# Case Study
## Redcar & Cleveland Council

Redcar and Cleveland Council oversees all local government functions and has over 136 thousand residents to look after in North Yorkshire, England. Redcar and Cleveland assist with numerous services and information: waste and recycling, jobs and careers, health and safety, business growth, home-to-school transport and more. These services require the council to possess a forward-thinking attitude, and Redcar and Cleveland Borough Council's fleet has championed that. Through workshop digitising and zero-emission initiatives, with the lead of Fleet Manager Gareth Healy, their fleet continues to modernise its workshops.

Healy manages a highly diverse fleet of 207 fleet vehicles – everything from under 3-ton electric panel vans and tippers, 7-ton commercial vehicles, 26-ton refuse wagons, to 32-ton hook loaders! All their assets are maintained in one workshop by ten technicians and their two supervisors. Operational efficiency is critical for a fleet's success, but Redcar & Cleveland's archaic software did not fit their purpose. The legacy software had limited functionality for fleet operators, which meant only some parts of the business used it effectively-making the process and operational workflow disjointed.

One of Healy's main goals as fleet manager was to improve the council's workshops and create a good working environment. "Although it can be a greasy working environment because of the nature of vehicles, it does not mean the staff should not have great working conditions. It is now an impressive space which is not only clean but modern thanks to a full workshop review and refurbishment" said Healy.

> " **The flexible app solutions save time and money for everyone involved"**

### Improving Functionality with a Cloud-Based Solution

For many councils, fleet management software gets embedded into the council's IT (Information Technology) servers. This forces technicians, inspectors, and drivers to return to terminals to record and handle operational tasks. Healy wanted to move away from this and towards a dynamic and cloud-based software to increase flexibility for operational staff. "A cloud-based solution means anyone from the business can access the system anywhere. App technology enables inspections to be done remotely via mobile phone and tablet technology, technicians can fix vehicles from anywhere, and operational managers can see what is being done and where in real time. The flexible app solutions save time and money for everyone involved," stated Healy.
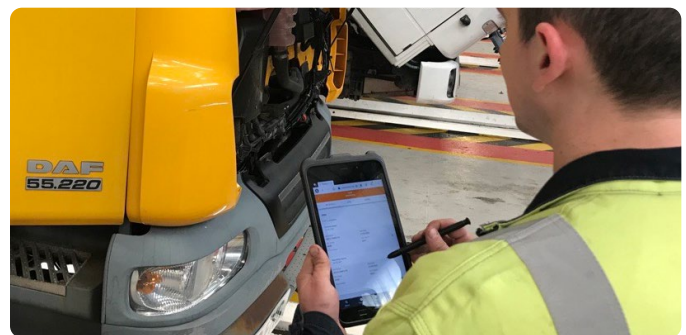


Redcar and Cleveland discussed different solutions in improvement meetings for many years on what needed to change within operations, but it was not until 2020 that they began formal research for a new fleet management software. In March of 2022, they went live with AssetWorks FleetFocus for its fully responsive mobile solution, FleetFocus EDGE. AssetWorks stood out to Redcar & Cleveland from the start because of its ecosystem of fleet solutions. "We were looking for fleet management software that could do it all," said Healy.

## Importance of Investing in a Modern Solution

Redcar & Cleveland was excited to implement FleetFocus EDGE because of the associated app technology. Implementing digital technology was the council's first step in improving its efficiency.

EDGE is a mobile workshop application distinctly made for fleet managers to have the means to take on the future. The end-user experience also plays a significant role in decision-making, as technicians must be confident with new workflows and operational processes. It does not matter what one's job is in an organisation - anyone can use it. That was a big selling point for the council, but the customisable dashboard was also a huge benefit. "The software has a modern look and feel. It is a drag-and-drop solution which can be used by the whole business," said Healy.

FleetFocus EDGE provides ease of mind by recording and monitoring vehicle maintenance. The information and translation of data are digestible through operational dashboards - making understanding data effortless. Healy mentioned that "a big selling point was that the inspection checklists, compliance around drivers, data management, and managing workflow, could go through one system."

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Before implementing FleetFocus EDGE, Redcar & Cleveland was using a clunky thick client system, locked on a handful of machines, so one of the first things that caught Healy's eye with FleetFocus EDGE was the look and feel of the system. Before implementing AssetWorks software into their fleet, tracking vehicle maintenance was a tedious process. Healy's team had to call each other to keep track of vehicle maintenance. Since incorporating FleetFocus EDGE, administrators spend less time on the phone, and staff can now log in to the software to view vehicle processes in real-time. "It was a no-brainer for me upon seeing the system. I've seen a range of other systems, and they almost did what we needed them to, but not as comprehensive as FleetFocus," said Healy.

