

# Annual Report

## 2012/13



Midlands Highways Alliance Professional Services Partnership (MHA PSP1)

# A year at a glance

See Annex A for further details

## April 2012

**Staffordshire County Council - Chasewater Reservoir Dam, Chasewater Reservoir** URS commenced regular inspection of the dam in accordance with the Reservoir Act.

**Nottinghamshire County Council TRO and Environmental Weight Limits** Co-location of URS staff enabled far reaching improvements to the client team; and both URS and council staff undertook a LEAN review to streamline the TRO processes and achieved efficiency savings.

**Milton Keynes Bus Stops** Provision of design, contract documents, site supervision and CDMC services for the delivery of DDA compliant bus stops.

**Loughborough Women in Engineering** URS and Leicestershire County Council promoted women in engineering to current Loughborough University students.

**Milton Keynes Council** Waterman Aspen Secondments provided staff of various disciplines into Milton Keynes offices.

## June

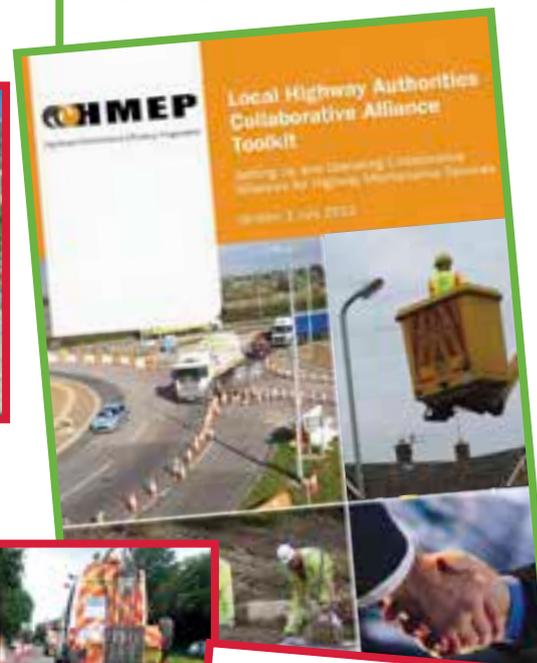
**Wolverhampton City Council City Centre Project** URS provided a range of engineering disciplines to support the town centre development.

**The Midlands Highway Alliance – EMMA Awards – Team Achievement – Highly Commended**

## August

**HMEP Collaborative Alliance Toolkit** for Local Highway Authorities released.

**Leicestershire County Council Personal Travel Plan Review** Personal Travel Plan phases A and B completed for 8,000 households in Loughborough.



## May

**Wolverhampton City Council: Travel Plan Coordinator** URS part time secondment for an interim travel plan coordinator to assist the council implementing and monitoring travel plans and sustainable transport initiatives.

## July

**Training** MX training for Wolverhampton City Council staff delivered by URS.

**Wolverhampton City Council Noise Survey for the Barnhurst Lane Bridge Scheme**

This was carried out before a weight restriction was implemented in order to record the noise levels prior to a reduction in traffic flow (HGV's).

**Leicester City Council Melton Road, Leicester July – September 2012**

URS completed a pavement investigation and treatment options report on a section of Leicester Ring Road.

## September

**Welcome to Derby City Council who joined PSP1.**

**Milton Keynes** URS provided project management, site supervision and CDMC services to deliver transportation improvements.

**Leicester City Council Lutterworth Road** URS completed an intrusive pavement investigation on a section of Leicester Ring Road.

**Flood Investigations** URS undertook a number of flood investigation studies for Derbyshire County Council which fulfilled the requirements of the respective LLFA.

## October

### Wolverhampton City Council Castlecroft

URS Project Manager acted on behalf of Wolverhampton City Council (WCC) responsible for the site supervision, quality control and liaison with the client, contractors, design team and local community.

### Leicester City Local Sustainable Transport Fund (LSTF)

Personal Travel Plan completed for 2,300 households in Leicester City.



## December

### Wolverhampton City Council

URS started PMS surveys for the city.

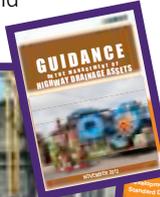
**Amanda Millard (URS Delivery Manager for Wolverhampton City Council and Stoke City Council)** became chartered with the Chartered Institute of Building.

### Leicestershire County Council

Dan Godfrey and Ian Vears for Leicestershire County Council described how travel information had improved journey times and is providing sustainable access to employment in an article for Re-booting Smarter Choices conference magazine.

### Hucknall Town Centre Improvement Scheme (HTCIS)

URS provided continuous support across a range of disciplines that successfully enabled Nottinghamshire County Council to make a planning application and later a strong fundraising bid.



## February

### Nottinghamshire County Council Procurement

URS supported the development of the Nottinghamshire County Council Term Service Contract.

**Welcome to Stoke City Council who joined PSP1.**

### Wolverhampton City Council Pinch Point Wobaston Road Corridor Improvements to Vine Island

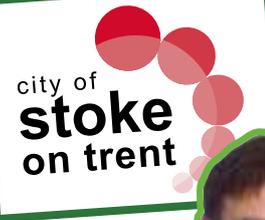
URS assisted Wolverhampton City Council with their successful submission to the DfT for funding towards the Wobaston Road Improvement Scheme.

