



**Gateshead**  
**Council**

Housing, Environment & Healthy Communities  
Highways & Waste

# **Borough of Gateshead Permit Scheme for Roadworks and Streetworks**

First Annual Review  
For the year ended 31 March 2021

## INTRODUCTION

I am pleased to present the foreword to the first annual review of the Gateshead Permit Scheme, which covers the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> March 2021.

This year has been like no other for all of us. A national lockdown was imposed on 23 March 2020 – the date the Permit Scheme went live. The new team were forced to work from home throughout 2020/21 and embraced new technology and working practices, whilst also receiving training on permits and navigating the legislative changes that came in during July 2020.

Gateshead Council's vision is to make Gateshead a place where everyone thrives. This review highlights some significant positive outcomes that represent real benefits to the people and businesses of Gateshead alike which contribute to that vision, particularly in terms of improving the efficiency of our highway network.

As always, we will continue to strive for further improvements and are aware that there have been some data quality and reporting issues (that are fully covered within the review) as the new systems and procedures have bedded in.

If you have any questions about this report or the permit scheme more widely, please email the team at [streetworks@gateshead.gov.UK](mailto:streetworks@gateshead.gov.UK) and they will be happy to help.



Marc Morley  
Service Director, Highways & Waste  
Housing, Environment & Healthy Communities  
September 2021

## **1 Executive Summary**

The efficient management of road and street works is vital when delivering essential utility services and facilitating much needed maintenance and improvement of the road network itself, thus ensuring that the infrastructure remains in a fit and proper state. However, these works also cause significant delay and disruption to the road network and frustration to road users, businesses and residents; a balance therefore needs to be struck between these competing demands.

The development of the Gateshead Permit Scheme was undertaken in 2019 along with other local Highway Authorities in the North East, and elsewhere in England. The process involved a significant work and a great deal of collaboration between neighbouring highway authorities, as well as with statutory undertakers.

The introduction of the Permit Scheme in Gateshead required change for everyone involved, requiring adaptation to the new procedures and ways of working which set the foundation of how the scheme would be managed. Gateshead Council has been fully committed in ensuring that the main objectives of the scheme are met and adhered to.

The new permitting rules allow for greater control over works taking place on the network, with Gateshead Council's street works team (the Permit Authority) able to refuse consent for works considered to have the potential to cause unnecessary disruption. The new rules also allow the authority to agree conditions with the activity promoter to ensure that works are expediated in the most efficient manner. National Regulations require parity of treatment, so the Council's own works are subject to the same rules and requirements as those of the statutory undertakers.

The increased discipline required under permitting has improved existing processes within works promoter organisations, which has enhanced the quality of information relating to proposed works received by the permit authority. The permitting rules have also served to highlight the importance of providing early and detailed information concerning planned works to assist in the coordination process.

As Permit Authority, the Council has made effective use of our new powers and have worked closely with utility companies and our own highway works promoters to ensure that those powers have been applied in a fair, reasonable and competent manner. The combined impact has been improved network coordination and reduced disruption, both key to Gateshead fulfilling its network management duty under the Traffic Management Act 2004 and to delivering the Council's own Thrive agenda.

This review evaluates the progress of the Gateshead permit scheme in meeting both the stated objectives and parity of treatment between local authority highway works (Works for Road Purposes) which are undertaken by the highway authority and statutory undertakers works (utility company 'street works') for the financial year 2020 21.

In its first year of operation 8,920 permit applications were received with 7,856 having been granted and 725 refused for varying reasons.

Whilst there are no obvious trends, some successful outcomes are apparent. In particular, there has been a clear reduction in overall occupation of the highway arising from works activities through the better assessment of permit durations and a significant improvement in identifying and encouraging collaboration between works promoters. Together, these have resulted in approximately 117 fewer days of occupation.

In addition to the measured benefits, several material but less easy to quantify benefits have been identified, including:

- An increased discipline amongst highway authority promoters recording their works following statutory requirements.
- The need to book route space and undertake the activity within a specified time period has focused attention on improved planning and activity scheduling by all works promoters.
- Better quality information available to make considered coordination decisions.

The overall performance of the Gateshead scheme for the financial year 2020/21 has been successful in meeting its wider objectives, but there is still scope for improvement both in terms of operational performance and the recording and analysis of data.

## **2 Introduction**

### **2.1 Gateshead Council road network**

The Borough of Gateshead covers an area of 142 square kilometres and has a population of about 203,000. The Borough has a variety of landscapes including urban in the town itself and along the south bank of the River Tyne towards the east, along with Whickham towards the west, with the most semi-rural and rural locations further west towards our borders with Northumberland and County Durham, including Ryton and Rowlands Gill.

Gateshead is key to the regional transport network, sitting almost at the centre of the region and providing strategic links to and from other networks. With the exception of three roads operated by Highways England (the A1(M), A194(M) A1(T)) all roads in the Borough are under the Council's direct control.

The Permit Scheme was introduced to give greater control of activities taking place on Gateshead highway network which in the past have been seen to cause unnecessary disruption. These works were previously coordinated via a noticing system operated under the New Roads and Street Works Act 1991 (NRSWA). Parity of treatment for all activity promoters (whether these be statutory undertakers or highway authorities) is a national requirement of any permit scheme.

Permit Schemes enable the Authority to;

- manage and coordinate street works more effectively
- minimise disruption to users
- recharge the allowable coordination costs to the Utility Companies.

The power now afforded to Gateshead Council has allowed us to agree conditions with Promoters, carrying out works to ensure that works are carried out in a safe, efficient and cost-effective manner.

### **2.2 Objectives of the Gateshead Permit Scheme**

The objectives of the Gateshead permit scheme are laid out in section 1.7 of the Scheme Document, namely:

Objective	How the objective has been met
Obtain greater control and consistence over all activites on the highway	Use of permit refusals to ensure information is accurate. Use of Fixed Penalty Notices to drive quality of information. Greater level of planning to ensure permit contains all the necessary information required in order to grant a permit.
Manage and minimise delays and other impacts on all road users	Careful use of conditions to ensure works are undertaken at suitable times. Encourage weekend working where appropriate to reduce working days disruption
Promote best practice and enhance co-ordination, collaboration and cross boundary cooperation across the North East region, particuliarly in the area covered by the North East Joint Transport Committee	Significant savings in occupation from activites through the use of conditions to manage activites, coordinating works to avoid clashes, seeking collaborative opportunities and challenging durations

Also, to ensure parity of treatment for all activity promoters, including the Councils' own works the performance indicators show both highway authority and statutory undertaker, works are assessed in an equal manner and conditions applied to both in a considered way. Introduction of council-wide processes to include other activities that do not fall under this scheme also apply (highway events, licences under s.50 New Roads and Streetworks Act 1991 or s.171 Highways Act 1980, to name but a few).

### 2.3 Gateshead Council's Permit Scheme evaluation

Part 3 of the Traffic Management Act (TMA) 2004 introduced Permit Schemes as a new way in which activities in the public highway could be managed and to improve Authorities' ability to minimise disruption from road and street works. This Permit Scheme is known as the Borough of Gateshead Permit Scheme ("the Permit Scheme").

Regard must be had to Part 3 of the Traffic Management Act 2004 ("TMA"), as amended by s51(b) of and Schedule 10 to the Deregulation Act 2015, and also to the Traffic Management Permit Scheme (England) Regulations 2007 (SI 2007/3372), as amended by the Traffic Management Permit Scheme (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2015 (SI 2015/958). Unless the context requires otherwise, these Regulations (as amended) are the ones referred to in this document as "the Regulations".

The Order creating Gateshead's Permit Scheme was made on 19<sup>th</sup> February 2020 and became effective the following month, on 23<sup>rd</sup> March.

This report sets out an overview of the scheme's operational performance in its first year. It provides analysis of the available data in relation to street works and road works activities in Gateshead Council for the purposes of

- demonstrating the introduction of the Gateshead permit scheme has and will continue to provide benefits stated in the objectives; and
- outlining any changes required by Gateshead council to improve the operation of the scheme

Data has been collected, collated and presented in either graphical or tabulated format for each of the defined KPIs. Commentary is also provided to draw out and expand on noteworthy trends in the data.