## Digitising the Workshop

Redcar & Cleveland felt to bring their shared vision across to the whole workforce, the fleet needed to ensure they effectively implemented the innovative technology. To do so, Healy made all staff log on to the system to ensure everyone was satisfied with its abilities. With such a large technological change, Healy believed the implementation would fail without the whole team accepting modern technology. "For the change to work long term, I was committed to ensuring that this was a team shared vision and not just my own," said Healy.

Changing a workshop to fully digital is a change, but the process was smooth with the help of their team and AssetWorks. "AssetWorks came in and spent some time with us delivering the end-to-end formal training, and that was made easy by the expertise from the AssetWorks team and the early buy-in and commitment from the Redcar team – what followed then was lots of questions and more learning," said Healy.

Healy cleverly organised a team dedicated to workshop management, and this group went through all the data processing files and anything needing offset. Those individuals delivered the training to the rest of the staff, so when it came time for AssetWorks training, they knew what they were looking at, ensuring Healy's team got everything from the formalised AssetWorks training.

### The Outcome

The Redcar & Cleveland Borough Council's workshop was heavily paper-based and manually inefficient before implementing EDGE due to the amount of paperwork around the building from handoffs. With EDGE, Healy expressed they have seen a significant reduction in the number of handoffs. "We don't have to send physical ticked inspection sheets to other departments or third-party organisations anymore- it is in most cases direct handoffs with no third-party involvement. If we need to share information on inspections, we simply allow read-only access to the system" shared Healy.

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Eliminating the third party has allowed Healy's team to reduce their administrative time per vehicle from 15 minutes to just minutes - allowing technicians to concentrate on turning more vehicles around during their working day. "I would say that we have a much more focused workforce due to working on things in a much more dedicated and efficient way, and that is absolutely 100 per cent down to the processes that have been developed and built within AssetWorks and the whole change in culture as a result," said Healy.

Not only is the workshop moving to more streamlined processes, but the fleet is more embedded into the larger organisation. When Healy arrived in the business, the fleet was regarded as a distant cousin to the larger council organisation due to the lack of visibility and communication. "The fleet was something in the background, it was just a machine that happened elsewhere. I wanted to ensure my team felt fully part of the bigger business. I championed the communication channels and data sharing so that the team were celebrated for their demanding work and positive contributions." stated Healy.

### Preparing for the Future

Going digital was just one of Healy's goals for their workshop, he is also working on reaching zero emissions. "Our newly ordered 25 small electric panel vans are all zero emissions which will replace our existing stock of outgoing diesel vans," said Healy. These add to the already 11 zero-emission vehicles on the fleet. By 2023, Healy's fleet will be 20 per cent zero emissions, with further sustainability efforts in the works. Redcar & Cleveland's fleet also contains 32-ton hook loaders and 26-ton refuse wagons, and have already started to trial hydrogen technology for their large-scale equipment. 'We were determined to find the best alternative fuel for Redcar & Cleveland and hydrogen is best placed because of our rural, coastal, and urban topography, especially with some of the larger vehicles."

The transition to zero emissions requires adjustments in workshop flow and vehicle maintenance. Part of Redcar & Cleveland's pilot program was training their workforce on electric and hybrid vehicles, so their team has the understanding to complete inspections on EVs (Electric Vehicle). This is no small achievement, to have all staff qualified to work on EVs is a testament to Healy's forward-thinking attitude.

Redcar & Cleveland is also working on another pilot - using hydrotreated vegetable oil (HVO) as a diesel alternative. "It essentially goes directly in as a straight switch for diesel in vehicles, but it has 92% fewer emissions. We bought seven small new street sweepers, which are three and a half tons, as they are HVO (Hydrotreated Vegetable Oil) approved," said Healy. This idea has been tried and tested by other councils such as Hackney Council which run everything over three and a half tons on their fleet on HVO. "There's somebody else who's done the hard work so we can't take the glory, but it is important we learn from other fleets and test what works for us until the price point aligns on alternative fuels and vehicles," explains Healy.
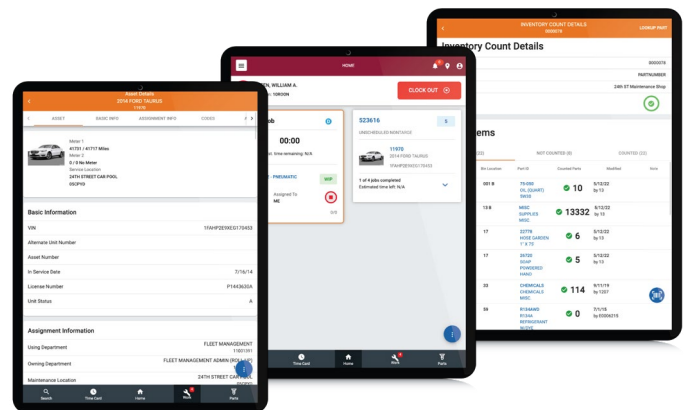


***To learn more about AssetWorks FleetFocus EDGE, please visit [assetworks.co.uk](assetworks.co.uk).***