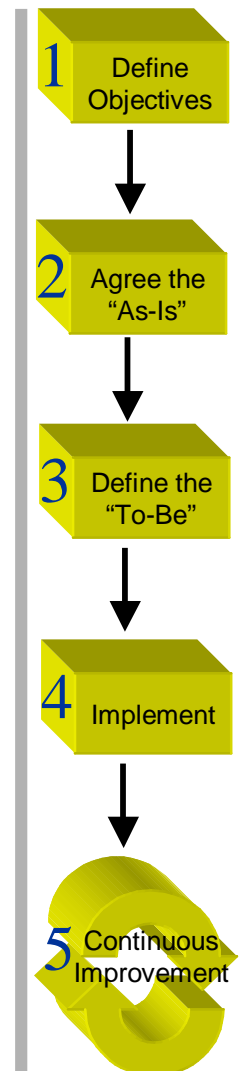
Over the months this had resulted in a massive backlog (about 880) of routine inspections– one key point of which is to mitigate any possible compensation claim – let alone ensure that the streets were hazard free. In addition the time from fault report to fix exceeded the PI targets in 22% of cases – 24 hours for “urgent” repairs and 28 days for others.

## The Solution

As part of our training for their in-house BPR Practitioners we involved them from the outset in this project. Our task was to redesign the process to reduce the time from report to fix and to free up Inspectors time by making the whole process more efficient. We used our 5 step approach:

- Ø Set up a cross-functional project team to meet weekly to guide the project
- Ø Facilitated a Highways staff workshop to map the process and identify the hand-offs and non-value adding activities
- Ø Facilitated a verification “drop-in” day for managers and staff
- Ø Facilitated a Visioning workshop involving managers, staff and the external contractor’s Managing Director and Contracts Manager
- Ø Developed the vision into an implementation plan with risk and change management plans
- Ø Facilitated the production of a Business Case for approval

The To Be process described the Contractor as the “owner” of the street, with the Highways Inspectors acting as “auditors” to ensure that repairs were carried out within the target time and standards. Reports from the public were to be routed directly to the contractor without any pre-inspection and without any works order being raised.



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### Implementation

Because the key managers, staff and the external contractor were all involved in the development of the To Be process, its adoption was simplified. The timing of this project had been planned to coincide with a contract review point, so the revision of its terms was simpler.

The two in-house BPR Practitioners, by then fully trained, took over the implementation project management. They implemented a pilot of the To Be process in one half of the Borough.

The pilot ran for six months and demonstrated the benefits of the To Be process.



### The benefits

The Council now has:

- Ø 90% improvement in the time from report to fix
- Ø 100% of faults fixed within PI target – was only 88%
- Ø Backlog for routine inspections down from 80% to 0
- Ø Urgent repairs on un-inspected streets down from 57% to 0
- Ø Improved customer feedback survey results

The council has now put the contract out for tender for the whole borough. It expects accident claims to fall as streets are better maintained and a significant reduction in successful claims against the council. It is also anticipated that improved street repairs will positively contribute to their crime reduction initiatives.