### **3 Performance Indicators**

The scheme was developed using the mandatory key performance indicators (KPIs) which were part of the statutory guidance determining schemes at the time of development. There are also several operational and Authority measures which will be used to help quantify the key objectives.

#### **3.1 Specific considerations**

The scheme went live on 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2020, the same day the UK went into a nationwide lockdown due to the Covid 19 worldwide pandemic.

The street works team had only been in place 1 week before lockdown started and had only had 1 weeks' worth of training. Pre-Permits the team's structure was 1 Street works Manager, 1 inspector, 1 streetworks technician. Post permit implementation the structure changed to 1 streetworks manager, 1 inspector, 1 streetworks controller and 2 permit officers and in December 2020 we were able to employ another permit officer.

#### **EToN and Street Manager**

Pre July 2020 all authorities and statutory undertakers in the industry had notice management systems (NMS) which used an industry developed XML schema called Electronic Transfer of Notices (EToN), to transfer information allowing authorities and promoters to meet their basic regulatory requirements.

On 1st of July 2020 the Department of Transport brought in a new system of recording information known as Street Manager.

### Reporting problems

As the Gateshead scheme has developed, difficulties in gathering necessary information have become apparent, largely owing to the migration from EToN to Street Manager. However, we are still able to produce the information for both the nationally agreed Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) and the Operational Measures (OMs) and Authority Measures (AMs) that the scheme requires.

### 3.2 KPI 1 – The number of permits and permit variation applications

The introduction of the Gateshead Scheme provided Gateshead Council, as the Permit Authority with the powers to Grant or Refuse an application to work on the public highway. There are specific timescales in which permit officers must assess and respond to permit applications. If action is not taken within this time that permit becomes 'Deemed', therefore granted by default.

KPI1 provides the number of permits and permit variation applications received, the number granted and the number of refused, and is shown as:

- The total number of permit and permit variation applications, excluding any permit applications that are cancelled prior to assessment
- The number of applications granted as a percentage of the total applications made
- The number of applications refused as a percentage of the total applications made

### KPI 1 Results

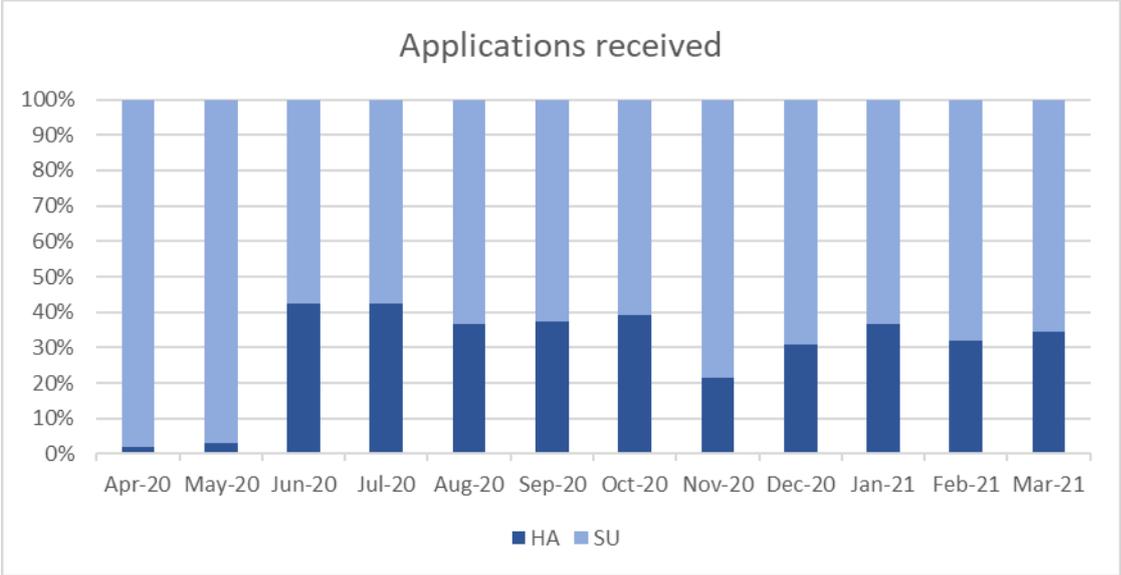
The data below is obtained by running the Mayrise report "KPI1 Permit and Permit Variations". It includes permit applications and variation applications of a granted refused or permit modification requests it includes any granted permits that are subsequently cancelled

*Total number of permit applications and responses*

	2020/21
Permit and Variation Applications Received	8920
Granted	7856 (88%)
Refused	725 (8%)

The remaining 4% relate to cancelled permits

The chart below compares the percentage of permit applications received from the highway authority and the statutory undertakers. On average the authority permit applications ranged between 0 and 40% of the total permit applications received in 2020/21.



The chart below details the breakdown of the permit applications received (not including PAAs)

<b>Applications (210,310)</b>	Received	% of total		
	HA	SU	HA	SU

Major	120	499	1.75%	11.35%
Standard	225	850	3.28%	19.33%
Minor	2075	1479	30.24%	33.63%
Immediate Urgent	9	1314	0.13%	29.87%
Immediate Emergency	34	256	0.50%	5.82%
Total	<b>2463</b>	<b>4398</b>	35.90%	64.10%
<b>Variations</b> <b>(311,510,1110)</b>	<b>Received</b>		<b>% of total</b>	
	HA	SU	HA	SU
Major	99	346	4.81%	21.30%
Standard	98	428	4.76%	26.35%
Minor	229	485	11.12%	29.86%
Immediate Urgent	2	249	0.10%	15.33%
Immediate Emergency	7	116	0.34%	7.14%
Total	<b>435</b>	<b>1624</b>	21.13%	78.87%

The data show that roughly 35% of all Permit Applications are from the Highway Authority and 65% are those from Statutory Utilities.

The variations include amongst others, description, location, duration, works data variation, variations prior to works start, variations after works start. The number of variations against the total number of permits has shown an interesting statistic that Major permits are subject to a significant number of variations.

In the period 1/4/20 to 31/3/21 the permit team also assessed 696 PAAs (Provisional Advanced Authorisation), of which 583 were followed up with the Permit application (which are accounted for in the figures above).

## **KPI 1 Analysis**

### Number of Permit Applications

On average the highway authority generated around 35% of applications and the statutory undertakers 65%.

Prior to the implementation of the Gateshead Permit Scheme, the Highway Authority had previously submitted notices under EToN. It was apparent that when the step up from 'noticing' to 'permitting' that there was a significant change. Some works were not being correctly submitted and the Permit Authority took extensive work to help the Highway Authority develop the new processes.

In July 2020 EToN was discontinued and permits moved to Street Manager, the Councils software provider Yotta experienced significant problems in being able to effectively

process the permit applications from the Highway Authority which resulted in many permits not being issued correctly. This was rectified later in July but did cause many issues for both the Highway Authority and the Permit team.

### Permits Granted and Refused

Granted		Granted & Cancelled		Refused		Refused & Cancelled	
HA	SU	HA	SU	HA	SU	HA	SU
2743	5113	200	516	89	636	62	352
	7856		716		725		414

In comparison to the number of permit applications received on average 88% of applications were granted

### **3.3 KPI 2 The number of conditions applied by condition type**

The Gateshead permit scheme allows permit conditions to be attached to a permit. Conditions are applied by the works promoter either through their own volition or as requested by Gateshead Council's permit team.

The Department of Transport introduced a statutory set of conditions to bring all schemes into alignment with the way conditions were used. Appendix X provides a summary of these conditions.

Conditions are applied to permit to undertake the works on the highway to ensure that the information on these works is maximised and the impact of the works on the travelling public is minimised ensuring the network is managed as effectively as possible and enabling works be undertaken efficiently.

