



SUSTAINABLE IN-HOUSE INFRASTRUCTURE MAINTENANCE WITH INTRODUCTION OF INNOVATIVE ALL-ELECTRIC LINE MARKING MACHINE

# CASE STUDY

**SUSTAINABLE IN-HOUSE MAINTENANCE WITH INTRODUCTION OF INNOVATIVE ALL-ELECTRIC LINE MARKING MACHINE****OVERVIEW:**

Reading Borough Council, known for its proactive approach to innovation, has been setting the standard for local authorities in adopting innovative methods for their infrastructure maintenance.

Their dedication to excellence was recently acknowledged when Reading's In-House Highways Team received the 'Best Council Services' award at this year's MJ Awards. This achievement reflects their commitment to providing exceptional services and their vision of leadership within the public sector.

*"This year our Highways Team won the best services team in the country! We are really excited about that.*

*One of the reasons that we won is because we strive for innovation. Our team is energised and delighted to see products like Meon's all-electric line marking machine."*

**Karen Rowland - Lead Councillor, Environmental Services and Community Safety, Reading Borough Council**

Alongside their aspirations to deliver the best service to the residence of Reading, the council have begun their proactive approach to tackling climate change with their 'Climate Emergency Strategy', with hopes of achieving the goal of 'a net zero carbon, resilient Reading' by 2030.

This sustainable vision aligns perfectly with their innovative approach, as they seek to create a brighter and greener future for their community.

*"We are not looking to take over the world, but what we want to do is as much as we can in-house, with sustainability being a huge part of it.*

*We need to drive down our carbon use and utilise innovative products such as the ones Meon and other suppliers have bought to us, so we can reduce our carbon footprint.*

*We can use cold-applied and longer lasting materials.*

*There are constant economic pressures worldwide felt by councils to support one another, so what we really want to do is be a sustainable team. "*

**Sam Shean - Highways & Traffic Services Manager, Reading Borough Council**

**PROJECT:**

Reading Borough Council recognised the need for a more efficient, cost-effective, and sustainable approach to maintaining their highway line markings.

They had ambitions to train up their Highways Team to be able to manage the refreshing of existing road markings internally, resulting in greater budget savings.



*“Here in Reading we have our own commercial ambition – We use in-house highway works; we’ve got our own Direct Labour Organisation for Highway Maintenance.*

*One of the things I’m looking to do is to try and reduce the cost of our road marking refreshing, so what we have been moving towards is training our up our own staff so they can refresh existing road markings.”*

Sam Shean

Additionally, this initiative was driven by a clear desire to enhance their in-house capabilities and promote local infrastructure development.

The opportunity to up-skill their workers and provide a more efficient service for the local infrastructure came to light when Reading Borough Council participated in the LCRIG’s Innovations Festival in 2022.



LCRIG (Local Roads Innovation Group) provide a unique platform for engagement between central and local government, supply chain and the wider highways community, to ensure ongoing improvements in the highways sector.

*“LCRIG has been instrumental in bringing us together. During the 2 years I have been a part of LCRIG, we were introduced early on to Meon at The LCRIG Innovation Festival.*

*We had discussions with Chris and the Meon Team about some of their products, we were brave enough to take on some trials, which have all been successful.”*

Sam Shean

## **METHOD:**

After a productive collaboration with Meon and their involvement in the Electric Line Marking Machine ‘Try before you buy’ scheme, Reading Borough Council and their Highways Team gained first-hand experience of the numerous benefits of self-delivering line marking services.

*“We still use our main contractor as they are responsible for our main works, so we are not looking to compete with them.*

*But we are looking to deliver the minor maintenance; APM, the refreshing of double yellow lines and parking enforcement lines – All the bits that could take a while to put on a programme to get a contractor to do, we can react and deal with it straight away.*

Sam Shean

This affirmed Reading Borough Council’s notion that they could successfully self-manage and delivered these services internally in a sustainable and cost-effective manner. Reading Borough Council made the strategic decision to invest in the ECO ES RoadLiner, an industry-first All-Electric Line Marking Machine.

*“When we are looking to meet our climate goals for a net zero Reading by 2030, every little bit we do helps.*

*An electric line marking machine such as this, where there will be cold-application, reducing carbon and creating line marking that will be more durable and last longer – This all contributes to our overall sustainability goals, meeting the climate emergency.”*

Karen Rowland



**SUSTAINABLE IN-HOUSE MAINTENANCE WITH INTRODUCTION OF INNOVATIVE ALL-ELECTRIC LINE MARKING MACHINE****RESULT:**

Since the successful trial of self-delivered cold-applied line marking and the following purchase of the ECO ES RoadLiner, Reading Borough Council has experienced substantial benefits.

*“We are constantly on the hunt for sustainable answers and meeting the climate emergency through anyway possible.*

*With line marking machines such as this, it's really going to make a difference for us. Its bringing a product in-house. We've got staff that are going to be trained up.*

*We will be able to be more agile in responding to the line marking needs throughout the town, so that's really an exciting thing.”*

Karen Rowland



Their commitment to environmental sustainability has resulted in a significant reduction in their carbon footprint. This achievement aligns perfectly with their 'Climate Emergency Strategy' and contributes to the ambition of a 'net zero carbon, resilient Reading' by 2030.

