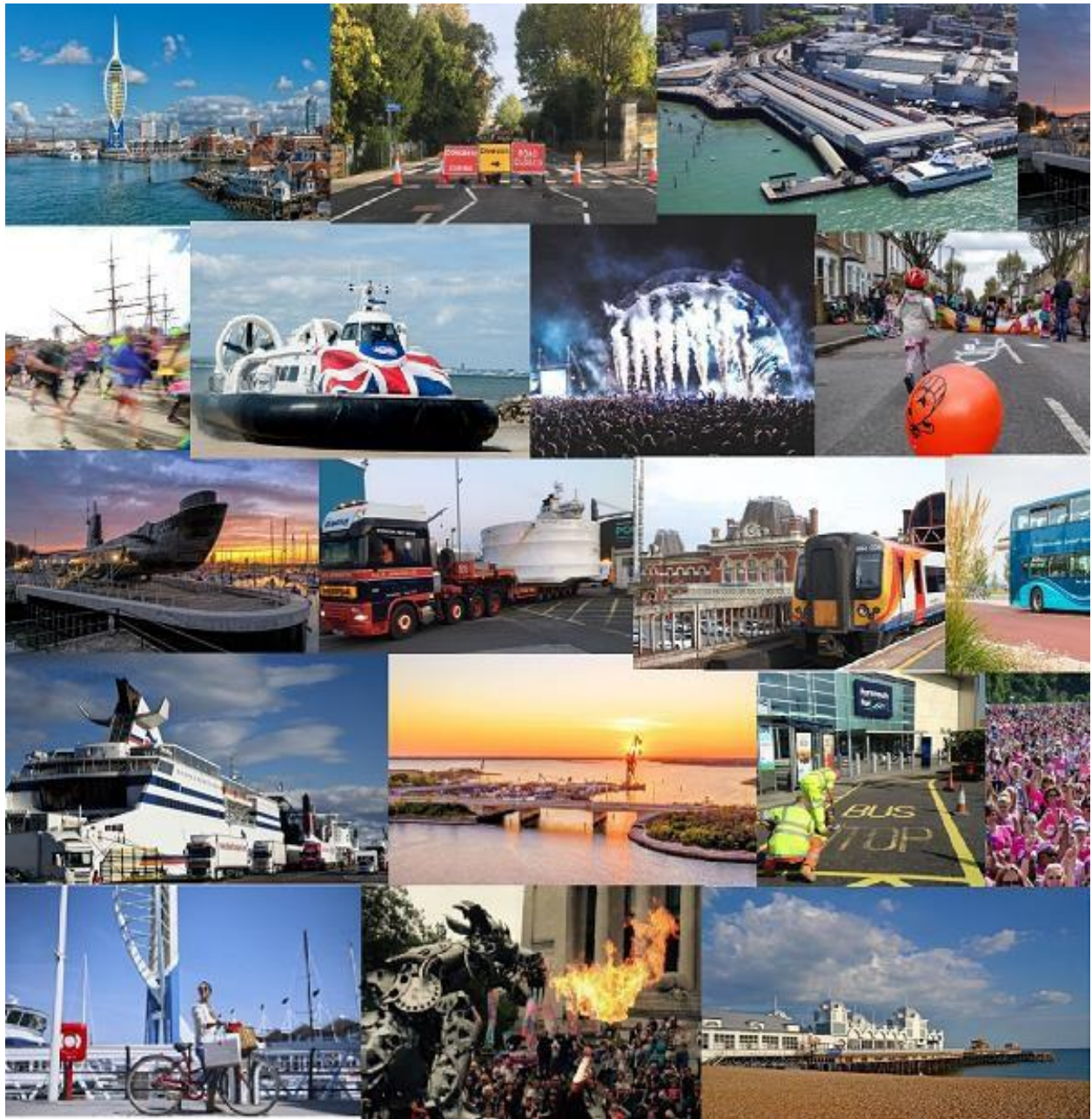


Portsmouth City Council Permit Scheme for roads and street works

Year 1 Evaluation Report



Working together to deliver a safe, efficient and sustainable highway network for everybody.

May 2023

PCCPS Year 1 Evaluation



Portsmouth
CITY COUNCIL



Contents

1 Executive Summary

2 Introduction

3 Objectives of the Portsmouth City Council Permit Scheme

4 Costs Budgets and Actuals

5 Operational Benefits

6 Permit Scheme Performance Data

7 Permit Scheme Performance Summary

8 Conclusions

9 Looking Forward

Appendix 1

Appendix 2

1 Executive Summary

The first year of operation of the Portsmouth City Council Permit Scheme (PCCPS) brought unique and complex operational factors requiring consideration and mitigation to allow businesses and those working and travelling around the city extra road space linked to COVID 19 lockdowns. During this the street works team also had to offer extra support to those who were endeavouring to carry out their essential activities such as repairs to the highway and buried plant whilst working within COVID 19 restrictions.

During the first year of operation 4333 Permits were granted to Utility Promoters and Highway Authority Promoters. This total includes applications that were granted but subsequently cancelled by the Promoter before the works were undertaken. This is 110% of the volume indicated by the historical Notice volumes.

Permit volumes are affected by several factors, not least the necessary actions of those carrying out their activities on the highway. One such factor that occurred during the first year of operation of the PCCPS was the rollout of fibre to the premises (FTTP) within the city.

The FTTP rollout within the city equates to 27% of the volume of permits received and managed by the street works team. COVID lockdowns also led to much lower volumes of visitor traffic to the city supporting works promoters to undertake activities that would otherwise have resulted in large scale traffic disruption. Therefore, once it was established that works promoters were able to undertake works within COVID restrictions, more permits for road space were applied for and granted in unison than would be allowed in a year when greater traffic flows existed.

The outcome of all these factors shows that, whilst numbers of works increased in the first year of operation, the PCCPS was successful in fulfilling all expectations and objectives to better manage the highway network, whilst facilitating necessary road space for those working on or beneath the highway. Therefore, the Network Management Duty placed upon the Highway Authority by the Traffic Management Act 2004 was met.

