

Well-Managed Highway Infrastructure: A Code of Practice

MHA+ Lunch and Learn
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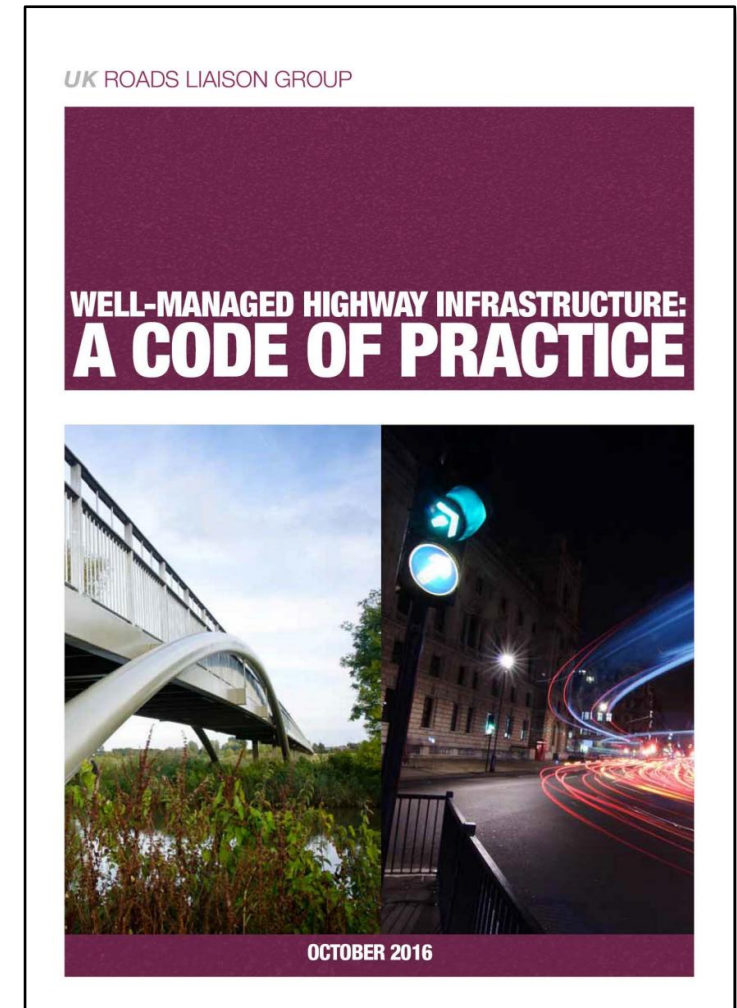
27th April 2026

Agenda

- 01 Overview of the 2016 Code
- 02 Background of the refresh
- 03 Key themes to develop
- 04 How the project is running
- 05 Other changes
- 06 How MHA+ members can get involved

Overview of the Code

- Comprehensive guidance for the management and maintenance of Highway Infrastructure.
- For practitioners who manage the UK's road networks, primarily local authorities.
- Serves as the primary resource for best practices in managing our roads.
- Split into four Parts:
 - **Part A:** Overarching principles
 - **Part B:** Highways
 - **Part C:** Structures
 - **Part D:** Lighting