### Stoke City Council Structural Engineering Support for Building Control

URS provided weekly support checking of building control submissions for stadia and buildings in the city.

### Leicester City Cycle Signs

URS started support for Legible Leicester Fit 4 Business Walking and Cycle Route Signing through the Local Sustainable Transport Fund.



## January 2013

### Peterborough City Council Procurement

Development of Peterborough's standard Term Maintenance Contract for the Highway Term Services.

### HMEP New Streetworks Coordination

Brief Commissioned and approved for HMEP contract training.

### Wolverhampton City Council Horsely

**Fields Tunnel** URS appointed to the role of Project Manager.

### Milton Keynes Pinch Point Bids

URS provided transportation advice, preliminary design and costings for input into Milton Keynes Pinch Point bids for DfT funding which were ultimately successful.

### Milton Keynes Saxon Street

URS provided transportation modelling, advice, detailed design and contract documents for the roundabout improvements.

### MEGZ 2013 Ecology

URS provided on-going specialist environmental, geotechnical and structural support to Derbyshire County Council towards the redevelopment of the area.

## November

### New HMEP Briefs Commissioned

New Term Maintenance Document Compiler Package and LEAN Toolkit commissioned.

### Bi-Annual Event

Held at Forest Hill Golf Club attended by officers from across the Partnership.



## March

**NEC3 Training** delivered by URS at Nottinghamshire County Council.

**Martin Carnaffin** took over from Rob Driver as Nottinghamshire County Council's Operational Board representative.

**HMEP Specification and Guidance for the Management of Highway Drainage Assets** released.

**Derbyshire County Council Bridge Inspections - Repairs to Milford Road, Cowhill and Scotches Railway Bridges**

URS' Bridge Asset Management team oversaw a repair contract to three historic railway bridges carrying the A6 in and around Belper for Derbyshire County Council.

### Bat Awareness Training

URS presented training to Derbyshire County Council engineering staff.

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PSP1 launch event, April 2011



# Overview

The current Professional Services Partnership commenced on 4th April 2011 with initially six members signed up. This has since grown to 18 Midlands Highways Alliance (MHA) members of which 12 used the Professional Services Partnership (PSP1) contract in 2012.

The Alliance partners continue to recognise the benefits of working closely with the private sector and judging by the continual improvement in client feedback, URS increasingly understood the client's requirements and worked collaboratively to share the achievement of client aims and ambitions. Some of the projects that reflected this comprised the project management and support activities for the Highways Maintenance Efficiency Programme (HMEP), and support for new Term Service Contracts for both Nottinghamshire and Peterborough.

URS' partnership with Waterman Aspen (WA) has continued and added additional flexibility to provide the resources that each council needed.

Both URS and WA continue to have a significant presence in the East Midlands with offices in Chesterfield, Nottingham, Bedford, Birmingham and Telford in support of this contract. Indeed, work of national interest has been procured using the PSP1 contract to aid transformational change across all English Local Highway Authorities through the HMEP. URS' teams in the region have undertaken a significant amount of work to support delivery of the programme.

They continue to promote 'good practice' and lessons learnt within the MHA and across the wider highways sector.

One of the themes of the Programme is collaboration, and the ways that this can be achieved to deliver efficiency savings. The MHA supports wider collaboration as it has already demonstrated substantial savings for the members of the Alliance. However, there are other opportunities that may present themselves and surveys of the members will be undertaken to assess opportunities and appetite between the members for further collaboration.

The MHA continued to adopt the good practice from HMEP. Both Leicester City and Leicestershire County Council will be piloting the HMEP LEAN Toolkit to streamline aspects of the services they undertake. The results and experiences will be presented in the final toolkit for use across the country and will hopefully identify a typical 10 to 1 return rate on the investment made.



**Peter Barclay**  
MHA Alliance  
Manager



**Anna Moore**  
URS Framework  
Manager

Anna Moore presenting at the bi-annual event



## Vision

The Alliance, with the support of URS, has continued to achieve efficiency savings through collaboration. URS has assisted in the collaboration process by offering a range of joint training and procurement opportunities that helped authorities achieve economies of scale. This is measured through a PSP1 Efficiencies Log which at the end of year two demonstrated a saving of £929,599, equivalent to an 11% saving. URS appears to be well on target to better the efficiency savings from the previous 3 Counties Alliance Partnership (3CAP) contract.

The MHA has continued to win awards for its visionary aspects and implementation of the partnership. Some notable awards have been:

- Partnership working – The Midlands Highway Alliance was ‘Highly Commended’ at the 2012 ICE East Midlands Merit Awards (EMMAs) in the Team Achievement Category
- Medium Project Category - URS and Leicestershire County Council were ‘Commended’ at the 2013 EMMAs for their joint design of the Loughborough Eastern Gateway project

The involvement of URS continued to demonstrate that projects jointly developed and delivered have provided both additional capacity and expert multidiscipline capability to the benefit of the Alliance members.

The Alliance accounts for well over 10% of all English authorities. Greater collaboration is needed though to achieve more efficiency savings. Given the increasing impetus in Government to achieve budget savings, members will need to work more closely and collaborate fully, to safeguard the level of service they aspire to deliver and make sure every penny is spent wisely. URS can help facilitate collaboration between service levels using its knowledge and experiences across the region to help advise and promote common working practices and approaches to national issues i.e. Climate Change Toolkit and Water Framework Directive.