2 Introduction

The Traffic Management Act 2004 (TMA), Part 3 Sections 32 to 39, and the Traffic Management Permit Scheme (England) Regulations 2007 make provision for Permit Schemes to be introduced in England. The Portsmouth City Council Permit Scheme (PCCPS) was adopted by Portsmouth City Council on 3rd August 2020.

Regulation 10 of The Traffic Management Permit Scheme (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2015 inserts a new regulation (16A) into the 2007 Regulations. This new regulation makes provision for the content and timing of permit scheme evaluations which states that permit schemes be evaluated

following the first, second and third anniversary of the scheme's commencement and then following every third anniversary. It also requires that the outcome of each evaluation be made available within three months of the relevant anniversary. PCCPS will be releasing their subsequent evaluation reports on the following proposed dates:

- Second Year Evaluation; end of November 2022
- Third Year Evaluation; end of November 2023
- Sixth Year Evaluation; end of November 2026

Contained within evaluation reports the acting Permit Authority Portsmouth City Council shall include considerations of:

- (a) whether the **fee structure needs to be changed in light of any surplus or deficit**;
- (b) the **costs and benefits** (financial or otherwise) of operating the scheme; and
- (c) whether the permit scheme is meeting **key performance indicators** where these are set out in the Guidance.

This report sets out an overview of PCCPS operational performance in its first year only, using the available data in relation to street works and activities on the Portsmouth network.

It is to be noted that the migration from an Eton system to the DFT Street Manager system (concurrently with the implementation of the PCCPS) does not allow adequate comparison between historic noticing data and new permitting data as the systems are considering different sets of data with different rules in respect of the way data is received and stored.

Going forward, further evaluation reports will be able to consider achievements against set parameters, such as those listed below, based on information and data within Street Manager, thus enabling to derive repeatable and measurable indicators on the performance of the PCCPS.

Permits received/granted/refused	Number
Total permit applications received	5,330
Total permit change requests received	566
Total permits with status that cannot be determined	0
Total permits granted	4,974
Total permit change requests granted	559
Total permits refused	38
Total permit change requests refused	7
Total permits cancelled by works promoter	959
Total change cancelled by works promoter	72
Total permits granted where works were undertaken on site	4,333
Total permit extension requests	612
Total permit extension requests granted	513
Total collaborative works undertaken	8

3 Objectives of the Portsmouth City Council Permit Scheme

Any activity undertaken in a street has the potential to cause disruption by reducing the width of the street available to traffic, pedestrians, and other users, thus inconveniencing businesses and residents. The scale of disruption caused is relative to the type of activities being undertaken, the capacity of the street, the duration and timing of the works and the methods employed to carry them out. Works on those streets where the traffic flow is close to, or exceeds, the physical capacity of the street will have greatest potential to cause congestion, disruption and delays.

The objective of the TMA and therefore this permit scheme is to enable the management of the traffic network to ensure expeditious movement of traffic (including pedestrians, cyclists, and other vulnerable road users) as required under the TMA Network Management Duty. 2.4. The Permit Scheme is intended to enable more effective co-ordination and to empower the Local Highway Authority (Permit Authority) to minimise disruption from both street and highway works.

The strategic objective for the Permit Scheme is to provide a capability to manage and maintain the local highway network for the safe and efficient use of road space, whilst allowing Promoter's access to maintain their services and assets, including installing new connections. The principle of the Permit Scheme is to improve the planning, scheduling and management of activities so that they do not cause unnecessary traffic disruption to any road user. Co-ordination of activities through the Permit Scheme will enable differences between those competing for space or time in the street, including traffic, to be resolved in a positive and constructive way.

The objectives of PCCPS were laid out in Section 3 of the Scheme. These are summarised below.

- Reduced disruption on the road network
- Improvements to overall network management
- Reduced delays to the travelling public
- Reduced costs to businesses caused by delays
- Promotion of a safer environment
- Reduced carbon emissions

Future end of year assessment reports will include any appropriate Street Manager monitoring reports to be developed to evidence the effectiveness of a permit scheme function.

The Permit Scheme objectives align with the guiding principles contained within the Portsmouth City Council local transport plan (LTP3):

- Seek to improve accessibility for all
- Reduce carbon and other greenhouse gases generated
- Support and promote economic development
- Engage with the community, other City Council's departments, Members, local businesses, interests groups, transport operators and neighbouring authorities as appropriate
- Ensure appropriate consideration of all those with disabilities
- Work towards social inclusion for all
- Sustain and improve safety for all

4 Costs Budgets and Actuals

When the PCCPS was being developed, the DfT Cost Benefit Analysis (CBA) decision –making tool was utilised providing predicted costs and volumes of applications from previous years of street works activities in the Portsmouth City Council jurisdiction on maximum fee's tariff. The actual costs accumulated over the 1st year and volumes recorded are now available and a comparison can be drawn.

Due to the risk associated with the anticipated amount of fee income being directly affected by operational decisions by Utility companies, a budget was established that was less than the amount identified in the DfT Fees Matrix.

This risk managed approach also made allowances for potential inconsistencies in the reporting of volumes by the IT system.

The actual volume of Permits was higher than data derived expectations. This is mostly due to the large fibre installation programme being undertaken in the city.

Start-up cost centre	Year 1 budget	Year 1 actual
KPI Production	£15,000	£7,500
Invoicing	£12,104	£2,629
IT support	£20,000	£29,687
Management Overhead	£20,000	£19,017
Training	£-	£10,000
Staff	£240,000	£222,317
Totals	£307,104	£291,150

First year operational costs were £291,150 with permit fee income being £350,690.

The first operational year for the Permit Scheme has generated a surplus in fee income of £59,540 comparative to costs incurred.

The Permit Scheme has functioned at a surplus in its first year and consideration as to whether the fee structure needs to be changed in light of the 1st year findings has been undertaken.

The current high numbers of fibre to the premises permits will not continue long term and therefore a significant drop in permit fee income circa 30% is expected; therefore, no reduction in permit fee levels will be considered at this time as this reduction would place the scheme in a deficit position for fee income.