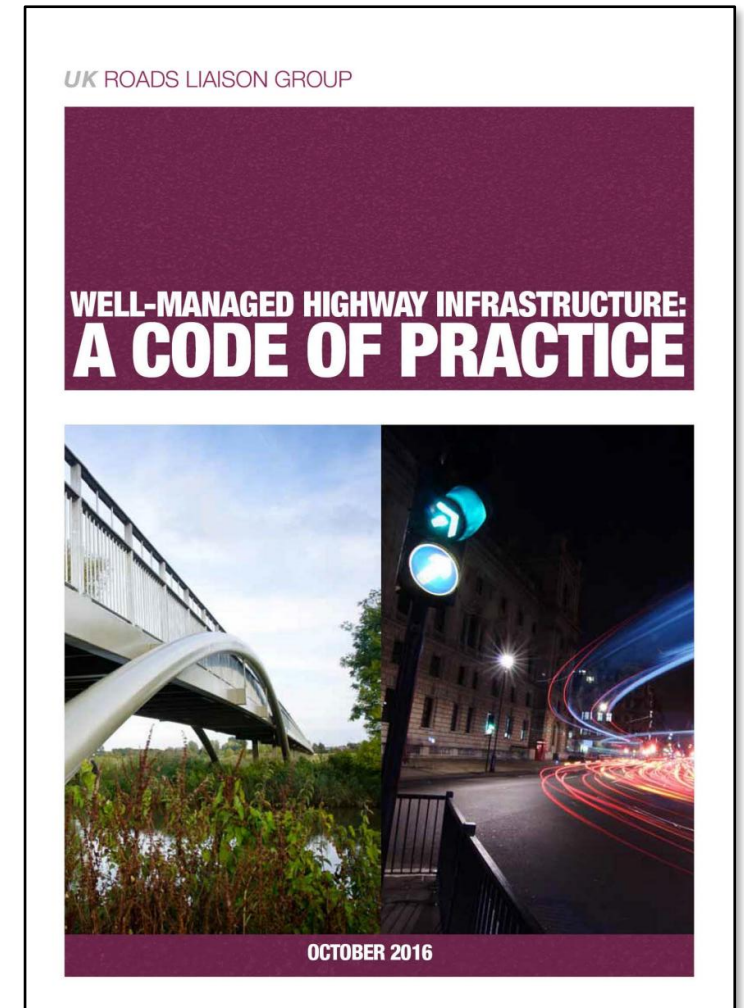


Overview of the 2016 Code

The Code:

- Promotes a risk-based approach to highways asset management.
- Moves away from prescriptive rules towards local decision-making.
- Supports authorities to balance safety, service levels, affordability and risk.

It is not statutory but provides a benchmark of good practice.



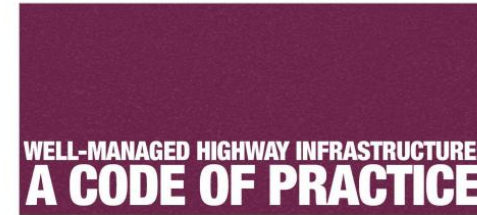
Background of the refresh

Steps taken to set-up the review:

- Scoping exercise
- Open survey
- Stakeholder engagement
- Report of findings
- Procurement



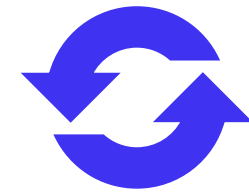
UK ROADS LIAISON GROUP



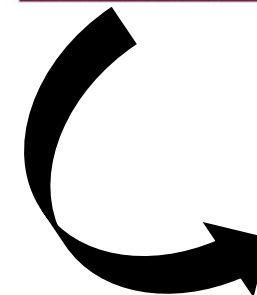
Engagement
session
feedback



Updated Code



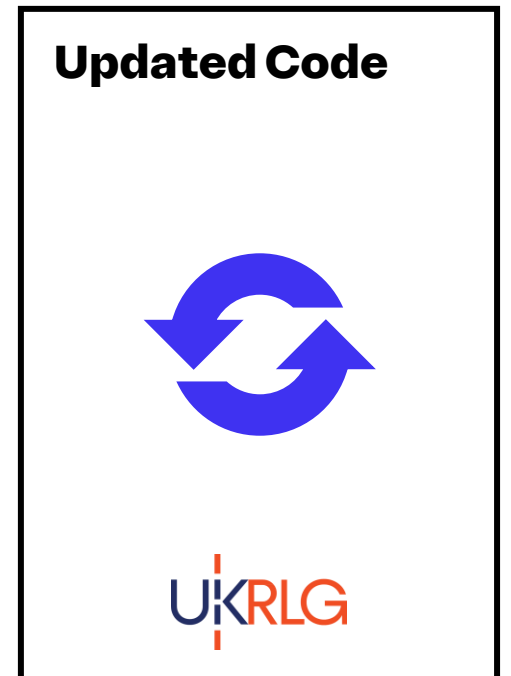
UKRLG



**Survey
Findings**

Background of the refresh

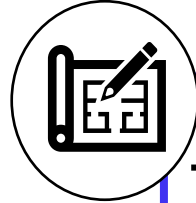
- Purpose is a review and update of existing content, not a full rewrite
- Retain the current modular structure of the Code:
 - Part A: Overarching Principles
 - Part B: Highways
 - Part C: Structures
 - Part D: Lighting
 - NEW** Part E: Tunnels
- Retain risk-based approach, rather than defining minimum service levels