Mark Stevens presenting at the bi-annual event

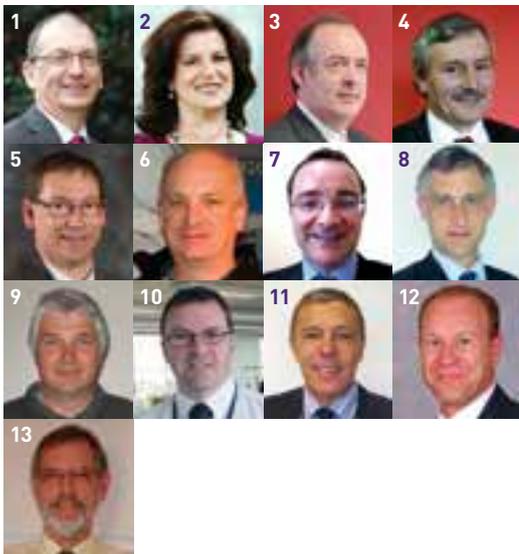
# MHA Governance

The governance is largely unchanged from the previous contract. Strategic direction to the Alliance is provided by a Strategic Board that meets quarterly and receives high-level performance reports. The Strategic Board sets targets within an Annual Partnership Business Plan. An Operational Board meets every six weeks and is responsible for delivery of the Business Plan and collaborative procurements. Project Managers, both within the client organisations and URS, are responsible for delivery to demanding project targets and report progress monthly.

Both Boards seek out opportunities for wider collaboration around specific procurements and managers at every level are tasked to drive continual improvement by generating ideas for improving services further. For instance, changes in legislation around the Water Framework Directive and Sustainable Urban Drainage have given opportunities for collaborative procurement of specialist advice from URS and a standardised approach across the East Midlands.

URS maintains a dedicated Management Team with a Delivery Manager assigned to coordinate communication with client officers within each authority. Peter Barclay of Leicestershire County Council is the MHA Alliance Manager and coordinates client management.

## Active Strategic Board Members



1. **Peter Barclay** MHA Alliance Manager
2. **Anna Moore** URS Framework Manager
3. **Adrian Coy** URS Framework Director
4. **John Surguy** URS Framework Director
5. **Andy Warrington** Nottinghamshire County Council
6. **Brian Matthews** Milton Keynes Council
7. **David Bartram** Derby City Council
8. **David Walters** Staffordshire County Council
9. **Ian Hipkiss** Wolverhampton City Council
10. **Mark Wills** Leicester City Council
11. **Pete Price** Stoke City Council
12. **Mark Stevens** Leicestershire County Council
13. **Stewart Ibbotson** Derbyshire County Council

## Active Operational Board Members



1. **Peter Barclay** MHA Alliance Manager
2. **Anna Moore** URS Framework Manager
3. **Amanda Millard** URS Delivery Manager
4. **Ed Varley** URS Delivery Manager
5. **Gary Thompson** URS Delivery Manager
6. **John Cole** URS Delivery Manager
7. **John Holland** URS Delivery Manager
8. **Bob Bellm** Waterman Aspen
9. **Ian Hipkiss** Wolverhampton City Council
10. **Ishwer Gohil** Milton Keynes Council
11. **John Commins** Staffordshire County Council
12. **Lincoln Smithers** Derby City Council
13. **Martin Carnaffin** Nottinghamshire County Council
14. **Richard Dawson** Derbyshire County Council
15. **Karen Notman** Leicestershire County Council
16. **Abul Tarafder** Leicester City Council

# Achievements

The improved performance trend demonstrates URS' increased understanding of our clients' needs and their expectations establishing a consistent capability to deliver programmes to time, to budget and to the satisfaction of client officers. We have continued the philosophy of the '5 Building Blocks of Improvement' into PSP1 and notable successes are detailed below under each theme.



## Delivery

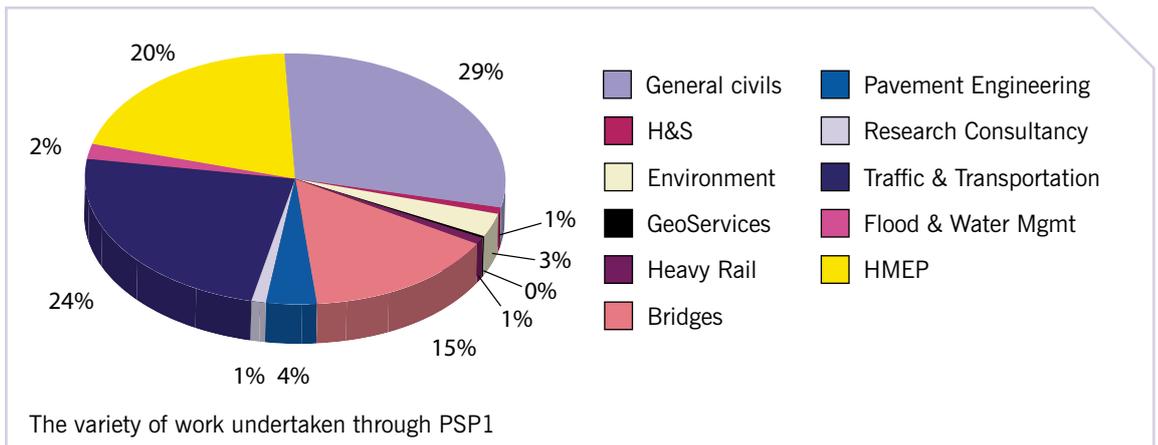
Reassurance of successful **Delivery** provided client departments with the confidence that they will achieve the outcomes expected. Consistent delivery is important for both URS and in-house design teams. The same national performance indicators are used by teams across the Alliance so that best practice is identified and disseminated to accelerate improvement. A 'Performance Dashboard' allows a manager to monitor performance and to 'drill down' to investigate individual projects.