This will be reviewed again in the year two and three evaluations.

5 Operational Benefits

Within the first year of functioning of the PCCPS there is quantitative comparison evidence taken from the CBA predicted sums and the first year's actuals evidencing the following benefits have been achieved:

Works Input

Pre-scheme CBA figures / prediction

Works type	No. of works per year (Statutory Undertaker)	No. of works per year (Local Authority)	No. of work days per year (Statutory Undertaker)	No. of work days per year (Local Authority)
Major	92	87	2,013	2,307
Standard	409	104	3,475	936
Minor	2,136	223	3,417	578
Immediate	779	46	3,529	112
Totals	3,416	460	12,434	3,933

Year 1 actuals

Works type	No. of works per year: Statutory Undertaker	No. of works per year: Local Authority	No. of work days per year: Statutory Undertaker	No. of work days per year: Local Authority
Major	343	73	14,000	949
Standard	549	181	4,941	1,448
Minor	2,436	267	7,308	534
Immediate	746	85	3,730	170
Totals	4,074	606	29,979	3,101

As an example of the impact of the FTTP projects currently under way within the city the high increase in major works undertaken by Statutory Undertakers were primarily led by FTTP works. With 268 of the major works noted being undertaken by a single fibre provider alone.

Works have increased but as noted FTTP works account for 27% of the works undertaken in the city as a whole and indeed account for more than 3 times as many of major works as compared to any other works promoter.

When the additional and exceptional FTTP works are factored out of the data collected (27% extra works overall) it can be seen that the total number of works undertaken annually have decreased from 3876 to 3580. This equates to a 9% reduction in the total number of permits granted for all works promoters as a comparison to the pre permit scheme figures thereby surpassing the expected 5% reduction in works volumes.

6 Permit Scheme Performance Data

The table below shows a breakdown of permit applications received, granted, and refused for the first year of operation in the city.

Permits received/granted/refused	Number
Total permit applications received by PCC during year 1	5,330
Total permit variation applications received by PCC during year 1	566
Total permits with status that cannot be determined	0
Total permits granted or refused	4,371
Total granted	4,333

Appendix 1 provides further details regarding the breakdown of permit data into works promoter, permit status and or reasons for refusal by the street works team.

Permit response codes can be found in **Appendix 2** for reference purposes.

7 Permit Scheme Performance Summary

During the first year of operation 5896 Permit applications (including variation requests) were received from Utility Promoters and Highway Authority Promoters. This total includes applications that were granted but subsequently cancelled by the Promoter before the works were undertaken.

86% of Permit applications are from Utility companies. The average Utility works duration is 5 days.

4899 Permits were granted, which is 83% of applications.

38 Permits were refused for various reasons, which is 1% of applications. The Permit team can refuse a Permit application when they consider that elements of the application (e.g., timing, location or conditions) are not acceptable. Less Permits being refused would indicate that the quality of applications and uses of information such as online maps has improved the quality of application.

566 variations requests were received which is 2.5 times higher than the number originally expected when the permit scheme fees were evaluated using the DfT fees matrix.

There were 8 occasions of collaborative working. The days saved from this approach has totalled 24. This is a valuable achievement by the team. At an average cost of works of £600 per day at 2002 prices the societal saving equates to £14,400.

8 Conclusions

This report provides evaluation findings of key indicators and measures for the Permit Scheme after its first year of operation. Overall, the Permit Scheme, as designed, is effective and efficient.

The team consistently co-ordinate all road and street works in Portsmouth and take the time to review each and every application and apply conditions to minimise the impact of the works on the users of the network.

There are some difficulties gathering relevant data from the IT system, and it is expected that this will improve in future years as further development of Street Manager occurs. However, the gathered data shows that the objectives of the scheme are being met and that society is benefiting from the ongoing operation of the Permit Scheme.

Collaborative works are being increasingly organised, which is a very challenging objective to achieve.

Discounts on Utility fees for positive working arrangements have been applied successfully and will continue to be used by the Permit Scheme staff as positive incentives.

The Permit team and Promoters will continue to work together and make improvements to minimise the impact of works on the highway network.

Works are being Permitted and co-ordinated effectively and this has resulted in the network being managed efficiently with the available tools.

The introduction of the Permit Scheme has led to a better control of the network and of the works undertaken on it, demonstrated by the data contained with this report.