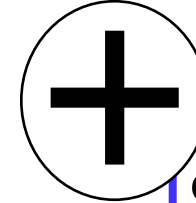
Key themes to develop



A **governance framework** for the Code



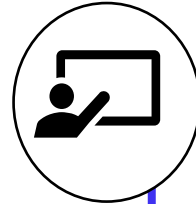
Technical updates to the Code and its structure



Inclusion of **new content areas** such as carbon management, artificial intelligence, and climate resilience



Launch of a live, **searchable digital platform**



Creation of **comms** and **training materials**



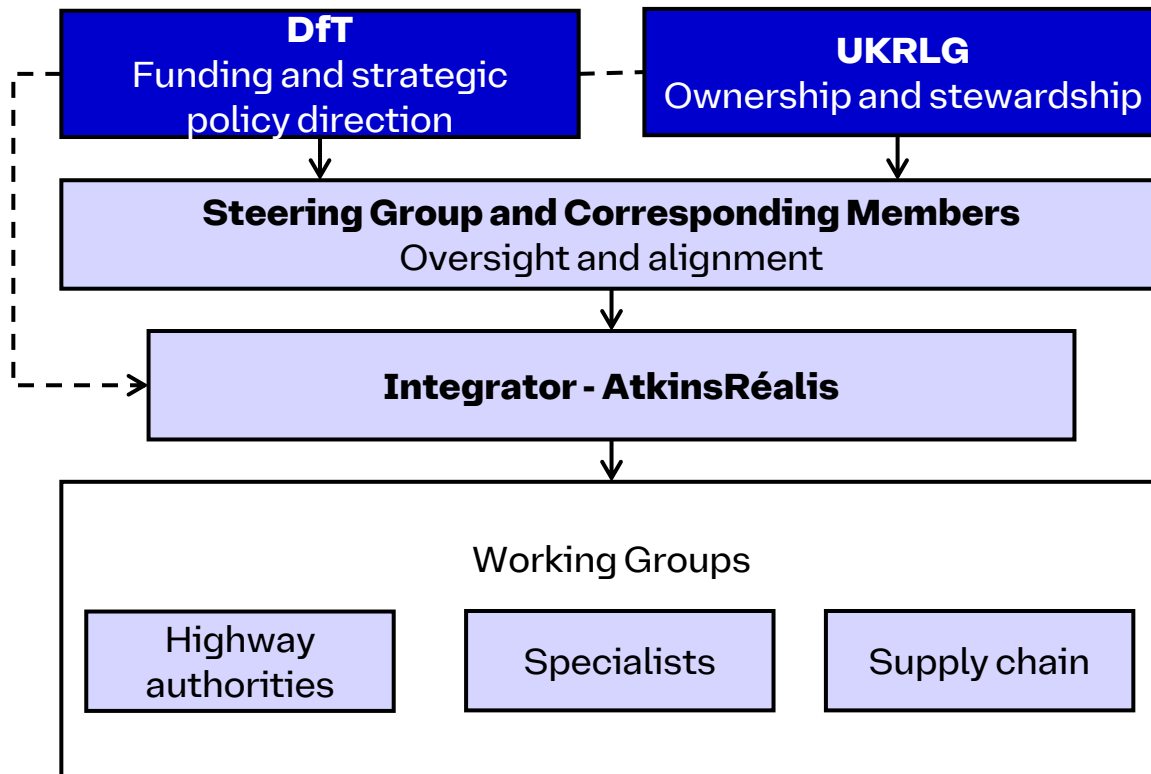
Development of a **monitoring and evaluation** framework

Key themes to develop - contents

Part A: Overarching Principles	Parts B, C, D and E: Asset-specific
Scope	Scope
Legal Framework	Legal Framework
Network Strategy	Asset Strategy
Risk Based Approach	Risk Based Approach
Network Knowledge	Asset Knowledge
Resilience & Adaptation	Resilience & Adaptation
Finance & Investment	Finance & Investment
Sustainability	Sustainability
Procurement & Delivery	

How the project is running

Governance structure



- **DfT** will provide strategic oversight, funding, and policy alignment.
- **UKRLG** will be the overall owner of the code, providing sector endorsement and long-term stewardship.
- The **Steering Group** will provide oversight, technical leadership, and ensures broad stakeholder representation.
- Representatives from DfT and key stakeholder groups will act as **Corresponding Members** that will be regularly consulted on specific topics.
- **Working Groups** will be responsible for reviewing and co-authoring necessary updates and developing executive summaries.
- **AtkinsRéalis** will be responsible for project coordination, drafting/editorial support and stakeholder engagement.
- **AtkinsRéalis** will also lead the parallel workstreams around risk-based approach, training, monitoring and hosting.