To date, a wide range of projects across different disciplines have been delivered with general civils (29%) leading the way closely followed by traffic and transportation works (24%) and bridge inspections (15%). Over 20% of the workload has been associated with HMEP, reflecting the national importance of some of the work undertaken through the partnership. This breakdown is represented in the pie chart below.

URS has continued to maintain and improve its performance building on a good record under 3CAP. This led to a revised target average score from client feedback questionnaires being increased from 7.5 to 7.75 out of 10.

This has been exceeded to date with many of the individual scores for year two being in the 8-9 range compared to the year one scores that predominately averaged between 7-8. Noticeable improvements have been made in terms of understanding the client's brief and the project management aspects in both cases gaining an additional point score.

Excluded from the pie chart (which illustrates the variety of work undertaken) is the work undertaken by staff seconded into clients' offices to cover vacancies and to cope with workload pressures. Many of these staff are Waterman Aspen engineers and provided clients with a valued flexible support.



Projects that highlight URS' delivery of MHA projects are as follows, with a more detailed presentation in Annex A:

- **Nottinghamshire County Council Term Maintenance Contract** – preparation of contract documents
- **Wolverhampton City Centre Project** – using URS' UK resource from multiple offices to deliver this public realm project

- **Nottinghamshire County Council TRO and Environmental Weight Limits** – co-location of URS staff enabled far reaching improvements to the client team over and above the normal design services that URS had contributed previously.

Understanding that it is people within each **Organisation** that deliver projects, PSP1 invested in training and identified best practice to ensure that processes improved to deliver expected results.

Examples where URS has assisted our client partners to build in-house capabilities:

- **Best Practice** – developed toolkits and guidance around asset management practices for promotion and embedment throughout the region and across England
- **Training** – MX Training for Wolverhampton City Council Staff built in-house competency

- **Training** – NEC3 Training at Nottinghamshire County Council
- **Training** – NEC3 Training held in Chilwell for Leicestershire County Council, Derbyshire County Council, Leicester City Council and Nottingham City Council
- **Training** – WinDes (Drainage) Modelling Training Course that met the specific requirements of Nottingham City Council and Derby City Council
- **Training** – NEC3 Training in Peterborough
- **Best Practice** – Shared best practice at bi-annual training events with presentations by member authorities and URS.



The partnership recognises that **Efficiency** savings have to be planned and jointly pursued. Looking outward, PSP1 understands that design teams need to work more closely with contractor partners to improve efficiency further.

Examples where URS has assisted our client partners to deliver efficiency savings:

- **Nottinghamshire County Council TRO and Environmental Weight Limits** – undertaking a LEAN process review to streamline the TRO processes reducing the time taken for the design, consultation and implementation stages

- **HMEP** – the development of toolkits showcasing good practice within the sector and 'how to' examples of how others have applied LEAN practices and achieve effective client competencies for promotion and embedment within the region and wider sector
- **Milton Keynes Transport Improvements** – URS provided Project Management, Site Supervision and CDMC services that enabled Milton Keynes to deliver their Transportation Improvements Budget.



Sustainability

Conscious of the importance of **Sustainability**, PSP1 is working jointly to minimise its effect on the environment, to adapt to climate change and to reduce the carbon impact of highway works.

Examples where URS has assisted our client partners to deliver sustainable solutions:

- **Personalised Travel Planning Advice** – provided educational information and promoted sustainable travel choices within Leicester City Council, Leicestershire and Nottinghamshire County Councils

- **Flood Investigations** – URS undertook a number of flood investigation studies for Derbyshire County Council and Wolverhampton City Council to meet Lead Local Flood Authority responsibilities
- **Local Flood Risk Management Strategies (LFRMS)** – fulfilled the requirements of the LFRMS for Staffordshire and Shropshire County Councils
- **Water Framework Directive Guidance** – offered URS expertise from across the UK to guide development of guidance for the Alliance members.

Community Impact

Finally, PSP1 believes that the real benefit of the partnership must be an **improvement to the levels of service enjoyed by Local Communities**. Project teams have been encouraged to focus continually on the outcomes that are expected and a collective approach to public satisfaction surveys has provided evidence that highways and transportation services are valued.