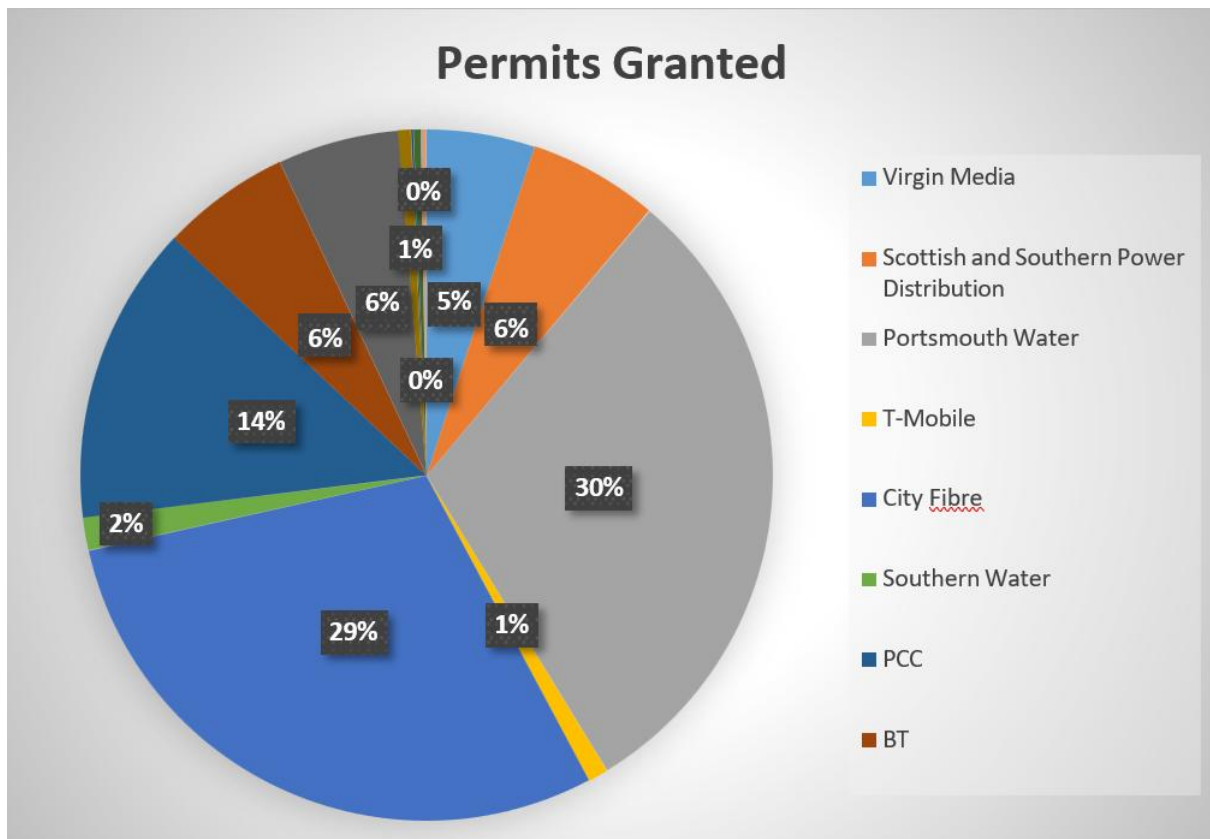
9 Looking Forward

The Permit Scheme team will strive to maintain its effectiveness over the following years with a focus on key areas and activities.

- Assess staffing levels to ensure appropriate and adequate resources are available to meet the demands of the permitting function.
- Review the current working arrangements of the Street Works function to ensure activities maximise their Network Coordination efforts and fully support the permit scheme.
- Consider a Lane Rental Scheme for the city to further reduce works durations.
- Monitor and support the development of the DfT's Street Manager project that will hopefully lead to improved data recording, reporting and standardisation across the Street Works industry.
- Support industry reviews of legislation such as the consideration of fees and charges levied for permit charges and fines providing reports and comments as required.
- Continue staff training and development.
- Monitor Utility discounts given and the behavioural changes that have resulted so the impact can be assessed.
- Assess how the Permit Team can support other initiatives within the Highway Department such as programmes to monitor the level of compliance with Specification of the Reinstatement of Openings in Highways (SROH).
- Continue the drive to maximise efficiencies and identify any areas for improvement or development in Network Coordination.

Appendix 1

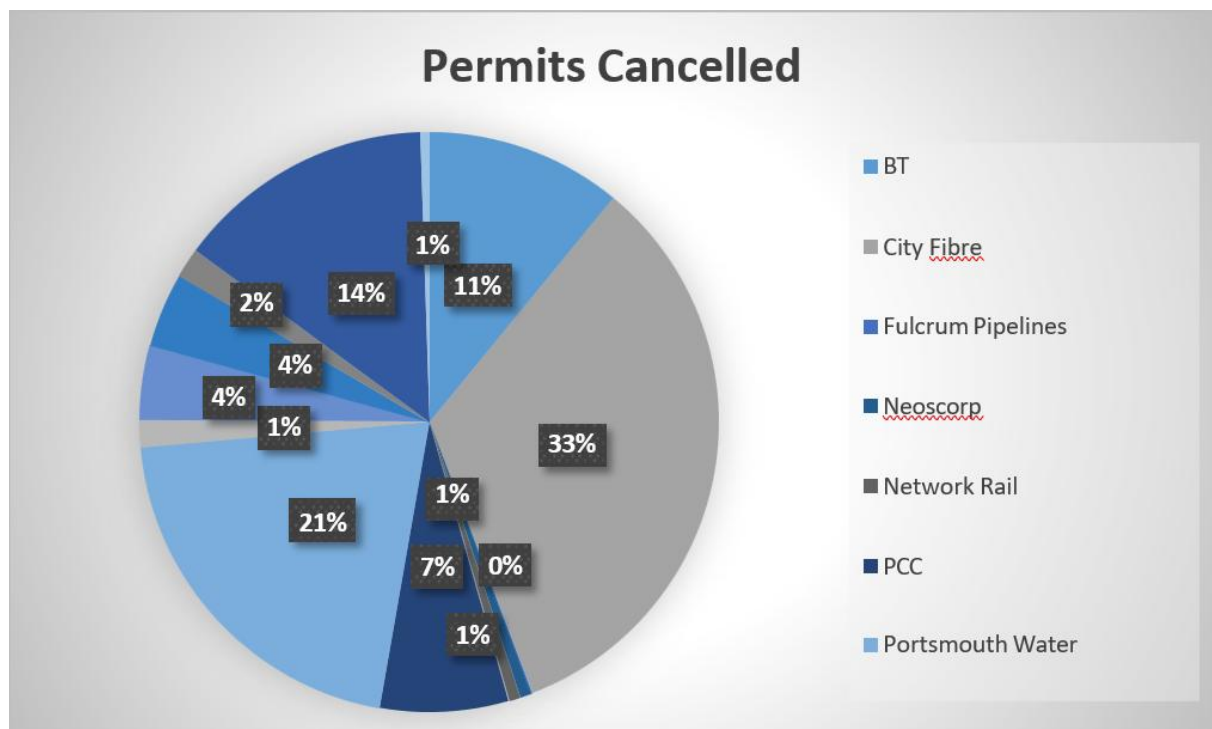
Permits Granted by Works Promoter



Organisation	Percentage of permits granted
Portsmouth Water	30%
City Fibre	29%
PCC	14%
Scottish and Southern Power Distribution	6%
BT	6%
Virgin Media	5%
Southern Water	2%
T-Mobile	1%
Other organisations/categories	1% combined*