How the project is running

Approach

Balance of detail against principle of **guidance**

Involvement of **risk, legal and insurance sectors**

Continues to link to the **Highway Infrastructure Asset Management Guidance**

Continues to link to the **Electronic Traffic Equipment Code** (also under review)

Alignment with the **DfT Incentive Fund** for English authorities

Adoption period to be considered

Future requirements not in scope being captured

Governance for **future updates of the Code** on an ongoing basis

How the project is running

What's changing

Stronger alignment with the four core objectives of the Code – **safety, serviceability, sustainability, customer service**

Refined guidance on **risk based approach**

New Part to be developed for **tunnels**

New sections in Part A on **carbon, AI, innovation, streetworks, human capital**

Expanded sections in Part A on **network knowledge, finance & investment, and procurement and delivery**

New sections in Asset Parts to make Overarching Principles more tangible

Refreshed links to external guidance

Recommendations to be reviewed once main text agreed

Other changes

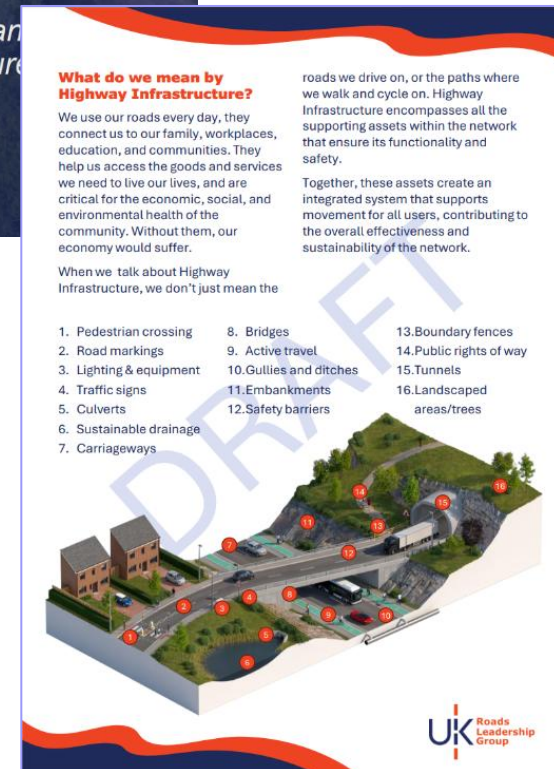
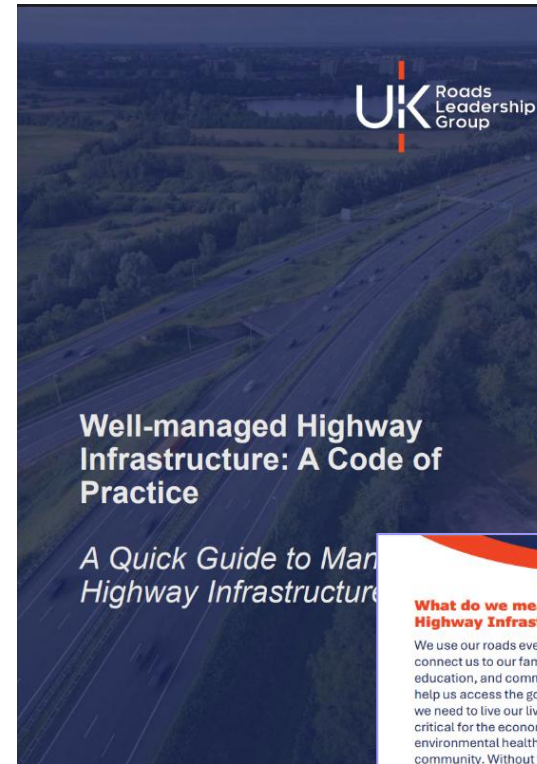
Quick guides

Purpose is to communicate key concepts from the Code to a non-technical audience:

- Aimed at councillors, the public, or new members of teams
- PDF format, but designed to be printed on a single sheet of A4
- Easy-read style, accessible language and visuals where possible

Topics to be covered:

- Introduction to the Code & asset management fundamentals
- Highway infrastructure
- Risk based approach
- Resilience and adaptation
- Environment and sustainability
- Innovation