There are three conditions that are 'standard' and applied to every permit in all cases; it is not necessary to select these condition types or include them in the condition text. These are conditions 1a ,1b and 11a

1. The activity will only take place between the permit estimated start and end date on a Traffic Sensitive Street (NCT1a- Date constraint)
2. The activity will only take place between the permit start date and end date allowing for a validity period which allows works to start and end later on a non-Traffic Sensitive Street (NCT1b -Date constraint)
3. Site must display the permit number at all times (NCT11a – Publicity)

KPI2 measures the number of conditions applied to permits and permit variations on shows:

- The number of permits granted per period
- The number of condition types applied
- The number of each type being shown as percentage of the total permits issued

## KPI 2 – Results

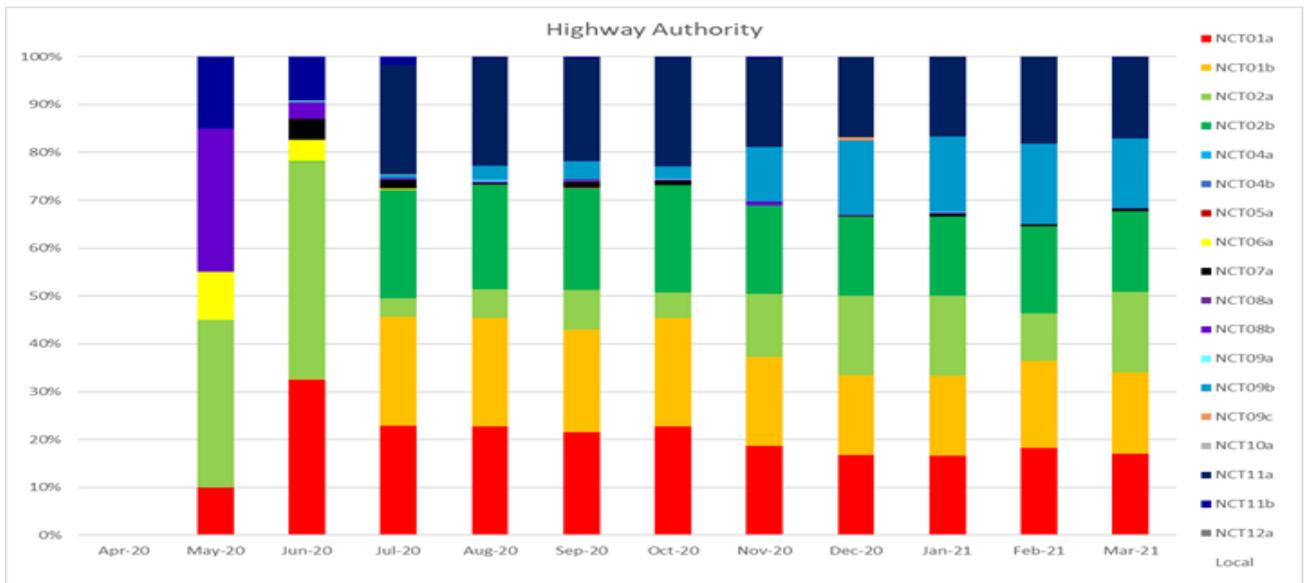
The data was gathered from Mayrise using the report “KPI2 –permit application conditions”. The report counts the condition type selections on each permit, not use of individual permit conditions themselves.

This data can be shown in many ways. It has been decided to use a form of colour map to show the proportional contribution of each condition type per month as the actual figures are not necessarily useful on their own; it is of more value to visualise general trends and use of their overall ongoing application.

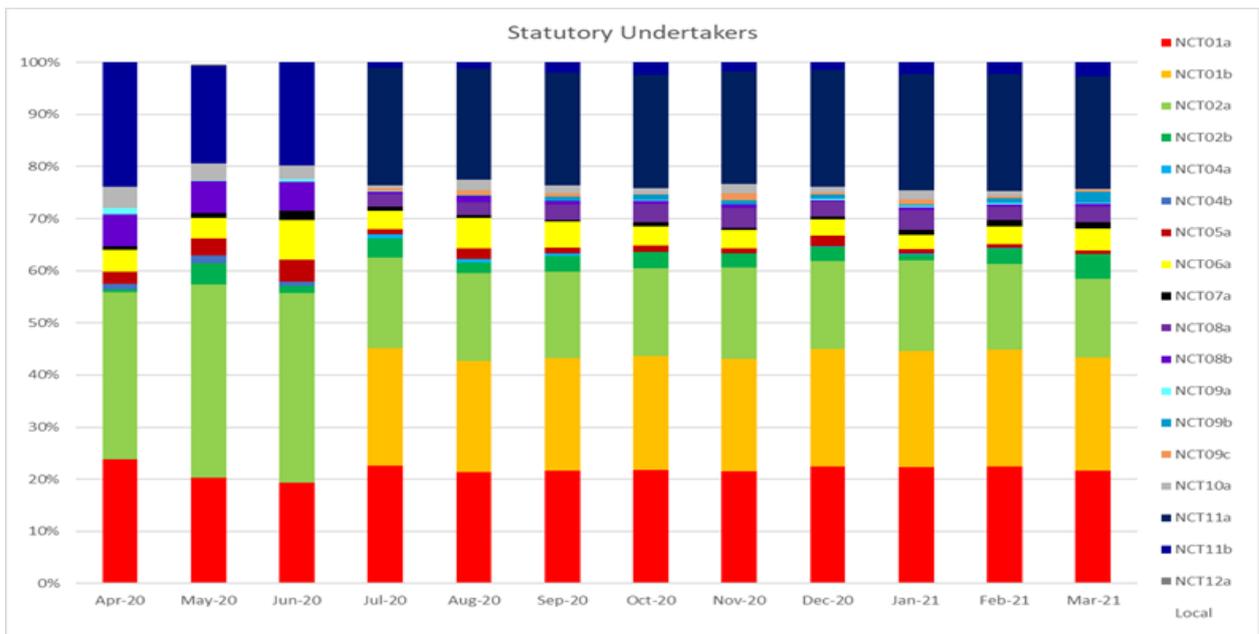
The charts below show the proportional percentage of permit conditions applied against permits in relation to works for road purposes and works undertaken by statutory undertakers based on the permit condition types.

NCT01a	Duration - applies to ALL PERMITS where no validity window applies				
NCT01b	Duration - applies to ALL PERMITS where validity window applies				
NCT02a	Limit the days and times of day				
NCT02b	Working hrs				
NCT04a	Removal of surplus material/plant				
NCT04b	Storage of surplus materials/plant				
NCT05a	Width and/or length of road space that can be occupied				
NCT06a	Road space to be available to traffic/pedestrians at certain times of day				
NCT07a	Road closed to traffic				
NCT08a	Traffic management request				
NCT08b	Manual control of traffic management				
NCT09a	Changes to traffic management arrangements				
NCT09b	Traffic management arrangements to be in place				
NCT09c	Signal removal from operation when no longer required				
NCT10a	Employment (as agreed) of appropriate methodology				
NCT11a	Display of permit number				
NCT11b	Publicity for proposed works				
NCT12a	Limiting timing of certain events				
Local	Exceptional circumstance				

*Highway Authority: percentage of condition types used for granted permits (2020/21)*



*Statutory Undertaker: percentage of condition types used for granted permits (2020/21)*



## KPI 2 Analysis

The application of conditions is considered as one of the key powers provided by permit scheme to help deliver the expected objectives and benefits

The need for consultation and publicity is inherent in any major scheme. For the highway authority the beginning of the year sees the bulk of the surface dressing programme which is difficult to manage and is very weather dependent. There is a high expectation that these kinds of activities are properly publicised including letter drops and advanced signage. This trend is clearly seen in the higher proportion of activities requiring this