Examples where URS has assisted our client partners to deliver successful improvements to local communities:

- **Nottinghamshire County Council Traffic Regulation Orders (TROs) and Environmental Weight Limits** – the implementation of TROs and Environmental Weight Limits helped communities by providing safer street scenes. Joint team delivery made for a more focused and proactive service for the community and Members alike
- **Pinch Point Funding for Kingston Roundabout and A421 Fen Farm to Eagle Farm dualling** – assisted clients to write bids to apply for pinch point funding enabling projects to proceed where funding arrangements were uncertain. On this basis, £8.8m was awarded by the DfT. More importantly it enabled

Milton Keynes Council to progress the eastern expansion area with confidence that the infrastructure to support it will be in place

- **Wolverhampton City Council Castlecroft Bridge** – URS liaised with FACTAR (the Finchfield and Castlecroft Tenants and Residents Association) to take account of local views when repainting the bridge parapets by commissioning special artwork
- **Hucknall Town Centre Improvements** – the Chancellor’s Autumn Statement announced accelerated approval of funding for 20 local major schemes – including the Hucknall Town Centre Improvement Scheme, thereby reconfirming Programme Entry for the scheme. URS was instrumental in providing the supporting documents for the funding bid for this project on behalf of Nottinghamshire County Council
- **A52 Congestion Management Study** – the URS team made proposals for addressing long standing traffic issues that affected service times for bus services and impacted on community links across the A52 corridor on behalf of Derby City Council.

# Financial Highlights

The 12 authorities procuring professional services spent £7.47m in fees at the end of year two, with approximately 41% of the fees being on staff seconded to client offices. The original 3CAP partners still procure the greatest volume of work, each over £1.5m, while some of the new additions (Milton Keynes, Staffordshire and Wolverhampton) have each procured over £500k of professional services in the same period.

Efficiency savings over the past two years have been recorded at £930k representing 11% on throughput. The significant contribution is due to new members joining the Alliance but URS' involvement in particular projects made a noticeable impact also:

- Leicester Cordon Survey – a saving of over one third on previous year's procurement that realised a saving of £26k;
- Flood and Water Management Act advice to all member authorities, £30k saved through procurement centrally with the potential for further savings;

- Personalised Travel Planning saving £13k across neighbouring authorities by using the same staff, saving costs associated with training new recruits;
- Shared Training Opportunities – Smaller savings of £1,500 to £2,800 where URS provided targeted training for member authorities.

## Financial Arrangements

To give URS greater visibility of the flow of work coming through the PSP1 contract, a 'pipeline' has been developed by each client. Given the turnaround in the construction sector in recent months, it is now more important than ever to have a detailed understanding of the work that may be procured through PSP1 to enable URS to resource it adequately. The pipeline is being monitored and discussed at the Operational Board meetings so other clients understand the impact their work may have on their neighbouring authority's programme and URS' ability to deliver the expected outcomes.

Form Number	Date	Brief Description	Company	Efficiency Area	Proposed Cost Saving	Approved Cost Saving
1	01.04.11	PSP1 Procurement of Consultancy Services	Collective	Delivery	£165,000	165,000
2	01.08.11	PSP1 Management of the Framework	Collective	Delivery	£136,800	136,800
3	01.03.12	Flood & Water Management Act Stage 1	Collective	Efficiency	£30,400	
4	01.03.12	Flood & Water Management Act Stage 2	Select from list			
5	16.05.12	Annual savings average of 9.5% on URS rates (Wolverhampton 18%)			£0	
6	03.04.12		Collective	Efficiency	£2,842	2,842
			Collective	Select from list	£6,779	
		PSP1 3 Additional Partners	Collective	Efficiency	£165,000	165,000
15		Additional Funding Guidance Toolkit	Collective	Select from list	£0	
16		Water Framework Directive	Collective	Select from list	£0	
17	May-13	MX Training for Wolverhampton City Council Staff	Select from list	Efficiency	£1,833	1,833
18	Apr-13	NEC3 joint training Wolverhampton/URS	Select from list	Efficiency	£1,470	1,470
<b>TOTAL</b>					<b>£978,033</b>	<b>£929,599</b>

PSP1 Efficiencies Log

## The Future

The MHA PSP1 Strategic Board is committed to continue the momentum and extend its reputation for delivering excellent services and improved value for money. A number of initiatives have already started that promise much for the next phase of PSP1:

	INITIATIVE	BENEFIT
	<i>Appointment of URS to prepare an external funding toolkit to guide member authorities on the 'how to' aspects (see below for further details).</i>	To increase opportunities to gain external funding for projects and infrastructure to supplement diminishing budgets.
	<i>To promote the use of the HMEP products by engagement and training.</i>	By using a freely available standard form, savings will be generated by not having to maintain our bespoke version.
	<i>To promote the use of the HMEP products by surveying member authorities to identify opportunities to implement shared service arrangements across the region.</i>	Some shared services already exist across the Alliance members but this will give a further opportunity to increase the scope of such arrangements and explore further opportunities.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Collaborative procurement of the Water Framework Directive.</i></li> <li>• <i>The Impact of Climate Change.</i></li> </ul>	The member authorities will continue to benefit from joint procurement activities and the development of a standardised approach across the East Midlands to national initiatives and legislation.
	<i>MHA participation in the National Customer Satisfaction Survey will be followed by further survey work.</i>	The success of MHA PSP1 will best be measured by the benefit collaborative working brings to the communities we serve.

### External Sources of Funding

There are now more opportunities for external funding available for local authority clients but they have found it increasingly difficult to allocate resource to both improve intelligence of what external funding is available and then to commit resource to make the submission. As a consequence, substantial funding opportunities are being lost to the Alliance members. Going forward, URS will identify new opportunities and follow them up for member authorities.

The following provides more detail on the range of projects that URS undertook on behalf of the Alliance or individual members emphasising the range of services offered through the commission.

