

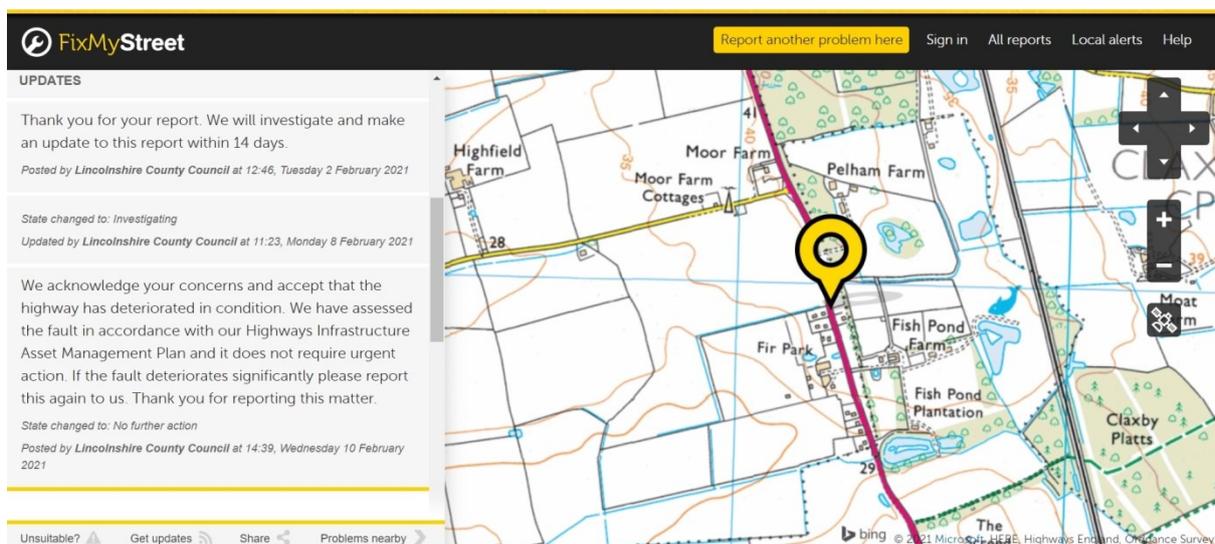
Fix My Street Development Update (March 2021)

Since the start of the new Highways Term Maintenance Contract in April 2020, advances in technology as well as new ways of working have allowed us to improve integration and updates through the Fix My Street website, which is linked directly to the Lincolnshire County Council website and Highways Asset Management System and available to anyone to report faults at www.lincolnshire.gov.uk/faultreporting

Over the past year, we have been taking on board public and Councillor feedback to understand frustrations with the system and make changes to address them. Our use of the system and the way Highways Officers work with it is constantly evolving, but the following is a list of the main improvements we have recently put in place:

No Further Action

When the system was first implemented in 2017, a status in Confirm that an officer would select (0400) which indicated no further action would be taken would result in a template response going out which indicated we wouldn't be taking any action with the report. We have now shifted away from the use of this status to a new status (0160) which still indicates that no immediate action will be taken, but when an officer selects this status it sends their notes through to Business Support who manually update Fix My Street with their bespoke explanation as to why we aren't taking immediate action, to give a personalised explanation. There is still some use of the 0400 status, particularly in teams who don't interact with the system on a day-to-day basis but when a "no further action" comment is received with no accompanying text this is down to user error and we are carrying out continued training sessions with officers to make sure they select the correct statuses for their response on site. We are also encouraging officers to still attach photos when using this message for internal purposes, so that their decision that immediate action wasn't required can be backed up if there are any future complaints.



The screenshot shows the Fix My Street website interface. At the top, there is a navigation bar with the Fix My Street logo, a 'Report another problem here' button, and links for 'Sign in', 'All reports', 'Local alerts', and 'Help'. Below the navigation bar, there is a section titled 'UPDATES' with three entries. The first entry says 'Thank you for your report. We will investigate and make an update to this report within 14 days.' The second entry says 'State changed to: Investigating'. The third entry says 'We acknowledge your concerns and accept that the highway has deteriorated in condition. We have assessed the fault in accordance with our Highways Infrastructure Asset Management Plan and it does not require urgent action. If the fault deteriorates significantly please report this again to us. Thank you for reporting this matter.' To the right of the updates is a map showing a street with a yellow location pin. The map includes labels for 'Highfield Farm', 'Moor Farm Cottages', 'Pelham Farm', 'Fir Park', 'Fish Pond Farm', 'Fish Pond Plantation', 'Claxby Platts', and 'The Street'. The map also shows a road number '28' and '29'.

Example of a report indicating we aren't taking immediate action, complete with a detailed note from the highways officer.

Drainage/Flooding Reports

A common complaint when reporting blocked gullies was that customers received a standard message talking about cyclic works including grass cutting and weed spray. As a result, we've created a new status specifically for blocked drains. Officers are instructed to follow the following hierarchy of decision making:

1. Check when the drains are next due to be cleaned on a routine basis. If cleaning is imminent, or if the issue is very minor and can wait until the drains are next cleaned, a status (0185) is used which indicates the drain will be cleaned on the next programmed schedule.
2. If the issue is severe, or it is a long time until the drain is due to be cleaned on programme, the officer will raise a job for off-programme jetting. This will inform the customer work has been scheduled.
3. If even priority jetting will likely not solve the issue, a Minor Works job will be scheduled for investigation and/or "dig down" repairs. The customer will also be informed that works are scheduled.