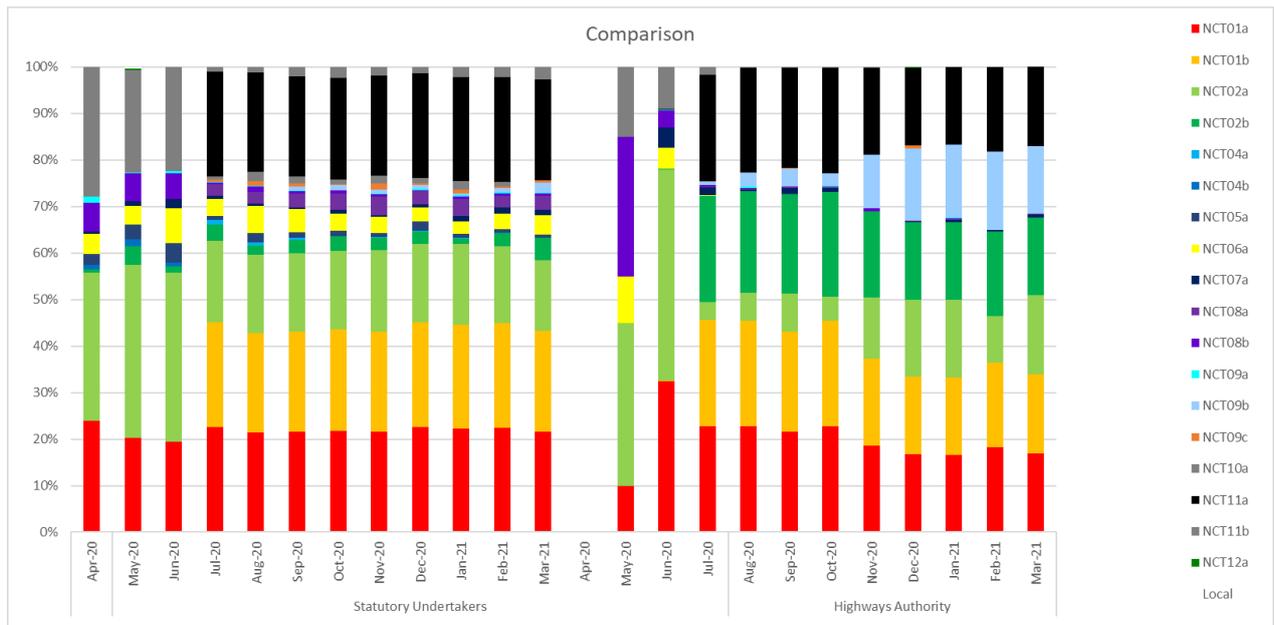
condition type at those times of the year. For statutory undertakers, publicity or consultation is normally used only on major projects or those who have a significant impact on the local area.

Time constraints were also used for a large proportion of the permits over the year. This is not unusual; the highway authority contractors are probably more much aware of Traffic Sensitive times since there is a contractual demand to work outside sensitive times as far as possible. They are able to address their working times more easily because of the nature of their works, particularly reactive or responsive repairs are generally only a few hours or less in duration and so these condition types are used typically in Traffic Sensitive locations to limit the activity to periods outside peak or traffic sensitive times.

The statutory undertaker chart shows a much more even spread of conditions. There is a high use of the date constraints type because many promoters will include one of the standard conditions (NCT 1a/b) on their permits although this is not necessary. This is also likely to be the reason for the consistent use of the consultation and publicity type, which reflects the other standard condition (NCT11a) for the display of the permit number on site.

For the statutory undertaker, the use of a time constraint is very typical to try and ensure that the works lasting several days are planned suitably to avoid significant times when no activity takes place on site; so as well as the standard conditions, typically this type is applied to ensure works only start or end on certain days.

*Statutory Undertakers and Highway Authority: comparison of proportional use of condition types used*



The above chart show that the use of conditions varies significantly between promoters.

Conditions are clearly applied and assessed for both promoters. Despite the obvious differences, there is no evidence to suggest that one condition is being overly applied over another. The graphs also demonstrate that conditions are not being applied more robustly to utility works in favour of highway works, but rather the Permit Authority is acknowledging the different type kinds of work and resulting pressures put on the network. The expectation is every site requires its own particular conditions to suit the location and works. This shows that a consistent level of scrutiny an intervention is being undertaken by Gateshead Council on both types of works.

### 3.4 KPI 3 – The number of approved revised durations

Also known as “duration extensions”, these are an increase in the agreed permit duration, and therefore in most cases the Section 74 reasonable period.

Within the constraints set out in the Gateshead scheme works promoters may request an extension to their permit if they are responding to a genuine and unforeseen engineering difficulty on the ground. If Gateshead Council believe the reason for an extension is spurious, for instance due to poor planning or works management then they may refuse the duration variation or extension to the reasonable period.

Extensions can have an impact on the network; an activity that was the subject of consultation or publicity can cause substantial disruption or nuisance to those people who are affected. Where the temporary traffic management is considerable then an extension may add significantly to the traffic congestion or disruption. In addition, extensions are often required because of poor planning. For example, works may be complete, but materials or plant remain on site. All of these situations are an unnecessary occupation and inconvenience.

Extension requests are considered individually on their own merits by Gateshead Council, who will grant an extension if the reasons are legitimate and if the network allows it.

The measure is shown as:

- the total number of permit and permit variation applications made
- the number of revised duration requests as a percentage of the total applications made
- the number of agreed revised durations as a percentage of requests made

### KPI 3 – Results

The data for statutory undertakers and the highway authority is taken from the Mayrise “KPI 3 Approved Permit Extensions”.

The chart below shows the number of permits or variations granted with a revised duration request.

Period	Extension Requests				Agreed Extensions		
	Highway Authority	Utilities	Total		Highway Authority	Utilities	Total
23/03/20 to 31/03/20	0	0	0		0	0	0
Apr-20	0	10	10		0	10	10
May-20	1	12	13		1	12	13
Jun-20	3	33	36		3	33	36
Jul-20	4	17	21		4	17	21
Aug-20	24	27	51		24	27	51
Sep-20	2	22	24		2	22	24
Oct-20	7	41	48		7	41	48

Nov-20	4	30	34		4	30	34
Dec-20	5	39	44		5	39	44
Jan-21	9	37	46		9	37	46
Feb-21	13	93	106		13	93	106
Mar-21	10	77	87		10	77	87
	<b>82</b>	<b>438</b>	<b>520</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>82</b>	<b>438</b>	<b>520</b>

### KPI 3 – Analysis

Identifying and controlling instances of approved extensions support the objectives of the Gateshead Permit Scheme to reduce unnecessary occupation. It should be borne in mind that the reasons for requiring extensions will vary considerably between promoters and contractors and kind of works being undertaken. The above data largely shows this to be the case.

The Gateshead permit team largely approved extension requests in 2020/21. In the global pandemic factors such as workforces being reduced in numbers due to social distancing or reduction to available workforce as a consequence of self-isolation or having COVID 19 meant that we received requests to extend permits.

There are also a number of operational factors that justify the need for duration extension - often a result of the need for an additional time to complete fault-finding and mitigation for emergency works such as leak detection and fixes for statutory undertakers. Highway authority works often need extensions for either weather dependent activities or where resources need moving around at short notice to deal with other situations. The data shows there is no obvious tendency to agree either promoted group more than the other showing the Gateshead Council considers each request individually on their merits without bias.

### 3.5 KPI 4 The number of occurrences of reducing the application period

Also known as early starts these are reduction to the minimum notice. As set out in regulations and shown in 5.11 and 7.22 of the scheme document.

Adherence to the correct minimum lead times for permit application (or to vary a permit) is essential to ensure effective coordination of works and to provide opportunities for collaboration between works promoters. The visibility of proposed

works is also vital to control the impact of the works through increased awareness and subsequent journey planning.

Early start requests are used to help promoters reschedule activities and personnel if needed, while ensuring that their statutory requirements under permits are still met and the permit authority can properly assess and coordinate the activity and others in the area.

There may also be operational factors that justify the need for reduction in the application period in order to ensure an activity's impact on the network is minimised, either through collaboration or through having the works carried out at a certain time.

Early start requests are considered individually on their own merits by Gateshead Council to ensure there is a legitimate reason for the request and not the result of poor works planning by the activity promoter.