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## Hucknall Town Centre

URS has provided advice to Nottinghamshire County Council (NCC) on the Hucknall Town Centre Improvement Scheme (HTCIS) over a number of years to improve the urban environment for shoppers and visitors to Hucknall Town Centre. Our scope of work has encompassed both planning consultancy and environmental support.

A relief road was proposed by Nottinghamshire County Council located to the north of the current High Street which would allow the implementation of restricted access orders to some lengths of the High Street, including the creation of a pedestrian-only highway to the remaining lengths. URS assessed the potential impact of this scheme and produced a business case for NCC to seek DfT funding. Following construction of an acceptable base traffic model, validated against traffic counts, journey times and journey route choices, future year networks were built to represent changes that would occur as a result of either building the scheme or continuing without it. This work enabled NCC to submit a strong business case for funding to the DfT on 9th September 2011, which was subsequently awarded in November 2011.

URS was also involved in the environmental assessment work in respect of contaminated land, noise and air quality assessments that formed part of the Environmental

Statement (ES). URS worked closely with Nottinghamshire County Council both as client and decision maker on the application requiring the coordination, submission and on-going management of the original application. URS continues to provide on-going support dealing with various issues that have arisen as part of the statutory consultation process. This has included supplementary work in respect of both heritage and flood risk.

**For further information contact David Elliott and Simon Betts – [david.elliott@urs.com](mailto:david.elliott@urs.com); [simon.betts@urs.com](mailto:simon.betts@urs.com)**



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## Water Framework Directive Guidance

URS undertook a detailed Water Framework Directive (WFD), European Union directive 2000/60/EU, assessment for the Hucknall Town Centre Improvement Scheme in Nottinghamshire. The scheme is in the latter stages of several years of planning but incurred an objection from the Environment Agency in December 2012 on the grounds of WFD, meaning that submission of the full planning application for the major scheme had to be delayed because a WFD assessment had not been provided. URS supported Nottinghamshire to develop a WFD assessment to help overcome this objection, building on our knowledge and experience from support given to its clients across the UK.

URS is working with the MHA Members to determine their appreciation of the WFD and how it affects them as the level of awareness and the duties it places on authorities is at different levels throughout the country. URS will scope the need for tailored guidance for both member authorities and for issue to consent applicants. A joint procurement is providing direct efficiency savings to the MHA members and delivered a consistent approach throughout the East Midlands when dealing with developments, building upon URS' leading experience of the WFD from across the sector.

**For further information contact Dr Neil Williams – [neil.williams@urs.com](mailto:neil.williams@urs.com)**

## Wolverhampton Travel Plan Coordinator

*'Jon adapted very well to very differing demands placed upon him, his support was extremely valuable for maintaining a high service standard for the Strategy Team.'*

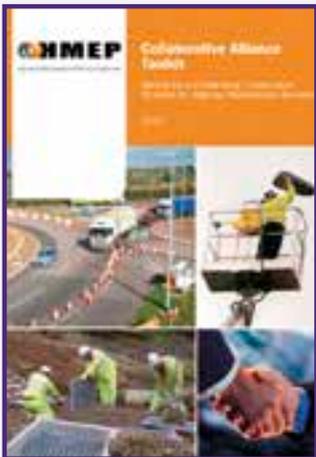
URS seconded a Travel Planner to Wolverhampton City Council part time who acted as interim travel plan coordinator and helped the council with implementing and monitoring travel plans and sustainable transport initiatives. The role included a review of the council's existing procedures for developing and monitoring workplace and residential travel plans and particularly promoting the TravelWise initiative in the West Midlands via a website for companies introducing travel plan measures for their work places. The same person also undertook a review of the council's own travel plan for future progression. URS coordinated with the

travel plan steering group for the i54 development and other developments including regeneration plans for Bilston town centre and parking management issues associated with the new South Wolverhampton & Bilston Academy and Bert Williams Leisure Centre representing the council. Other projects included reviewing and preparing responses on behalf of the council for recent policy and consultation documents including Centro's Local Sustainable Transport Funding and the aviation consultation paper.

**For further information contact Jonathan Miller – [jonathan.miller@urs.com](mailto:jonathan.miller@urs.com)**

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## Highways Maintenance Efficiency Programme



URS has been engaged by Leicestershire County Council to research and develop efficiency toolkits/guidance around the delivery of highway maintenance services. The Programme aims to transform the way in which highway maintenance activities are undertaken across all the English local highway authorities through collaboration within the sector and showcasing good practice.

URS has developed toolkits to promote collaboration between different highway clients by aiding the formation of new alliances or to share service arrangements. A 'how to' guide for implementing LEAN practices and a Client Competency assessment tool for the strategic management levels within highway authorities are also being developed. URS has also procured the development of a Term Service Contract document compiler system with a supporting specification reflecting the work local highway authorities undertake. URS has developed new Guidance for Managing Highway Drainage Assets and has recently been commissioned to develop a new

product looking at how Streets Works are undertaken by utilities and local highway authorities to reduce disruption to the public and small businesses.

At a strategic level, URS has provided Project Management support for Matthew Lugg OBE as an HMEP Advocate, and helped the Project Board manage the project effectively while supporting the wider Programme objectives and Gateway processes. The Project Manager has helped to engage with the sector to promote the various products at seminars, conferences and professional meetings as well as provided targeted support for early enablers.

