



Maintaining drainage

Richard Arrowsmith, Highways England asset information group leader, updates *Highways Magazine* readers on the award of a £4.5 million national drainage asset surveying contract

You recently let a contract to survey your drainage assets; can you tell us more about that?

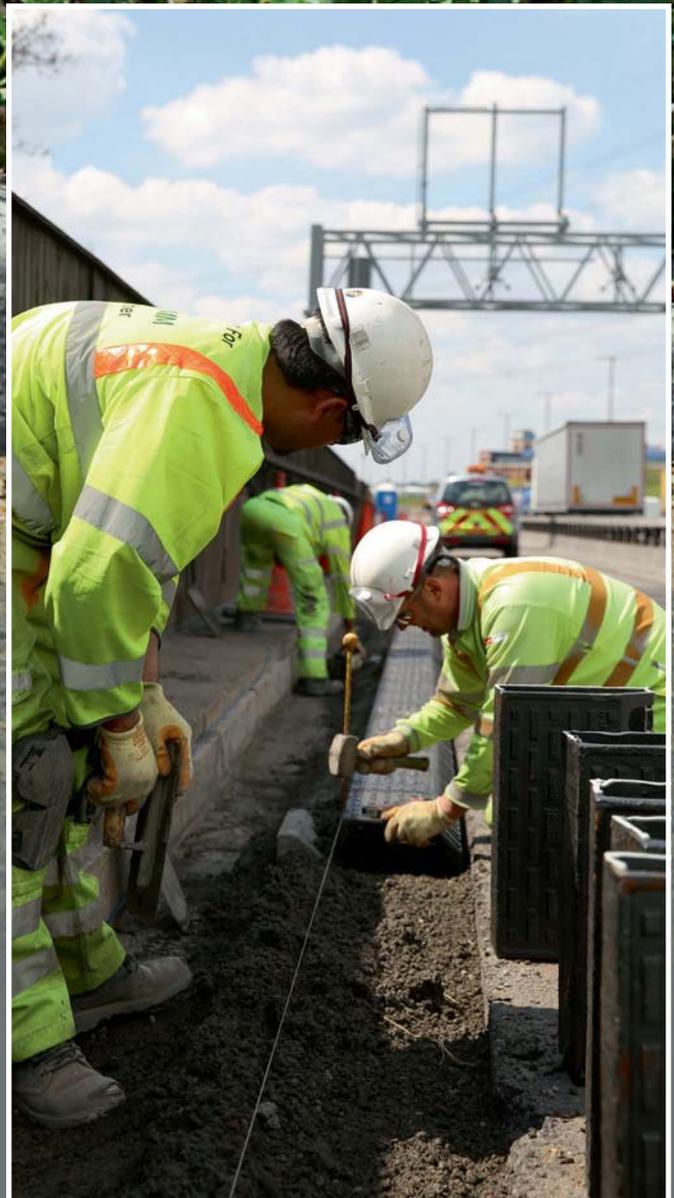
We let a pilot contract off the T-Tear framework to CH2M to carry out surveys to capture information on the state of our drainage assets in Kent (Area 4) and on the M40 between Denham and Warwick (M40 DBFO). The pilot is valued at £4.5m and will develop a new methodology for asset data collection and management. This will help us to complete a drainage asset inventory and condition assessment, as set out in the government's Road Investment Strategy.

How important a role does good drainage asset data play in the resilience of your network?

Since 2012, we have developed the use of Asset Data Capture Surveying Mobile Mapping System (MMS) surveys for surface visible assets, which can capture a large amount of data quickly and efficiently. We have surveyed 100 per cent of the network using this method. Due to the large volume of high quality data, we developed a sterile storage environment that would provide easy and quick access to the data. So, the Asset Visualisation System (AVIS), an online data viewer, was developed. It makes viewing high definition imagery and LiDAR point cloud data relatively easy.

Following the Transport Resilience Review in 2014 and the requirements set out in the Road Investment Strategy, we had to improve our understanding of the location and condition of our drainage assets and the interfaces with the adjoining drainage networks. We are supplementing the current surface visible asset dataset with underground and offline drainage asset datasets to offer a comprehensive asset picture for England's motorways and major A-roads.

Having a robust process for capturing, storing and analysing data gives us a better understanding of our drainage assets, helps to ensure an effective and resilient road network that can cope with weather events when they happen and help plan future funding.



Is this likely to be something that could be expanded more widely across the network?

This contract is an enabler for the subsequent tendering process to award contracts more widely across the network. The tender will be open to the entire supply chain regardless of their size. However, they need to have the capacity to fulfil the requirements of the task specification that will be managed by CH2M. This is a vast undertaking and has never been done before; therefore we estimate the entire project would take five years to complete.

What are the next steps?

For the next stage of this process, we will hold discussions with supply chain members that express an interest.

Our supply chain will play a critical role in providing fit-for-purpose survey data that will fulfil the drainage data requirements within the government license agreement. Therefore it is vital that we work closely, collaboratively and efficiently with them. ➔