The measure is shown as:

- the total number of permit and permit variation applications made
- the number of requests to reduce the notification period as a percentage of total permits
- the number of agreements to reduce the notification period as a percentage of requests made.
- 

The Gateshead Scheme will operate in a fair and equitable way ensuring a level playing field with all promoters competing for time and space in the highway. The Permit Authority will ensure sufficient separation between those operating a permit scheme and those responsible for highway activities so that parity of treatment is evident.

#### **KPI 4 – Results**

The data of a statutory undertakers and highway authority is taken from a Mayrise report "KPI 4 Reduced Application Periods".

Period	Early Start Requests			Early Start Agreements			%age early starts agreed		
	Highway Authority	Utilities	Total	Highway Authority	Utilities	Total	Highway Authority	Utilities	Total
23/03/20-	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%
Apr-20	0	11	11	0	8	8	0.00%	72.73%	72.73%
May-20	6	19	25	6	7	13	100.00%	36.84%	52.00%
Jun-20	10	12	22	9	1	10	90.00%	8.33%	45.45%
Jul-20	1	39	40	1	26	27	100.00%	66.67%	67.50%
Aug-20	2	28	30	2	15	17	100.00%	53.57%	56.67%
Sep-20	7	23	30	4	16	20	57.14%	69.57%	66.67%
Oct-20	8	20	28	5	9	14	62.50%	45.00%	50.00%
Nov-20	3	31	34	2	8	10	66.67%	25.81%	29.41%
Dec-20	4	9	13	3	5	8	75.00%	55.56%	29.41%
Jan-21	5	11	16	4	7	11	80.00%	63.64%	68.75%
Feb-21	4	10	14	4	8	12	100.00%	80.00%	85.71%
Mar-21	5	20	25	3	16	19	60.00%	80.00%	76.00%
	<b>55</b>	<b>233</b>	<b>288</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>126</b>	<b>169</b>			

#### KPI 4 Analysis

In April, May and June the country faced a lockdown therefore any request for early starts for works that may have been pre planned then subsequently cancelled and then were allowed to go ahead again, Gateshead Permit team approved as many early starts as they could

In July 2020 the street works moved from EToN to Street Manager and there was a transition period where work which has been previously recorded in EToN needed to be shown on Street Manger. Consequently, any pre planned works had to be rerecorded in street manager hence increase of early start requests from both highway authority and statutory undertakers in July and August.

In general, there seems to be a trend of fewer requests for early start in the winter months, but the greater proportion being agreed. This is likely to be because of the time of year; there are there are legitimate reasons for requesting early starts in order to help manage fluctuate in workloads that might occur due to adverse weather conditions locally, nationally or even national demands on resources.

#### 3.6 KPI 7 – Permit Inspections and OM5 (AM2) Category A Inspections

Category A inspections described in the NRSWA Code of Practice for Inspections scrutinises the way site is set up; suitability of traffic management, signing and guarding

and site safety. This is not just for vehicular traffic; it has significance for the safety of pedestrians and those with a disability. In addition, they also cover methods of excavation, materials and methods used during the reinstatement.

Category A inspections are part of NRSWA and are a common reporting and performance measure for authorities. It can be argued that this measure is not specific to the permit scheme and adjust necessarily provide information on how a permit scheme is being operated.

Category A inspections are carried out on an ad hoc basis. There is a statutory requirement to undertake a random sample of at least 10% of all recorded statutory undertaker sites. However, there are some difficulties in producing such a sample on a daily basis due to the transient nature of some works sites.

An inspector will normally require site operatives or their supervisor to remedy any inadequacy found whilst on site. Even for relatively minor site issues that are rectified in this way, a failed inspection will always be recorded against works so that there is a record of the site which feeds into longer term monitoring and performance.

Together with the Category A B and C inspections, the streetworks inspector can undertake permit inspections

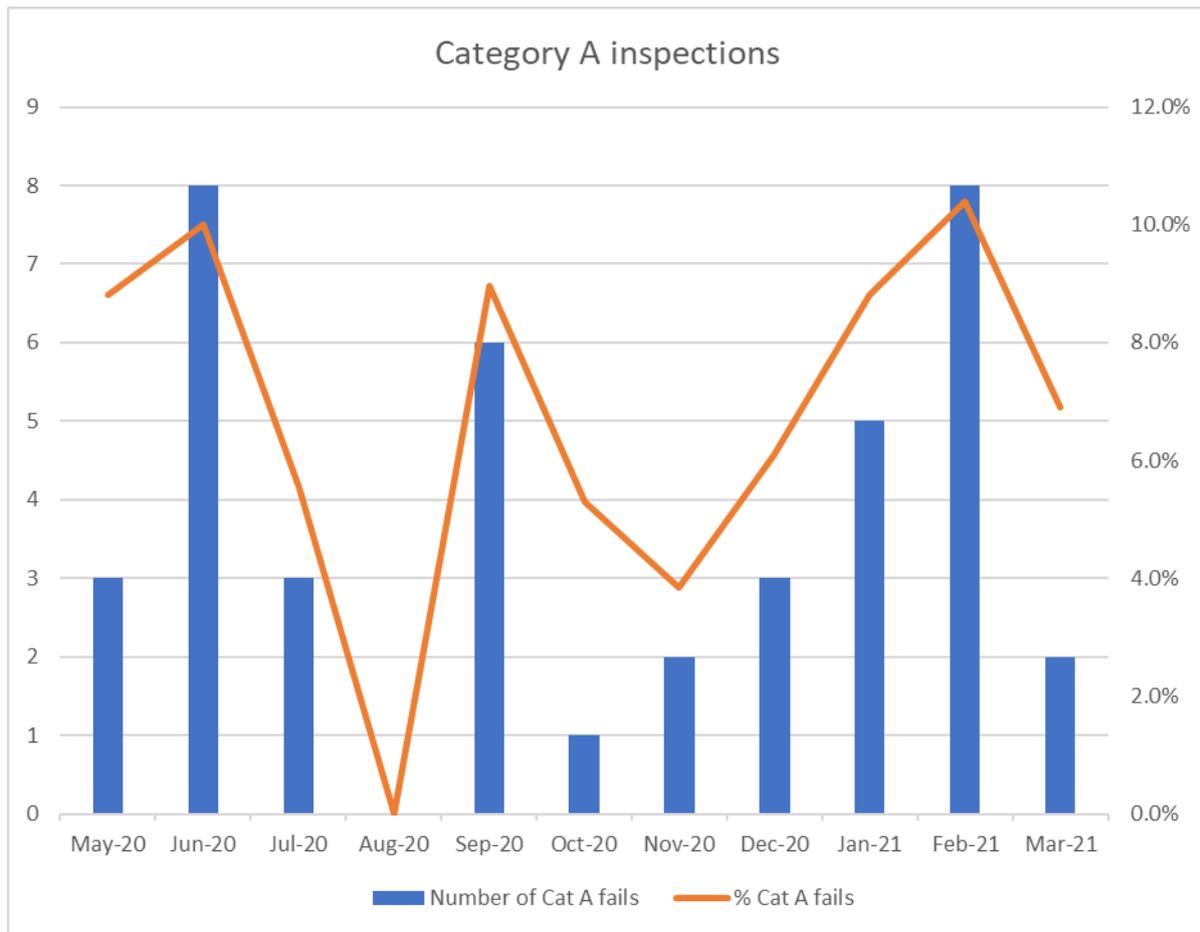
It needs to be noted that in April 2020 NO inspections were undertaken by the Streetworks inspector whilst the UK was in a national lockdown.

### **KPI 7 Permit Inspections Results**

Total	Passed	Non-compliant	Total	%age fail
<b>All SUs and HA Permit Inspections</b>	<b>192</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>218</b>	<b>11.93%</b>

The Permit team currently only has one streetworks inspector. Together with all of his other functions, he only undertook 218 permit inspections and these were all of Statutory Undertakers' works.

### **OM5 – Results (Category A Inspection Results)**



### OM5 – Analysis

The overall rate of inadequacy for sites is 7%. The expected levels are normally expected to be below 10% (Code of Practice for Inspections 2002 S.7.3).