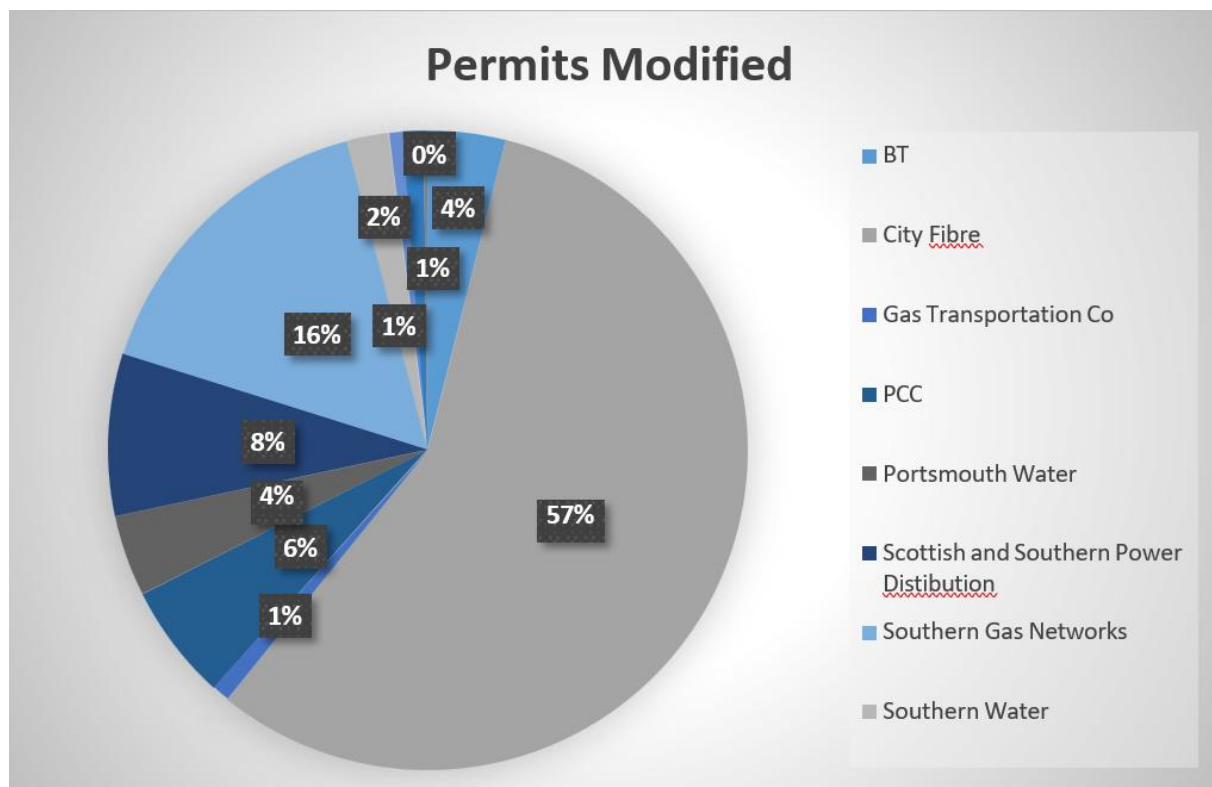
FOTP works were the second biggest single permit applicant by number received.

Permits Cancelled by Works Promoter



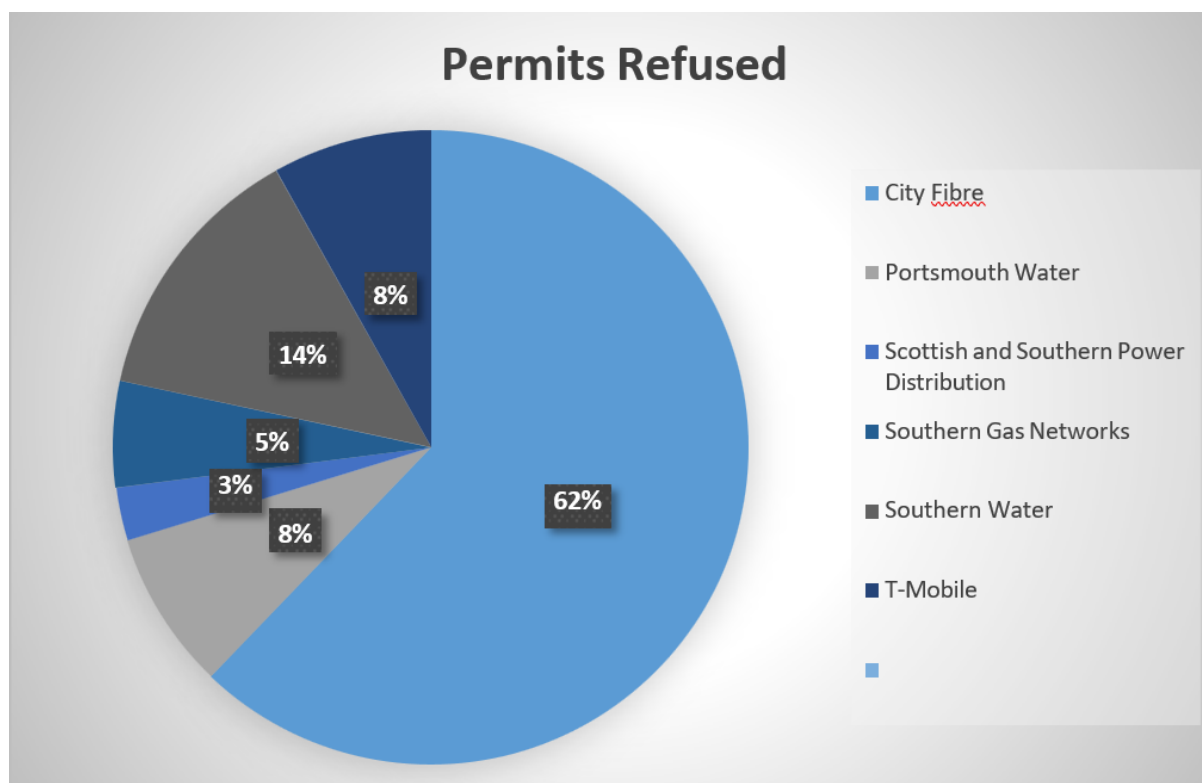
Organisation	Percentage of permits cancelled
City Fibre	33%
Portsmouth Water	21%
PCC	14%
BT	11%
Neoscorp	7%
Fulcrum Pipelines	4%
Network Rail	4%
Other/smaller categories	1-2% each*