Other changes

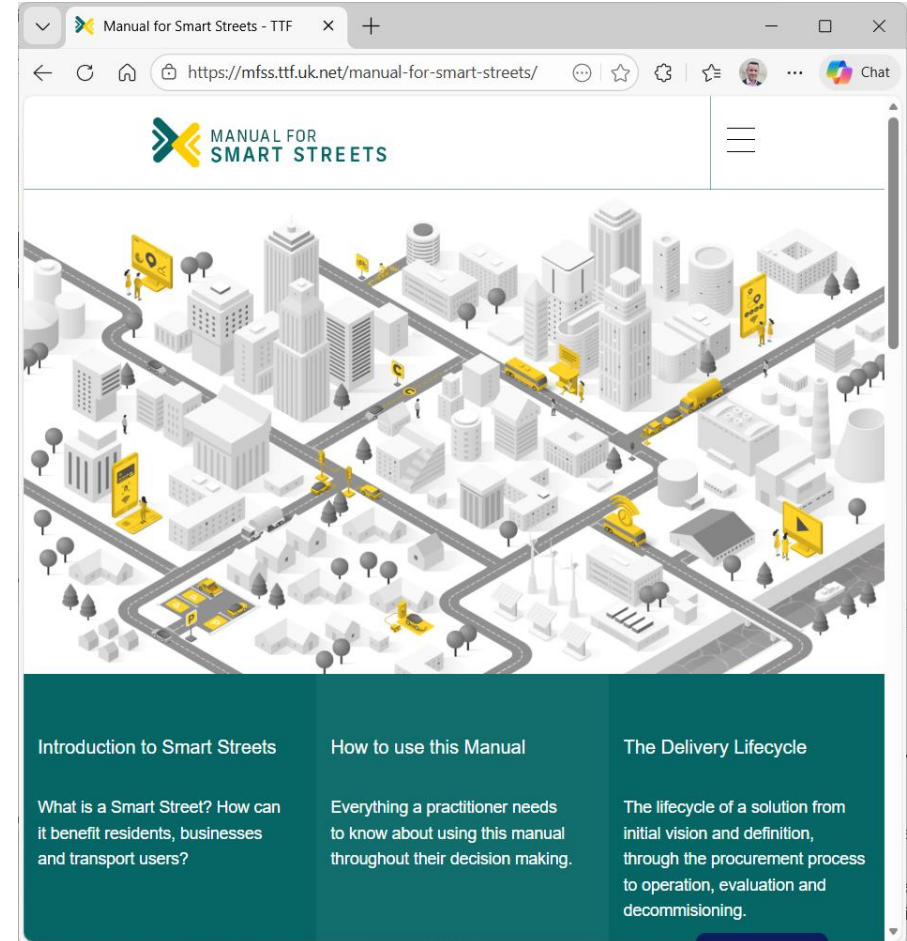
Digital platform

Purpose is to present the Code in a more accessible format:

- More navigable than 100s of pages of PDF
- Potential for user interaction and feedback
- Support regular updates of the Code's content

Approach:

- Similar to current online Manual for Smart Streets
- Technical requirements – e.g. universal access
- User requirements – e.g. exportable version
- Governance – e.g. version control of updates
- To be hosted via new UKRLG website



Other changes


Case studies

The UKRLG website will host case studies as examples of good practice. They will sit outside of the Code, so that:

- Multiple examples can be made available without making the code excessive in length
- They can be updated as required, without requiring a full update to the Code
- They are not misinterpreted as prescriptive examples – they are illustrative only

Call for submissions is open:


- Share lessons learned across wider UK sector
- Gain recognition for excellent work
- Nothing lengthy, single page Word template
- Sales materials to be avoided



CASE STUDIES

Please provide details of a relevant case study for the Update to the WMHI: A Code of Practice using the prompts below.