## 4 Operation and Authority Measures

In addition to the DfT KPIs, the Gateshead Scheme sets out a number of Operational Measures that provide further insight into the way scheme is being operated and the success of the scheme.

### 4.1 OM3 – Number of overrun incidents

It is essential for Gateshead to ensure that works carried out on the network have a permit and are also compliant to the agreed terms and conditions of the granted permit, such as timing and duration. The increased visibility of works provides an added benefit of greater certainty of the activity, allowing overruns (section 74) to be more easily identified and sanctions used to discourage this behaviour.

The number of activities that are logged by the Permit Authority as overrunning their agreed ended is an indicator of how well the activity promoters are managing their activities and lessening the impact of their works on road users.

This measure is expressed as:

- The number of overall incidences is shown as a percentage of permits issued

Total	No of Overruns	No of works	%age overrun works
Gateshead Council	10	2140	0.47%
All SU's	71	3356	2.12%

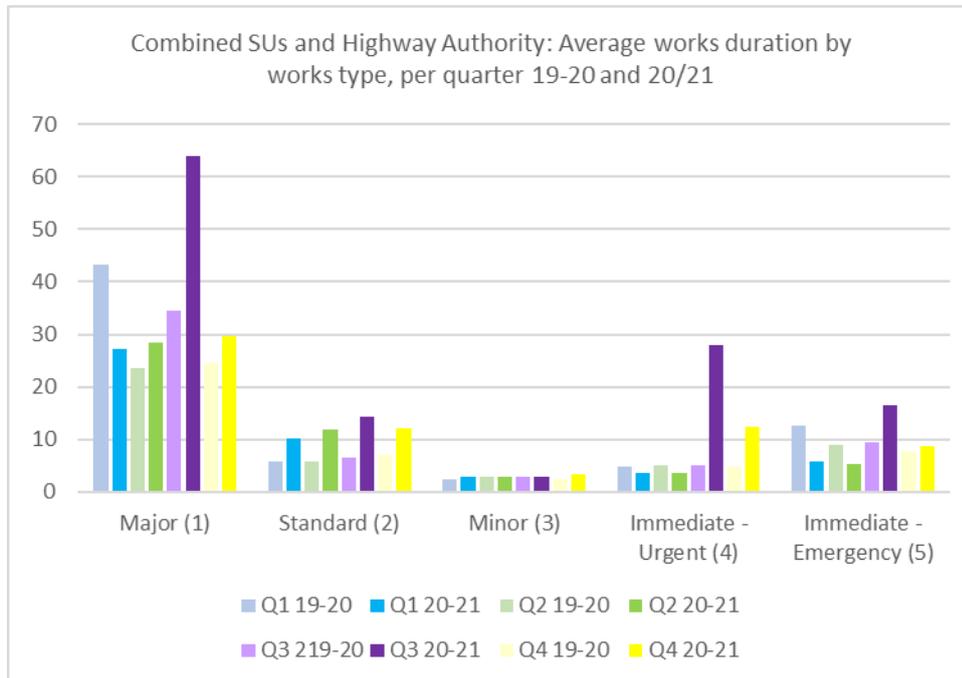
The number of overruns was very low and are only those identified by the Mayrise system. As indicated above, Gateshead Council only have one streetworks inspector at present; with additional resources, we would expect to identify more overruns.

### 4.2 OM4 – Average Duration of works

One of the benefits of permits is that works durations can be judged more effectively and their use of conditions is a greater driver for tighter processes from all activity promoters to reduce their occupation of the highway. Additionally, analysis of permit duration shows how the Permit Authority and activity promoters are reducing the overall impact of activities on the highway. It is expressed as

- The average number of working days for different works categories as compared between periods

The chart below shows the average works duration type for the different types of activity for 20/21 compared to 19/20.



### OM4 (Average Duration of works) Results

The data clearly shows that Q1 in 2020/21 saw a dramatic reduction in the number of major works dropping dramatically compared to the same period in 2019/20. This is attributed to the first national COVID 19 lockdown.

By Q3 2020/21, there had been an increase in all works categories (major standard minor and immediate) and this is attributed to the various lockdowns easing and construction returning to some form of normality.

### 5 OM6 Collaborative Works & AM3 Days of Disruption saved

The potential economic benefits from shared working space are considerable this measure ensures the proactive and positive approach to working together to minimise disruption and occupancy.

Mayrise report OM6 details the number of collaborative works phases and totals of working and calendar days disruption saved and Mayrise report AM3 details the number of phases that have permits that were refused and then a variation was submitted with a reduced duration which was granted.

OM6 below details the total of collaborative phases and the numbers of calendar and working days saved for the Highway Authority and Statutory Undertaker works in the first year of the permit scheme.

Period	Collaborative phases			Working days saved			Calendar days saved		
	Highway Authority	Utilities	Total	Highway Authority	Utilities	Total	Highway Authority	Utilities	Total
23/03/20-31/03/20									
Apr-20	0	1	2		3	3		3	3
May-20	0	1	1		3	3		4	4
Jun-20	0	2	2		20	20		28	28
Jul-20									
Aug-20									
Sep-20									
Oct-20	1	2	3		2	3	5	2	3
Nov-20	1	1	2		25	14	39	35	20
Dec-20	0	1	1		0	6	6		8
Jan-21									
Feb-21									
Mar-21	0	3	3		0	12	12	0	14
<b>Totals</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>14</b>		<b>27</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>88</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>80</b>

AM3 below details the totals of phases and the working days and calendar days saved

Period	Phase total			Working days saved			Calendar days saved		
	Highway Authority	Utilities	Total	Highway Authority	Utilities	Total	Highway Authority	Utilities	Total
23/03/20-31/03/20									
Apr-20									
May-20	0	1	1		3	3		5	5
Jun-20	0	1	1		2	2		1	1
Jul-20	0	4	4		5	5		10	10
Aug-20	0	2	2		30	30		44	44
Sep-20									
Oct-20	0	1	1		6	6		8	8
Nov-20	0	1	1		20	20		31	31
Dec-20									
Jan-21									
Feb-21	0	1	1		1	1		0	0
Mar-21	0	1	1		1	1		0	0
<b>Totals</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>12</b>		<b>0</b>	<b>68</b>	<b>68</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>99</b>

Gateshead Permit team actively encourage collaborative working where it is possible.

## 6 AM 4 Permit Refusal Codes

Actual number of applications refused apart of KPI1 are an indicator of parity.

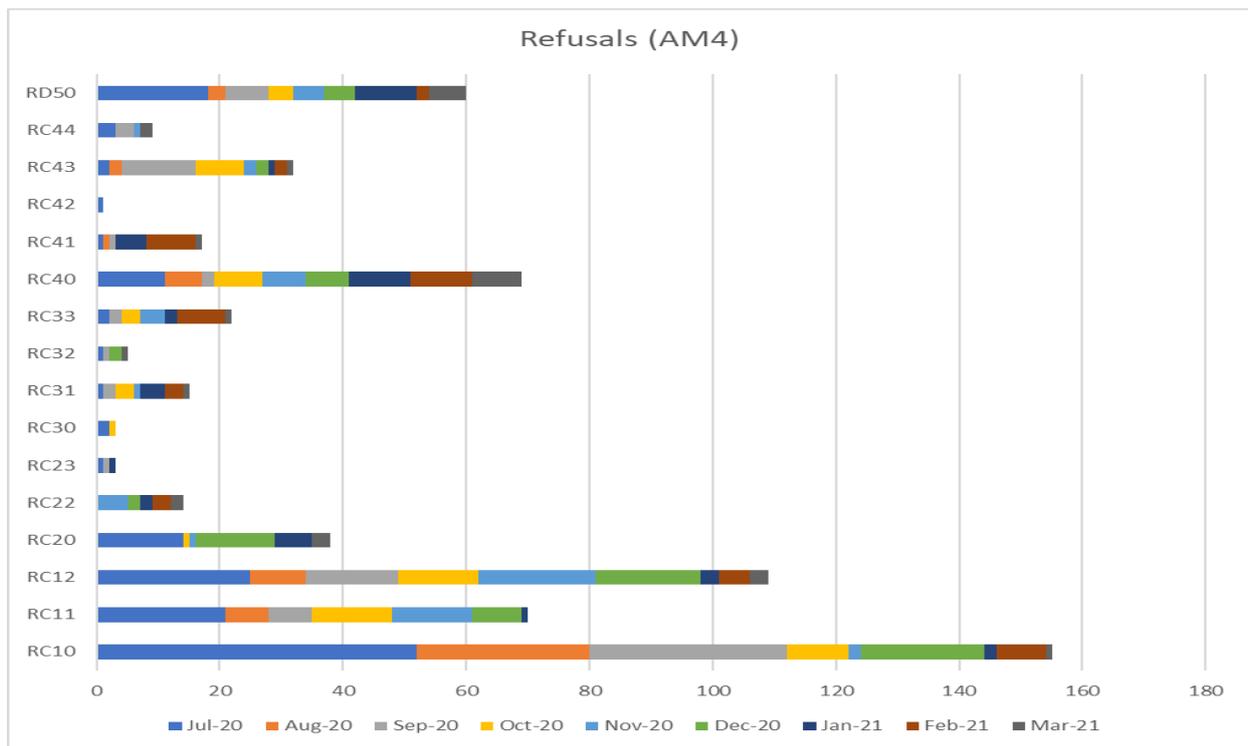
Monitoring permit refusals will show clearly the most common reasons for refusal. This is helpful to the activity promoted to identify particular areas where they are failing.