Permits Modified by Works Promoter



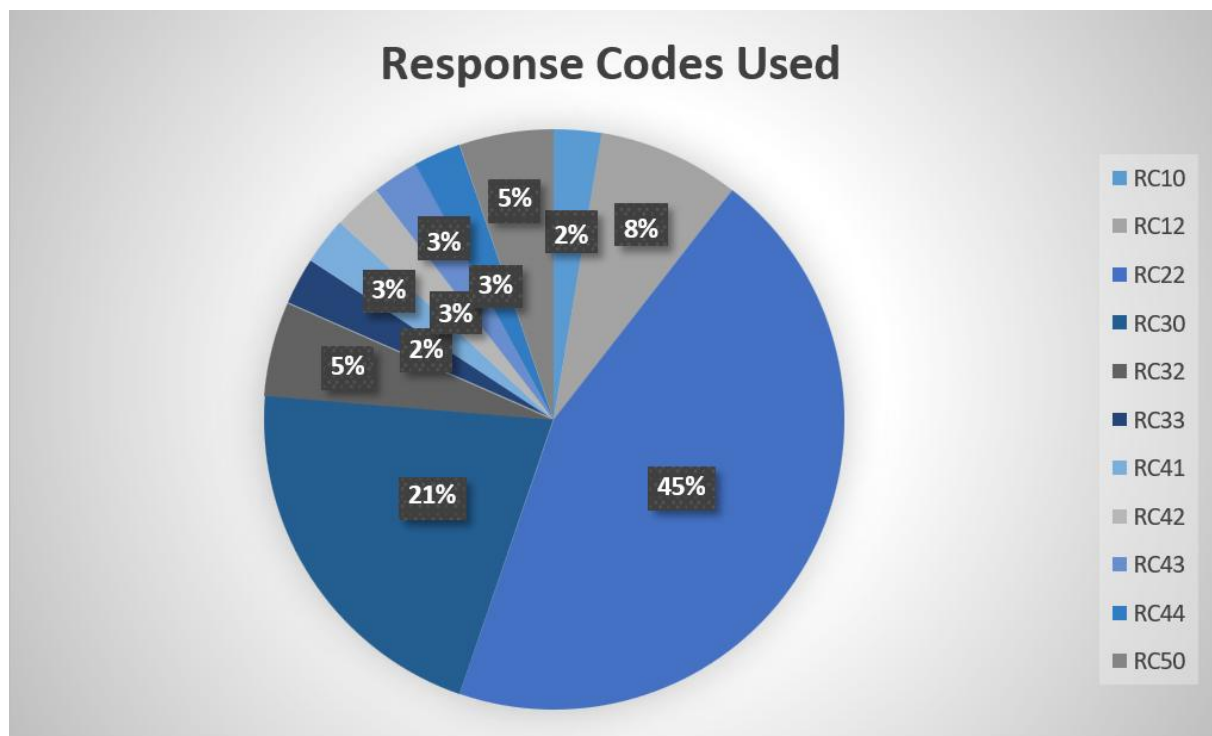
Organisation	Percentage of permits modified
City Fibre	57%
Southern Gas Networks	16%
Scottish and Southern Power Distribution	8%
PCC	6%
Portsmouth Water	4%
BT	4%
Southern Water	2%
Gas Transportation Co	1%
Other/smaller categories	1% combined*

Permits Refused by Works Promoter



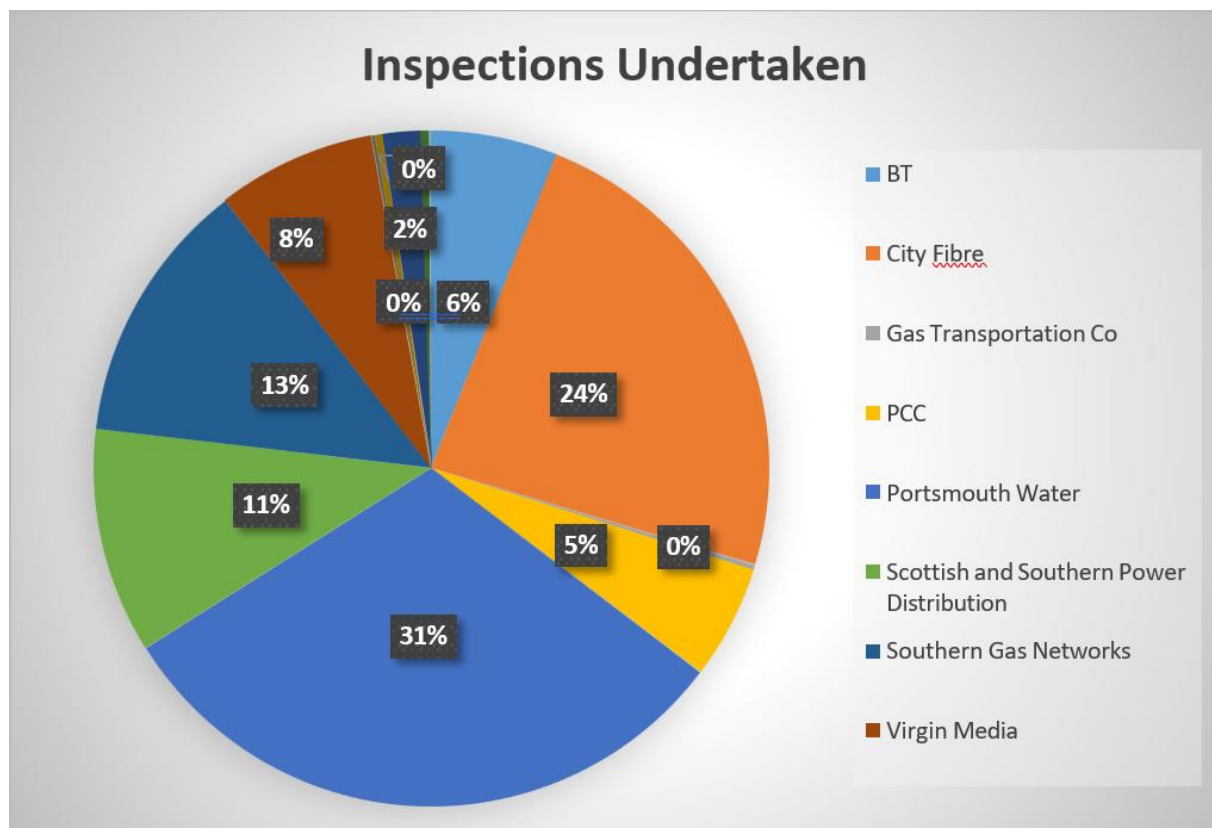
Organisation	Percentage of permits refused
City Fibre	62%
Southern Water	14%
Portsmouth Water	8%
T-Mobile	8%
Southern Gas Networks	5%
Scottish and Southern Power Distribution	3%