For further information about what opportunities the Programme can offer your authority, please follow the link below.

**[www.dft.gov.uk/hmep](http://www.dft.gov.uk/hmep)**

**For further information contact Gary Thompson – [gary.m.thompson@urs.com](mailto:gary.m.thompson@urs.com)**

# Nottinghamshire County Council Term Maintenance Contract

URS was invited to assist/support the preparation of the new Nottinghamshire County Council (NCC) Term Maintenance Contract. The existing MHA Term Maintenance Contract was used as the base document and developed to meet the council's needs along with those of the Borough and District councils within Nottinghamshire. Other publicly funded bodies within the geographical boundary of Nottinghamshire will be able to use the contract subject to the agreement of NCC.

The contract was tailored to meet the council's organisational requirements and specified interlinks with other council systems, such as the internal ordering system. URS provided Pre-Qualification Questionnaire stage assessment support, and bespoke

Key Performance Indicators information for the council to assess performance and incentivisation aspects around contract extensions and innovation savings.

URS also arranged for NEC contract training for council staff to increase awareness and develop their knowledge of the final document.

Following on from that work, similar services were provided to Peterborough City Council when developing their Contract Service Information to the new NEC3 guidance.

**For further information contact Ed Varley  
– [ed.varley@urs.com](mailto:ed.varley@urs.com)**



## Personalised Travel Planning

The Personal Travel Planning (PTP) work URS delivered for Leicestershire County Council in 2011 and 2012 received attention at the national sustainable transport conference 'Re-booting Smarter Choices' in Bristol. This focused on the delivery of PTP to 12,000 households in Loughborough, and featured as an article in a magazine supporting the conference.

PTP is a targeted approach of delivering information directly to households, to encourage sustainable travel choices. URS is preparing to deliver a final round of PTP in Loughborough, before moving onto the Coalville area as part of Leicestershire's successful Local Sustainable Transport Fund (LSTF) bid programme.

Using the Leicestershire experience, URS delivered similar schemes (tailored to the individual authority and locality) for Leicester City Council and Nottinghamshire County Council, with a pilot project in Milton Keynes underway which supports

the MK Better Bus Area Fund bid. URS' model involves liaison with a third-party evaluation specialist (Integrated Transport Planning) so that evidence of project outcomes can be demonstrated to wider stakeholders.

Recently, URS refined its approach to PTP through business travel clinics within ten business parks in north Nottinghamshire. URS is now seeking to feed the lessons learnt back to Leicestershire to support its Loughborough and Coalville Business Travel Networks. Indeed, the key element of the PTP work within the MHA is how URS has been able to transfer learning directly from one authority to another via adapting a core methodology to the requirements of the partner authorities and that by sharing best practice has also led to financial efficiency savings.

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## Wolverhampton City Centre Project

Wolverhampton City Council (WCC), in support of its objective to secure private sector investment in the city centre, is determined to enhance the public realm. The council had developed a concept design and then engaged URS to help take this forward.

URS drew on its expertise in a number of offices around the country to support and deliver this project as follows:

- Provided project and programme management
- Developed the original concept design through to a full 2D design on a survey secured through URS
- The URS Belfast office used the outline design and photographs to develop images of the proposals for use in the consultation
- URS' Transportation team in Birmingham has reviewed the proposals to establish that the scheme had adequate capacity for the predicted traffic movements

- A Road Safety Audit has been undertaken and the outputs used in the scheme development
- Assisted in the management of the public consultation, face to face meetings and results analysis
- Developed plans and a written report necessary to amend the Traffic Regulation Orders as required by the scheme.

During the 2D design, URS facilitated a training exchange whereby a member of WCC staff worked alongside staff in the URS Telford Office to develop skills in the use of MX software.

The next stage is for URS to continue to project manage the scheme and develop the design through to construction drawings.

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## Flood Investigations

Under Section 19 of Flood & Water Management Act, Lead Local Flood Authorities (LLFAs) are obliged to assess instances of flooding within their area. As part of an initial appraisal, the LLFA should determine which Risk Management Authorities have relevant Flood Risk Management functions to the instance of flooding and determine whether the respective Risk Management Authorities have exercised (or is proposing to exercise) those functions, where applicable.

URS has undertaken a number of flood investigation studies for Derbyshire County Council, Leicestershire County Council and Wolverhampton City Council which fulfil the requirements of the respective LLFA to investigate instances of flooding.

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## Local Flood Risk Management Strategies

Under Section 9 of Flood & Water Management Act, Lead Local Flood Authorities (LLFAs) must develop, maintain, apply and monitor a strategy for Local Flood Risk Management in its area (i.e. a Local Flood Risk Management Strategy (LFRMS)).

As part of an LFRMS, LLFAs must consult with both the general public and relevant Risk Management Authorities that may be affected. Furthermore, an LLFA

must publish its LFRMS and also publish guidance about the application of the LFRMS in its area.

URS has recently been appointed by Staffordshire County Council to undertake an LFRMS for Staffordshire and Shropshire, as LLFAs.

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## Drainage Modelling Training Course

URS developed a WinDes (Drainage) Modelling Training Course to meet the specific requirements of Nottingham City Council. The training was developed to provide officers with background information, appreciation and experience of working with drainage models submitted to Nottingham City Council for review as part of planning applications and major developments. The course comprised an overview of drainage modelling from first principles and then gave a 'how to' insight into the set-up of a model using a real life worked example. Finally, the drainage engineers were given the opportunity to work with the model, allowing them to make changes and revisions to get an appreciation of the subtleties these changes could make on the overall design.