This measure will show any improvements for each period for the way promoters deal with systematic failures within their process. It is therefore a measure of how information quality is improving.

The data used is only from July onwards when Street Manager was brought online.

The chart below shows a breakdown by refusal code for all refusals used each month from July 2020.

*Highway Authority and Statutory Undertakers; breakdown by refusal code of the number used each month (July 2020- March 2021)*



Refusal codes =

RC10 = Missing information (General), RC11 = Condition not provided/not necessary.  
 RC12= TM not received, RC20= Incorrect details on permit (General), RC22 =Location issues, RC23 = Conflicting information, RC30 = Coordination issues (General), RC31=Clash of works, RC32= Timing of works, RC33 = Conflicting work ask for

collaboration, RC40 = Lack of approval (General), RC41= Incorrect TM, RC42= Early start agreement, RC43 = S58 restriction, RC44= Duration, RC50= Other (General)

The data shows the number of times a refusal code was used in a month not as a proportion of the number of permits issued. This is because

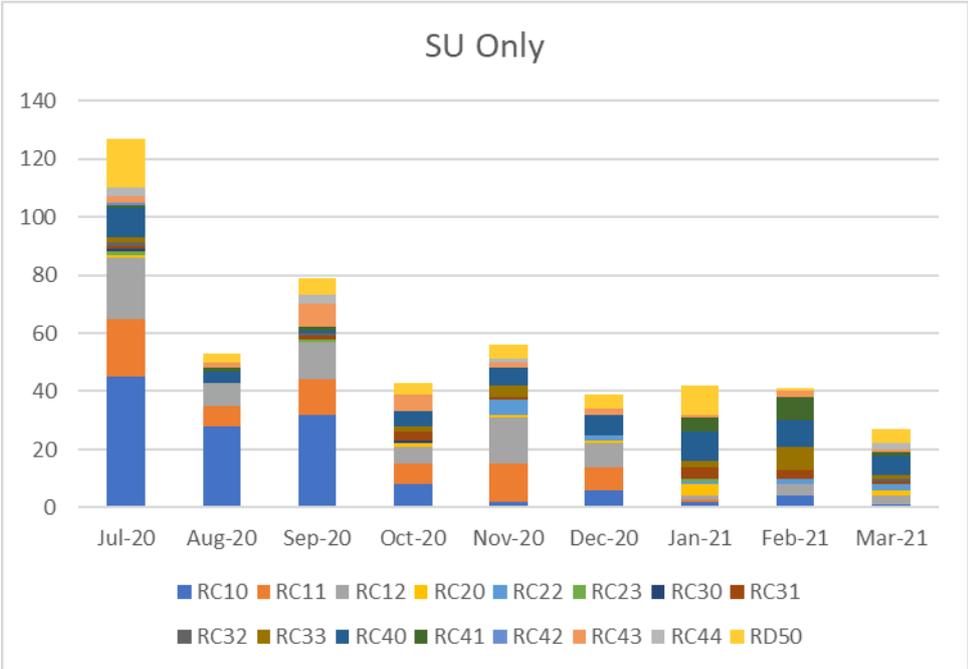
- it is possible for several refusal codes to be used on any permit application (i.e. there were multiple problems with that submission); and
- an application may be refused (or modified) many times before it is finally granted.

A percentage of permits granted figure would therefore be meaningless

However, there may be extracted some useful information from reflecting on refusal codes and their overall proportion usage within a month, as this allows a general consideration to be given to

- which codes are used most within a month; and
- a comparison between months to identify general trends in usage

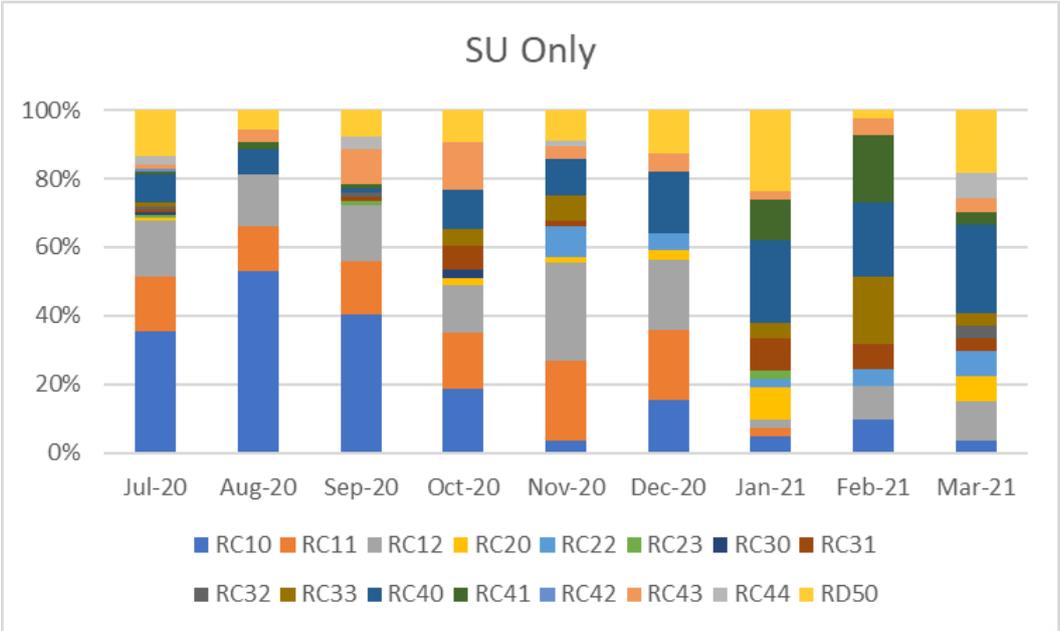
*Statutory Undertakers: overall numbers of refusal codes by month (Year1- July 2020 – March 21)*



The above chart shows us overall numbers of refusal codes used each month. The results seem particularly variable with some months have a particular high number of

refusals and other month fat fewer, but as we emerge from various lockdowns and compare forthcoming years a more realistic picture may emerge.

*Statutory Undertakers: Proportional usage of refusals by month month (Year1- July 2020 – March 21)*



It should be remembered that these figures give use of individual refusal codes not the number of refused applications (see KPI1), as there could be several refusal codes used on any one refused application.

**7 FPN (AM 5) – FPN Permit Breaches**

Year 1 data has been gathered from Mayrise which shows the number of Fixed Penalty Notices issued for permit breaches including withdrawn Fixed Penalty Notices.