Permits Refused by Response Code



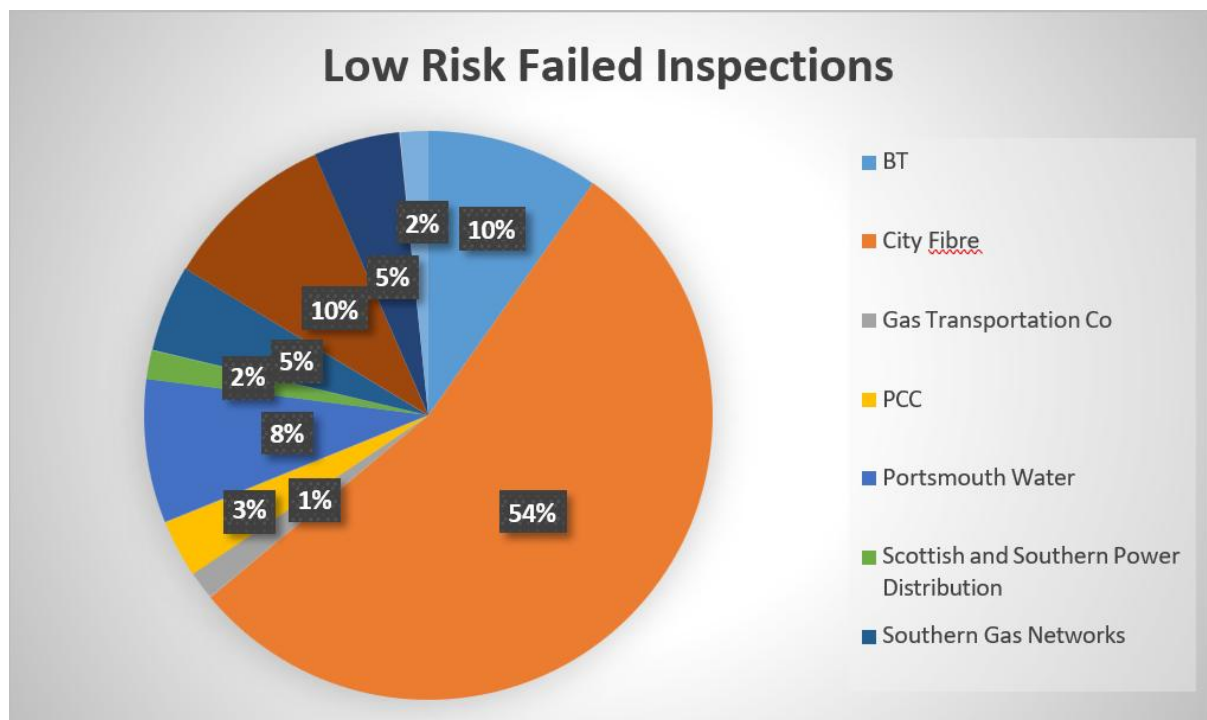
Response code	Percentage used
RC22	45%
RC30	21%
RC12	8%
RC50	5%
RC32	5%
RC41	3%
RC43	3%
RC44	3%
RC10	2%
RC33	2%
RC42	2%