The training has helped to build competency within the council allowing engineers to review drainage designs in-house and also make simple changes to determine the implications and hence refine the design. The training has also helped to build capacity within the client team as they move towards fulfilling their role as a SUDS Approval Body, following the enactment of Section 32 (Schedule 3) of the Flood & Water Management Act.

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## A52 Congestion Management Study

The A52 is a regionally important link between Derby and Nottingham / M1 motorway but has a number of transport problems comprising queuing traffic and collisions. The queues also present significant barriers for the frequent bus services and the Meadow Lane footbridge is not able to meet the needs of cyclists and the disabled.

The task for URS was to investigate these and identify potential solutions. The feasibility of each potential solution was examined with the result that three alternative options were identified and drawn-up in more detail. The most cost effective and environmentally acceptable solution was subsequently submitted to the Local Enterprise Partnership, D2N2, as a scheme for consideration in the prioritisation process for funding.



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## Repairs to Milford Road, Cowhill and Scotches Railway Bridges

The URS Bridge Asset Management team carried out a repair contract for works on three historic railway bridges carrying the A6 in and around Belper for Derbyshire County Council. The bridges are of masonry arch construction, one of which is Grade II listed.

The scheme, which had a contract value of circa £150,000, was managed and supervised by URS. Maintenance work carried out included extensive repointing, brick replacements, stonework repair (see 1st photo), installation of weep holes and resurfacing. URS organised the site works to be undertaken on Saturday nights under railway possessions to minimise the impact on commuters.



Principal inspections of the bridges were carried out during railway possessions using an underbridge unit, and recommendations of work required were given to the client. URS produced tender documents using the NEC3 Short Contract form. Returned tenders were assessed by URS and advice given as to the most technically and cost effective tender to be accepted.

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## Nottinghamshire County Council Traffic Regulation Orders (TRO) and Environmental Weight Limits (EWL)

URS' Traffic Team's current relationship with Nottinghamshire County Council's Improvements Team developed from an initial request to assist with a few specialist projects to a regular staff presence in the Improvements Team office assisting with a significant proportion of the County Council's annual improvements programme.

URS delivered 50 live projects in specialist areas of traffic management, including traffic sign design, civil parking enforcement, safer routes to school and traffic regulation orders. URS enabled complex and time sensitive projects to be quickly and easily handed over, clearing a backlog of work following the introduction of Civil Parking Enforcement. URS' expertise and experience across the region also led to the review and updating of key policies on Environmental Weight Limits and Residents Parking Schemes which, in turn, led to the development and implementation of more projects under these two work streams.

Collaboration between the council and URS has led to an overall improvement in the service in a number of key areas:

- An increase in the number of TROs and Environmental Weight Limits installed
- Quicker briefing and procurement of URS services

- Regular formal and ad hoc meetings removed the barriers to communication and aided client/consultant understanding of the overall and project objectives

- Development of a Gateway process system allowing client reviews and approval before proceeding to the next stage, maintaining a level of accountability between the parties

- Streamlining of the TRO process by applying LEAN practices resulting in delivery in a reduced timescale, improved consultation and reduced legal involvement

- A resultant higher level of satisfaction from both the public and Members.



Paramount to the improvements achieved has been the co-location of URS engineers alongside officers.

Our presence gives the client confidence that projects are being delivered professionally in a timely and cost effective manner.

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## Leicester City Cycle Signs

URS is supporting Legible Leicester Fit 4 Business Walking and Cycle Route Signing through the Local Sustainable Transport Fund. URS has been asked to review the current signing for cyclists and pedestrians along the routes:

- Groby to the City
- Littlethorpe to the City
- The Inner Ring Road.

The initiative seeks to sign specific destinations and areas of interest that are off the main routes for both pedestrians and cyclists.

URS has undertaken a review of the existing signing, designing new signs that provide continuity along each route and adjacent connectivity where this is inconsistent before implementing the proposals following consultation with Members and other stakeholders. URS has enabled the client to deliver its LTP objectives on these strategic routes by providing technical resource and consultation expertise, building on the experiences gained from Nottinghamshire County Council.

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## MEGZ 2013 Ecology

Markham Vale Economic Growth Zone (MEGZ) is an area of land to the north east of Chesterfield, comprising redundant colliery land purchased by Derbyshire County Council for industrial development, in partnership with Henry Boot Developments. URS has supported the development of this project over a number of years and has involved a variety of URS specialisms including geotechnics, structures and environmental.

The environmental specialism comprises an ecology survey undertaken in accordance with best practice guidelines. Surveys were undertaken for great crested newts, botanicals (orchids), breeding birds, water voles and great crested newts. Cold weather had delayed the surveys and the spring migration of bird species, arriving within the UK later than in preceding years. Other protected species surveys are yet to be undertaken (due to seasonal timing constraints) including surveys for otters, reptiles, bats, badgers and wintering birds.

Species recorded within MEGZ so far include great crested newt, water vole, grass snake and a diverse range of bird species. Ad hoc finds of other species e.g. invertebrates, bird species and mammal signs; are also recorded whilst undertaking surveys which adds to the MEGZ biodiversity data.

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