FixMyStreet Report another problem here Sign in All reports Local alerts Help

Flooding problem

Reported via Open311 in the Flooding category by Customer Services at 11:37, Tuesday 2 February 2021
Sent to Lincolnshire County Council less than a minute later.
Council ref: 4157424.

Blocked Drains

UPDATES

Thank you for your report. We will investigate and make an update to this report within 14 days.
Posted by Lincolnshire County Council at 11:37, Tuesday 2 February 2021

We have assessed your report and the drain will be cleaned on the next programmed schedule.
State changed to: No further action

Establishing secure connection...

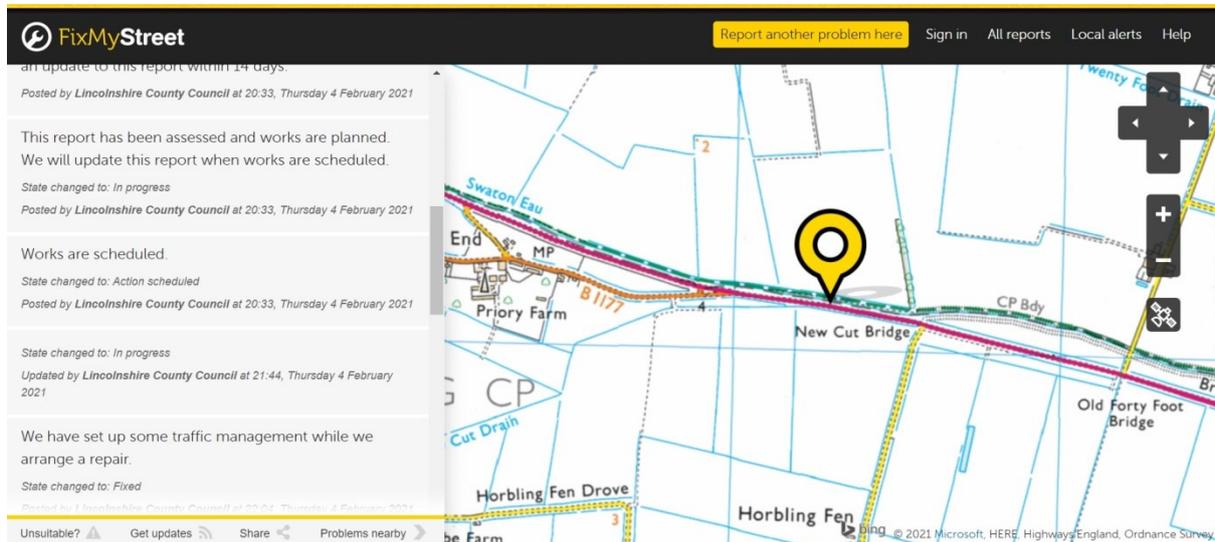
Example of a report indicating the drainage issue has been assessed and is considered to be appropriate to be picked up by the cyclic team who will be in the area shortly.

"Works Complete" Messaging

Frequently, reports were being updated as "works complete" when in fact they were not. Whilst there may occasionally be some human error from gangs completing works on site, this was predominantly when either only a temporary repair was being completed, or the site was only made safe with traffic management pending further works. This was often on emergency responses. In both cases, the gang had completed their instruction (hence "work complete") but clearly more work was required. We have remedied this by allowing the gang to pick from two options when they have completed their instruction but follow up work is pending for a specialist crew:

1. Made safe with temporary material
2. Made safe with traffic management

Both of these selections will trigger an update for the customer which indicates that whilst we have attended and carried out some works to make the site safe, they can rest assured we will be back.



Example of a report which instead of saying "works complete" now indicates that we have made safe with traffic management and will return

Duplicate Status Updates

Upon review of the messages customers receive on their reports, we wanted to see it from their point of view. What we realised was that whilst updates on our end make sense, it did seem like there were a lot of messages saying more-or-less the same thing. Particularly the acknowledgement message and the message indicating an officer needed to physically inspect the site. We will be changing some of the wording and trimming down the updates to make the thread of messages more concise.

Timescales

Currently, when an officer issues a repair job to our contractor, a message saying "works are scheduled" is sent to the customer. If that work is on a short timescale, for example 24 hours or 7 days, the next message of "works are complete" makes the process look very neat. However for non-urgent planned works with a 3 month timescale, people are often left in the dark about what to expect.

We are working with Balfour Beatty to introduce some new statuses they will select which will tie into the system and give a different message depending on the job priority. For example:

"Works are scheduled and are expected to be completed within the next week, subject to weather and emergencies"

Or

"Works are scheduled and are expected to be completed within the next month, subject to weather and emergencies"

Whilst some members of the public may feel disappointed that they may be waiting a while for less urgent repairs, most have indicated that knowing what to expect up front would address most of their frustrations.

Future Developments

We will continue to review and improve the system based on feedback from Councillors and as technology develops, communication will no doubt further improve.