*“It is quite a challenge actually because innovation is constantly moving, some Councils think the innovation they used 2 or 3 years ago is still the right one, when actually it is really important to keep working with companies like Meon to look at what else can be developed and taken on board, especially when we have things like the push for net-zero and the other challenges councils are faced with.”*

Paula Claytonsmith - Chief Executive Officer, LCRIG

In addition to the environmental advantages, the council has provided new opportunities for up-skilling within their Highways Team. This investment for internal development not only enhances the team's capabilities, but also boosts morale and professional growth.



*“The importance of up-skilling the local workforce, having just been looking at a demonstration where a couple of the team have been trained up to use the machine on Reading's roads, that allows a local authority to keep investing in the next generation.”*

Paula Claytonsmith

Additionally, the decision to manage and deliver line marking projects internally means Reading Borough Council have greater service reliability.

The council can now respond to the minor maintenance needs within their local infrastructure, self-delivering services such as line double yellow line refreshing and parking enforcement lines.

*“The perfection of the line, the way it looks and presents itself on the road - It's so much cleaner, its quicker and it's so much easier to apply.*

*It's just really exciting to not only have something that is going to meet our climate emergency goals but also aesthetically, it's a really wonderful product, so we are delighted we are moving forward with Meon.”*

Karen Rowland



# Reading

## Borough Council

### Working better with you

*"I think the authorities that are really truly delivering the best for their local communities are the ones that are pushing the boundaries on innovation."*

- Paula Clayton-Smith, Chief Executive Officer, LCRIG



Reading Borough Council has seen a great benefit from the reduction of costs, due to eliminating the need to rely on third-party services.

*"The training has been good, its informative, the guys are supported."*

*Meon came out to where we had the trial and helped them set up, the same again when we used some new equipment."*

*The support from Meon has been key to this success, without a doubt and we want to keep that partnership going."*

*We've got a brand-new machine and the team have had the training, but we know there will be support from Meon when needed going forward."*

Sam Shean



The combination of internal service delivery, reduced expenses and a substantial reduction in carbon usage affirms Reading Borough Council's commitment to providing cost-effective, sustainable and high-quality infrastructure maintenance to its residents.

*"Our members have taken a tremendous leap of faith in us to do innovation, to trial new materials and then deliver it."*

*By delivering and being successful, it becomes a true Team Reading success story that I am extremely proud of."*

*There are a whole host of companies like Meon, all of them together are driving innovation and success."*

Sam Shean



*"We're forever looking to up-skill our staff, starting out 15 years ago just doing pothole repairs, to the commercial ambitions we have now: Small schemes, road marking and a whole host of sustainable drainage system works.*

*The idea is to develop our own, It's part of our succession planning. Bring in youngsters and put them through apprenticeship programmes, making sure it benefits them.*

*It benefits our long-term ambitions and brings new skills into the team that we wanted."*

Sam Shean - Highways & Traffic Services Manager, Reading Borough Council

*"I cannot emphasise enough the importance of Councils to be proactive with looking at innovations, which really helps to deliver what the communities need in the local areas of the borough.*

*I just love coming to see councils like Reading Borough Council.*

*As an organisation, we work with well over 100 highways authorities and I can absolutely say that Reading Borough Council is up there at the top for being an organisation that looks at innovation, to really blend that into a better delivery for its services"*

Paula Clayton-Smith - Chief Executive Officer, LCRIG (Local Council Roads Innovation Group)



*"When we are looking to meet our climate goals for a Net Zero Reading by 2023, every little bit we do helps.*

*An Electric Line Marking Machine such as this, where there will be cold-application, reducing carbon and creating line marking that will be more durable and last longer - This all contributes to our overall sustainability goals in meeting the climate emergency."*

Karen Rowland - Lead Councillor, Environmental Services and Community Safety, Reading Borough Council

## SYSTEMS USED:

### GRACO LINELAZER ECO ES ROADLINER



The industry's first all electric line marking machine, capable of applying highway specification line markings which have 300% increased durability and 60% increased retro-reflectivity, compared to traditional methods whilst cutting carbon output by 90%.

The ES RoadLiner is developed from the Graco LineLazer ES 2000 and LineDriver ES, providing proven reliability.

This machine also provides increased safety for the operator, involving no hot works and with a noise level of only 82dB, which means nearby traffic or machinery can be heard.

#### PRODUCT FEATURES

- Pressurised Bead System with simple one-button operation
- Dual AGM batteries
- 2 additional pressurised air couplings
- Flashing Beacon with switch & chapter 8 chevrons on rear

#### CUSTOMER BENEFITS

- Zero carbon emissions with no need to offset for full compliance
- Absolutely no hot works removing any associated safety considerations
- Incredibly low noise output that enables residential night time working
- Will complete min 8hr shift at full usage without recharge

### SPECTRUM VIALINE F216 | HIGHWAY SPEC ACRYLIC LINE MARKING PAINT



Spectrum ViaLine F216 is a solvent based, highway spec, acrylic line marking paint. It is ideal for refreshing thermoplastic lines to minimise build up. ViaLine F216 is toluene free, which means this line marking paint is less harmful to the environment and safer for the user.

- High solid content for excellent opacity, specifically designed for highway use.
- Reduced application time and increased adhesion to substrate.



**Reading**  
Borough Council

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