Inspections Undertaken by Works Promoter



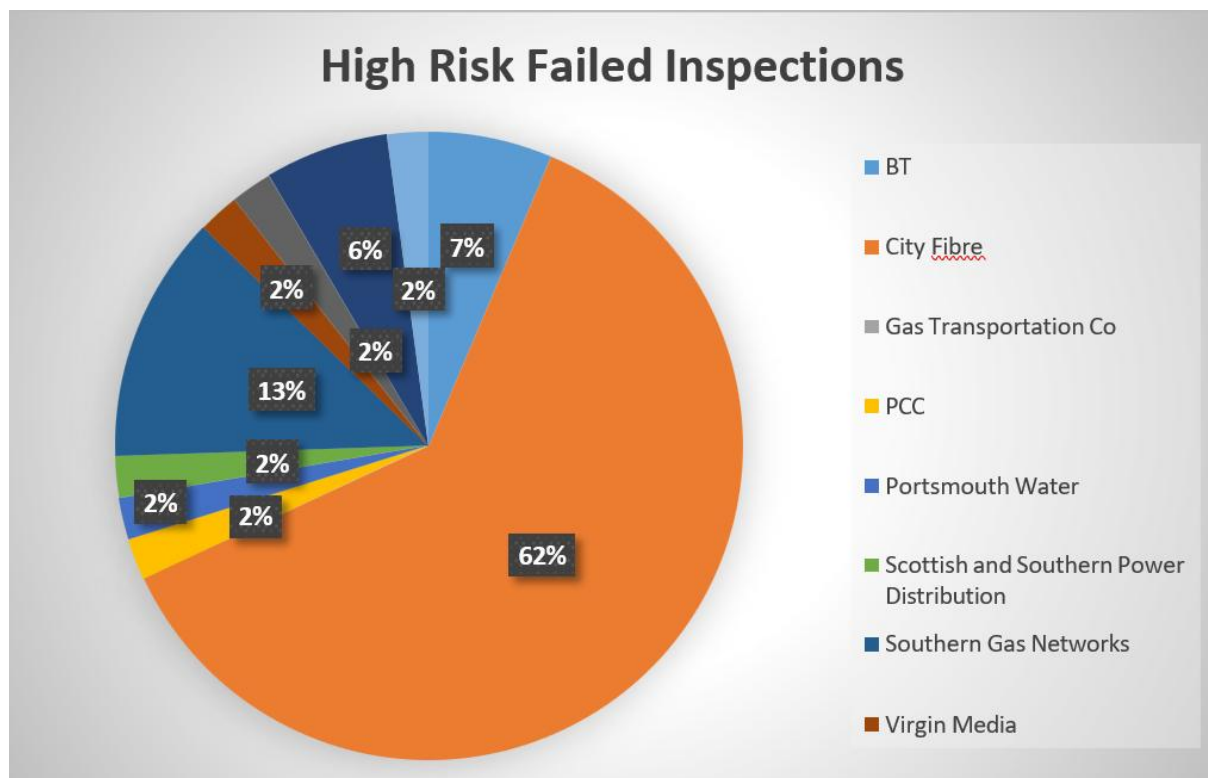
Organisation	Percentage of inspections undertaken
Portsmouth Water	31%
City Fibre	24%
Southern Gas Networks	13%
Scottish and Southern Power Distribution	11%
Virgin Media	8%
BT	6%
PCC	5%
Gas Transportation Co	0%*
Other/smaller categories	2% combined*

Failed Inspections Low Risk by Works Promoter



Organisation	Percentage of low risk failed inspections
City Fibre	54%
BT	10%
Virgin Media	10%
Portsmouth Water	8%
Southern Gas Networks	5%
Gas Transportation Co	1%
PCC	3%
Scottish and Southern Power Distribution	2%
Other/smaller categories	7% combined*

Failed Inspections High Risk by Works Promoter



Organisation	Percentage of high risk failed inspections
City Fibre	62%
Southern Gas Networks	13%
BT	7%
Virgin Media	6%
Portsmouth Water	2%
PCC	2%
Scottish and Southern Power Distribution	2%
Gas Transportation Co	2%
Other/smaller categories	4% combined*

Appendix 2

Permit Response Codes

Permit response code	Type	Description and suggested text
RC10	Missing information	This would include instances where required conditions have not been provided, are not necessary or conflict. The works description or location information provided is insufficient. Use this code for missing information issues not covered by the codes below.
RC11	Condition not provided/not necessary	You have omitted essential conditions for these works. If you still plan to proceed with the activity, you must supply the appropriate conditions within the conditions text box. [NAME] [Tel]
RC12	TM not received	Please provide the required [illustration/traffic management drawing/works activity footprint] for this activity. Please supply the required plan and submit a new application once you have received approval. [NAME] [Tel]
RC20	Incorrect details on permit	This would include where the dates, USRN or primary recipient of the permit are incorrect. Use this code for incorrect permit detail issues not covered by the codes below.
RC21	Incorrect primary recipient	You have incorrectly selected XXX as the primary recipient of the permit. If you still plan to proceed with this activity, you must submit a new permit application, ensuring that you have issued it to the correct permitting authority. [NAME] [Tel]
RC22	Location issues	Your location description and map coordinates conflict, preventing effective coordination of these works. If you still plan to proceed with the activity, you must amend this information. [NAME] [Tel]

Permit response code	Type	Description and suggested text
RC23	Conflicting information	You have conflicting information contained within your permit application. You state [Example 1], which conflicts with [Example 2]. If you still plan to proceed with the activity, you must supply consistent information. [NAME] [Tel]
RC30	Co-ordination issues	This would include where the works will cause any sort of conflict (e.g. with an event). Use this code for co-ordination issues not covered by the codes below.
RC31	Clash of works	Your works will conflict with other activities for your proposed dates at this location, and collaboration is not possible. Please submit a new permit application with alternative dates. The conflicting works are estimated to be completed on [XX/XX/XXXX]. [NAME] [Tel]
RC32	Timing of works	You have not specified the precise [Times/Days] that your work site(s) will be occupying the public highway. If you still plan to proceed with this activity, you must supply the necessary timing information. [NAME] [Tel]
RC33	Collaboration/Coordination	Your works will conflict with other activities for your proposed dates at this location. Please confirm you can co-ordinate your works with the party who are (Name of Conflicting Promoter). If you still plan to proceed with this activity, you must submit a new permit application with alternative dates or an agreement of collaboration. The conflicting works are estimated to be completed on [XX/XX/XXXX] by (XXXXXX promoter). [NAME] [Tel]
RC40	Lack of approval	This would include where TM approval has not been given, an early start has not been sought, the duration applied for is not viewed as acceptable or where the permit applied for does not reflect prior agreements made. Use this code for general lack of approval or the codes below for a specific issue.
RC41	Incorrect TM	You have not gained the relevant [TM plan/WAF/site meeting] (delete as appropriate) approval for these works. [NAME] [Tel]

Permit response code	Type	Description and suggested text
RC42	Early start agreement	No Early Start Agreement has [not been obtained/not been justified] for this activity. [NAME] [Tel]
RC43	S.58 restriction	This street is protected by a section 58 restriction. Please provided evidence that you have the relevant agreement to work within this restriction. [NAME] [Tel]
RC44	Duration	The duration is considered to be excessive/insufficient [delete as required] because [XX]. Please specify a duration not longer than [XX] working days. [NAME] [Tel]
RC50	Other	Any other reason not covered – As above you must clearly state the refusal reason – this category should be kept to a minimum otherwise the quality of the data can be diluted and made less useful in driving performance improvement.