



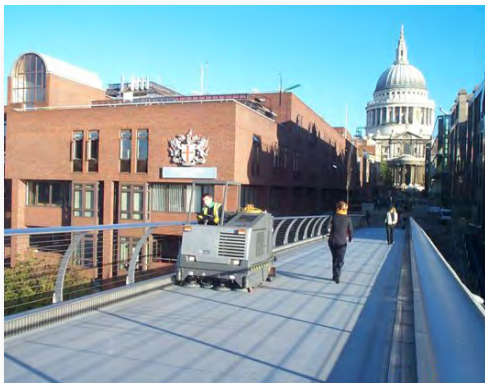
The City of London Corporation - case study

“FORS provides the perfect platform to monitor, manage and improve your operation’s efficiency”



The City of London Corporation provides local government services for the financial centre of Britain, the ‘Square Mile’. **Vince Dignam, Transport and Depot Manager**, explains the Corporation’s reasons for joining FORS and how they’ve benefited so far.

“I’m responsible for a fleet of around 150 vehicles, covering things like cleansing and waste collection, highways and maintenance, and open spaces services,” says Vince Dignam, from his office in the heart of the city.



“We buy the vehicles and then lease them out to sub-contractors to run the services,” he continues. “So I don’t manage the drivers but, as a local authority, we have a responsibility to take a lead in operating safely and efficiently, over and above our legal obligations.”

“We want to deliver best value for everyone in our area, and we also have specific targets to meet on emissions and air quality. I personally think that following best practice should be a priority for all boroughs and, as FORS is all about helping members to be safer, greener and more efficient, it was a natural step for us.”

Benefiting from the FORS assessment

All FORS applicants are assessed against set standards on transport operations and driver and fleet management, to ensure they meet the required performance levels for bronze membership.

“We already had management systems in place but we welcomed the assessment,” says Vince.

The assessment confirmed that the Corporation was performing well, though a few areas for improvement were identified “The assessors were very helpful and professional,” Vince says. “They gave us examples of areas where we could potentially fall foul of regulations and worked with us to identify improvements that we could implement easily.”

In many cases, the suggested solutions were relatively straight-forward, such as introducing more frequent checks on driver licenses and vehicle records. “It was a case of building on our existing systems,” Vince confirms. “We also introduced daily vehicle defect check books so that any issues can be highlighted and dealt with immediately, along with training documents for drivers on mobile phone use.”

The assessors visited the Corporation again a few months later to review progress. “They were very happy and we received our bronze membership,” Vince recalls. “Health and safety is paramount for us and it’s good to have the reassurance that you’re doing things the right way.”



“It’s also been really helpful in raising the profile of our work internally,” he adds. “News of our FORS membership has gone right up to senior official and councillor level. As well as promoting the importance of best practice within freight, it also helps us demonstrate that the resources we have are essential and are being put to good use.”



Silver success

There are three levels of FORS membership and Vince was eager to progress quickly. “You need to use the online FORS benchmarking system to move onto silver,” he explains. “It helps you analyse your performance against similar operations on things like fuel use and emissions, so you can quickly see how you measure up.”

“We entered six months’ data to gain silver membership and doing so immediately highlighted some inaccuracies with the collection of odometer readings, which we’ve now resolved.” Vince says.

“We’ve managed to cut our fortnightly fuel use by a third over the past three years, as a result of managing our fuel better, using our existing fleet more efficiently, and introducing alternative fuel vehicles,” he reveals. “It’s the perfect platform to continually monitor, manage and improve your operation’s efficiency.”

“The benchmarking system now lets us identify other areas where we could improve and strive to maintain and better our performance”

“The networking opportunities you get as a member are also brilliant,” he continues. “I went to a workshop the other day and one of the guys was explaining their drink and drug testing policy for drivers. It was an excellent system.”

“The approach wouldn’t work in exactly the same way here, as every organisation is different” he says. “But you share ways of working, pick up ideas and then adapt them to make sure they work for you.”

Going for gold

As well as looking to take advantage of other FORS benefits, Vince’s sights are now firmly set on gold membership.

“We can’t rest on our laurels,” he says. “We want to keep improving and get to gold as quickly as we can. We’re sending more of our staff to the best practice workshops and will be setting up the online training that FORS offers.”



“Although PCNs are less of an issue for our vehicles, we’ve also used the PCN advice to help other local government departments. It’s very good and I’d recommend it to anyone. We’re also now encouraging our sub-contractors to sign up through the tendering process.”

“Transport is a complicated sector and it does take a commitment from staff at all levels to make sure that changes are effective in the long-term, but we don’t mind putting the work in if we see the benefits. We’ve certainly done that with FORS.”

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