Title:
Local Authority / Organisation:
What Part of the Code is it relevant to: Choose an item.
What Section of the Code is it relevant to: Choose an item.
Is it relevant to any other Section or Part of the Code, if so, which?:
List any key works or tags (e.g. Carbon, AI, Lighting) - - -
Describe the problem / challenge / opportunity:
Describe the solution identified:
What were the key benefits and outcomes of the solution:



Case Study

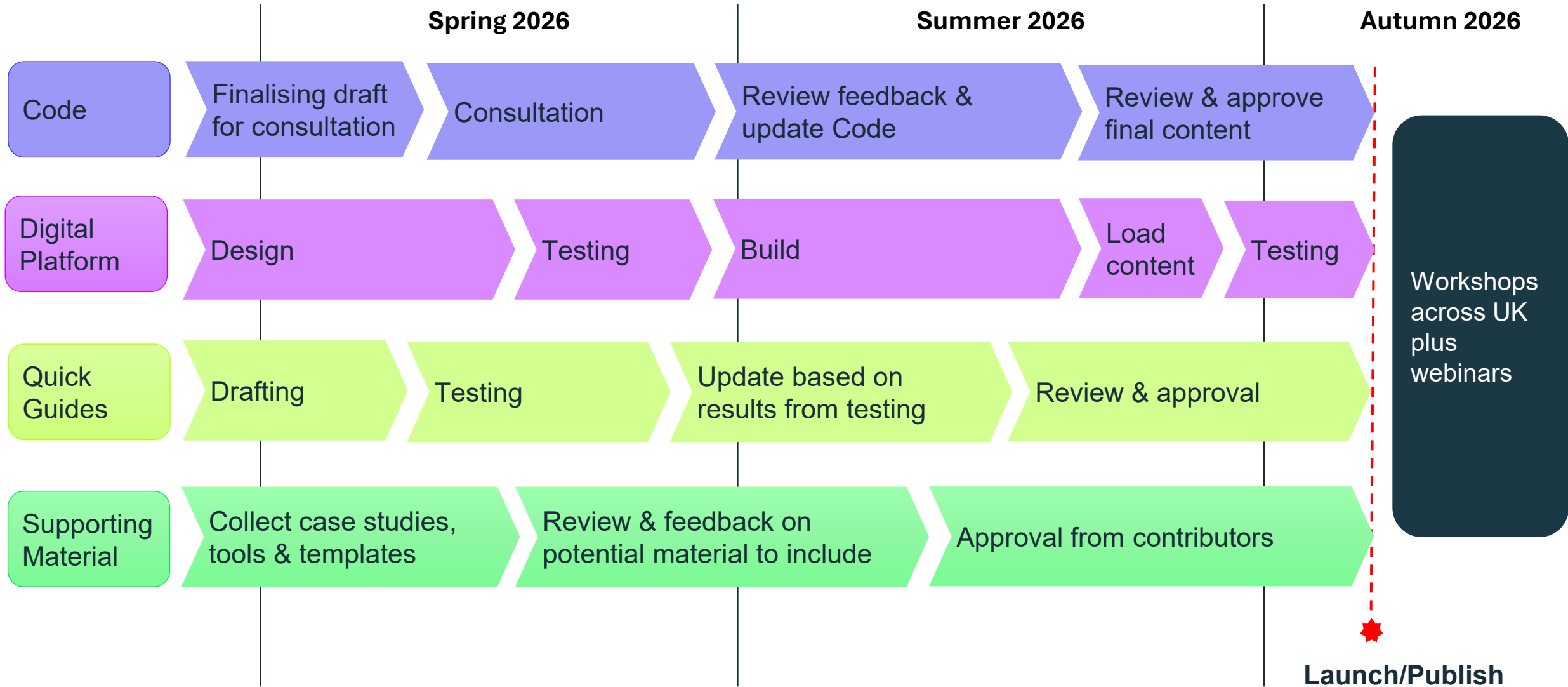
Example case study

Title: State of the City: planned maintenance programming using value management

Organisation: Westminster City Council / **Relevant to:** Part A, Risk-Based Approach

Challenge	Approach / Solution	Outcomes / Benefits
Managing a complex, heavily used urban highway network	Adopted a Value Management (VM) framework to support risk-based decision making	Over 10 years of consistent, evidence-led investment decisions
Maintaining asset condition targets amid funding constraints	Annual "State of the City" assessment combining: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Asset condition• Management hierarchy• Safety defects	Majority of network maintained in Good / Fair condition
Need to prioritise planned maintenance consistently and transparently	VM scores used to prioritise the Planned Preventative Maintenance (PPM) programme	Reduction in safety defects and improved targeting of works
		Clear audit trail linking condition data to funding decisions

Next steps



How MHA+ members can get involved

Contribute

- Case studies, tools, templates: From now through to summer 2026
- Consultation period: May 2026
- Embedment workshops and webinars: Autumn 2026

Get in touch

- If you wish to contribute or have any queries, please contact the project team at: ukrlgcodeofpractice@atkinsrealis.com