The table below show that the permit authority serves 1026 Fixed Penalty Notices and 42 were withdrawn

The reasons for the Fixed Penalty Notices are listed here

- 70(6) Failure to comply with requirements to give notice of completion of reinstatement
- 74(7B) Failure to give a notice required by regulations under s74 (charge for occupation of the highway where works unreasonably delayed)

- 19(1) Working without a permit
- 20(1) Breach of permit conditions

Gateshead Permit team only have 1 streetworks inspector so the amount of FPNs relating to 19(1) and 20(1) working without a permit and working in breach of permit conditions is severely limited, and this is demonstrated in the data below.

The Highway Authority figure for working without a permit of 59 has been generated by starting works prior to the permit granted start date. If this number is removed from the figures then the 'true' amount of Fixed Penalty Notices issued for working without a permit is 16

Total	70(6)	withdrawn	74(7B)	withdrawn	19(1)	withdrawn	20(1)	withdrawn	Total	withdrawn
0030 - BT	9	1	11	5	9	4	4	1	33	11
4505 - GATESHEAD COUNCIL	0	1	660	0	59	3	1	0	720	4
7006 - Northern Powergrid (Northeast) Limited	11	4	39	5	5	0	11	1	66	10
7160 - VIRGIN MEDIA	1	1	1	0	0	0	5	0	7	1
7182 - Telefonica (O2 (UK) Limited)	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
7250 - T-Mobile (UK) Limited	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
7271 - Northern Gas Networks	6	3	30	1	0	0	3	0	39	4
7363 - Wildcard UK Limited	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	2	0
9101 - NORTHUMBRIAN WATER	15	3	119	2	2	3	15	2	151	10
7093 - NETWORK RAIL -PROMOTERS NATIONAL	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	2	0
7366 - A1	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	2	0
7309 - ESP Electricity Ltd	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
7076 - Vodafone	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	1	1
	46	14	865	14	75	10	40	4	1026	42

## 8 Conclusion

Using powers not available and previous regulations, the permit scheme has improved the management of all activities on the road network by allowing Gateshead Council's Permit Team to better co-ordinate the timing of works by statutory undertakers and its own highway contractors. Improvements in assessment and coordination have reduced the number and duration of works and help reduced their impact on motorists and other road users

Only works for statutory undertakers on the authority's own works for road purposes fall under the scheme. However, the scheme does provide a framework to identify and manage for other potentially disruptive activities for instance new developments, highway events, various other highways licences. By bringing in these different elements

and adapting council wide changes to processes, Gateshead Council has been able to realise benefits across the whole borough.

Collecting the data for this report has presented challenge with notice management systems not being able to collect certain data. Just as problematic has been keeping the data constant across the software platforms and a small difference by the way data is recorded can make comparisons very difficult. As a result, there are several areas where further work needs to be undertaken to develop and improve the operational reporting of the permitting system, since the effective management of information is key to helping all parties to drive further improvements. Further regard needs to be given to the detail and appropriateness of how data is managed and produced to give a more accurate picture in future reports.

Any activity carried out in the street has potential to cause disruption. The Gateshead Permit Scheme has provided an opportunity to realise these benefits to road users, local residents and businesses in the borough. The scheme allows better control, planning and coordination of works, and a more robust framework for checking and challenging activities on the highway to reduce the total number of highway occupancy dates and ensure that the conditions in the permit promote the expeditious movement of traffic through works, reducing disruption and promoting Safety at Work sites.

The intention of implementing the Gateshead Permit Scheme was to help Gateshead Council increase the efficient running of the highway network by minimising the disruption and inconvenience caused by road works and other highway events and activities through proactive management of activities on the highway.

Overall, a number of the scheme's aims tie directly into Gateshead's Thrive policy. However Gateshead council recognises that the introduction of a permit scheme does not deliver instant success and that relies the objectives, a continuous policy of review and development is required.

#### Recommendations for the future

Whilst the management of road and street works and other highways activities has improved since the introduction of the Gateshead Permit Scheme, it is recognised that there are improvements still to be made.

Gateshead will continue to consolidate and build upon the number of joint occupations of the highway and assist in the direction of timing, to maximise the amount of time the highways available for use, as well as continue to work with all work promoters in

improving the quality and timeliness of information and further exploring innovative ways of working. This will improve the information to highway users to improve the reliability of journey choices, reduce the risk of penalties to works promoters, and continue to deliver more effective working practices.

Gateshead will also work with all promoters in improving quality of reinstatements through inspections, performance measures and improvement plans where required.

Gateshead would like statutory undertakers to take up the existing incentives that are currently available within this scheme. The council is keen to use incentives to encourage good practice and promote both a more sustainable and efficient method of working whilst contributing to the management of congestion within Gateshead. In order to do this, all promoters will be reminded of the current incentives and more importantly work with stakeholders seeking to identify further incentives that can contribute to the scheme objectives.

Gateshead is committed to carrying out an annual fee review whilst the Gateshead Permit Scheme is in operation to ensure that the balance is maintained between permit fee income and costs incurred in dealing with utility promoter permits.

Gateshead intend to work with Yotta who host Mayrise to examine and improve the quality and accuracy of the data being reported as part of the scheme's performance measures. There is also substantial deeper analysis that can be provided to individual promoters to help identify wider failings or systemic problems that could be rectified.

## **9 Fees, Costs & Benefits**

Gateshead council have set their fee levels in accordance with Department for Transport guidance and within the maximum fee levels specified in Regulation 30.

### Permit Fees

A charge is raised in respect of

- the application of a PAA (Provisional Advanced Authorisation)
- the granting of a permit
- each occasion where there is a permit variation or the conditions attached
- where a permit variation would move an activity into a higher permit category, the activity promoter will be required to pay the difference between the permit categories as well as the permit variation fee.

Permits that are granted but subsequently cancelled are still charged; it is considered a disincentive for promoters, which should encourage better planning.

The levels set reflect Gateshead Council's commitment equipment to keeping charges proportionate to the level of work done in issuing a permit.

Activity Category	Road Category 0-2 or traffic sensitive	Road Category 3-4 and non-traffic sensitive
Provisional Advance Authorisation	£81	£72
Major works - over 10 days or traffic regulation order required	£171	£115
Major works - 4 to 10 days and no traffic regulation order required	£120	£75
Major works - up to 3 days and no traffic regulation order required	£65	£40
Standard works	£120	£75
Minor works	£65	£40
Immediate works	£49	£36
Permit Variation	£45	£35

In addition, there are a number of discounts available to help promote improvements in working practice that help reduce the impact or occupation of activities and reflect the desire of the Council not to penalise economic growth and development.

Discount	Discount value
<b>Revocation of a permit</b> - where a permit is revoked on the permit authority's own initiative and the promoter had to apply for a new permit, there will be no fee for the new permit except where the original permit is revoked as a consequence of any action or omission on the part of the promoter	100%
<b>Cancellation of a permit</b> - prior to the permit authority's granting, a promoter cancels the permit	100%
<b>Refusal of permit or variation</b> - where an application for a permit or variation is refused	100%
<b>Authority imposed variation</b> - for permit variations initiated by the permit authority, unless at the same time the promoter seeks variations which are not the result of the circumstances causing the permit authority's action (in which case a fee would be payable)	100%
<b>Deemed permit</b> - where the permit authority fails to respond to an application for a permit within the relevant timescales and the permit is subsequently deemed to be granted	100%
Submission of 2 or more permits (incl PAAs) are submitted within 3 working days of each other, beginning with the day on which the first permit application is received (they must indicate that they are being submitted together)	30%
Collaborative working - (sharing trench or road space)	30%

## Future fee levels

It is accepted that permit schemes can take up to three years become financially stable. A full review of the cost benefit analysis will be undertaken on the third anniversary of the scheme. Gateshead Council anticipates additional permit scheme-related costs within that three year period.

The permit authority will review its level of fees in line with regulations to ensure that the overall fee income does not exceed the allowable costs, to ensure that the scheme remains as close to financial balance as possible over the medium term.

## SCHEME FINANCIAL SUMMARY as at 31 March 2021

Permit fee income	Expenditure (staff)	Expenditure (other)	Net surplus
£238,004	£115,408	£28,578	£94,018