



Discovering our true potential, and how to reach it together



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For 99 years, Kier Highways Solutions (KHS) has been serving the highways and construction industry with quality bituminous material. Formerly known as Ayton Products with a manufacturing plant based in Wymondham, Norfolk, the business has spent the last year overhauling its operations to become capable of servicing customers of all sizes.

Established in 1923, KHS manufactures bituminous road emulsions for use in the highways industry, as well as bespoke bituminous products and roofing products for the construction market. In 2011, the Surface Treatments Business arm was created, and the company began using its own product to deliver surface treatments works via its own contracts. Over 17,000 tonnes of bituminous material are produced annually and transported to various highways and construction sites nationally for internal and external customers, including West Sussex, Bristol City Council and Derbyshire County Council.

What is the art of the possible?

In 2021, Ayton was rebranded to Kier Highways Solutions, which sits under Kier Highways, a business stream of Kier Group. The name change was the culmination of a three-month long transformational project with operational improvement specialists, Managementors (MM).

MM were presented with a challenge: what is the art of the possible? Taking a facilitative

approach, MM launched Project Reseal and worked with Kier Highways to improve processes and management controls, as well as establishing improved interfaces to form a more resilient, efficient, and collaborative operation.

The MM team helped Kier Highways to provide clarity around targets and improve performance visibility for all employees, ultimately helping to set clear expectations. Through close coaching and mentoring, Kier Highways teams were upskilled, roles and responsibilities were defined, and accountability was created at all levels of the operation. Alongside this, a new management operating system

was implemented, and planning guidelines were developed.

The engagement with MM was not driven by a need to fix problems; it was driven by wanting to take the business unit to the next level and test areas for betterment. Kier Highways aim was to see what the productivity capability of the business was and what investment would be needed to achieve and sustain those levels of productivity. This presented the opportunity to bring the manufacturing arm and the surface treatment arm together to collaboratively achieve maximum productivity.

For a number of years, we have delivered within our capabilities. We have been fortunate to be awarded work by local government clients within our core market and have seen consistent results but knew we could offer more to our clients and customers. Last year, we stopped and looked at everything else we have to offer to ensure we can continue to push the boundaries as an end-to-end integrator and delivery party. We brought in Managementors to help us to holistically look at the business and assess where we can streamline our processes, improve sustainability, and offer a better, more efficient service to our customers.





Keeping the country moving



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Want to know more? Please contact:

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we got their buy-in to change. We hosted a series of workshops from the very beginning of Project Reseal and MM helped us with some close coaching.

Over £1m seasonalised financial benefits have been realised through a 38 per cent increase on gang productivity, a management team restructure and modelling of manufacturing product utilisation and capacity, all aimed at delivering better value for money to our clients and customers. Analysing and understanding how much product was being manufactured and how much more could be produced to increase bulk orders now gives Kier Highways Solutions the ability to plan better.

Of course, none of this would have been achievable had Kier Highways started the journey without the backing of the workforce. Using delivery

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partner Cleartrack, Kier Highways piloted a behavioural change programme among the operational teams that focused on human and organisational factors. Effective communication, empowerment and autonomy, and improved safety

performance were all experienced as a result of the programme.

We’re a tight-knit team, with several long-standing employees. They are local people who care for their local business. It was imperative

While we may have changed some things operationally, the one thing that has remained is the loyalty of our people. They care about each one of our customers, regardless of their size or spend.

A traffic management

design service was borne out of the improvement project. Based out of the area office in Retford, Nottinghamshire, a team of CAD designers produce traffic management drawings for both internal and external clients nationally. This additional service bolsters the current design capability of in-house surface treatment designs.

The new one-stop-shop offering now sees Kier Highway Solutions providing TM Design Solutions, road emulsion manufacture, on-site temporary traffic management and surface treatments installation. The end-to-end service gives Kier Highways Solutions greater control over delivery and ensures a more reliable service. ■



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