



Client Success Story

Whanganui District Council lays the foundation for smarter asset management with Brightly

Client

Whanganui District Council

Location

Whanganui, New Zealand

Challenges

The council was relying on an outdated property and parks management system that no longer met its wider asset management needs. As data grew, so did the challenge of storing, updating and using it effectively.

Vitals

- Population: 48,700+
- Asset Portfolio: \$1.8B

Results

Whanganui District Council has:

- Established the fundamentals** of good asset management – clean and reliable data, accurate registers, and structured planning
- Created a single source of truth** for above-ground assets, replacing multiple systems and spreadsheets
- Improved data cleansing** by identifying missing information and what data to record in the asset register
- Developed a unified asset policy** with clear definitions, improving governance and aligned teams
- Integrated key systems** for a holistic view of its operations, reduced duplication and simplified reporting

The Challenge

Whanganui, on the west coast of New Zealand's North Island, is home to nearly 49,000 residents who rely on Whanganui District Council to manage and maintain \$1.8 billion worth of assets, including roads, pipes, parks, community facilities and port infrastructure.

For years, the council relied on an outdated property and parks management system that no longer met its needs. As data grew, so did the challenge of storing, updating and using it effectively. "We had data spread everywhere, with contracts and maintenance programs in different spreadsheets, GIS and multiple databases," said Ari Houshangi, ICT Manager at Whanganui District Council.

The lack of a structured system created a deeper issue – a lot of the data they needed was either outdated or not properly recorded. "We had multiple points of truth and no way to align them," Ari explained.

The Solution

To gain better control and reduce reliance on spreadsheets, the council went to open tender to find an asset management system that could meet its needs.

"In the end, we selected Brightly's Enterprise Asset Management (EAM) and Strategic Asset Management (SAM) solutions, including Confirm OnDemand, ConfirmConnect, Work Planner, Predictor and Managed Services," said Ari. The platform replaced the council's legacy system, creating a centralised register for all above-ground assets, with a specialised system retained for roads.

Ari said Brightly stood out for its configurability, usability and clear technology roadmap. "We don't make decisions based on hopes and dreams, but the roadmap still mattered. The system aligned with our budget, and we liked the usability and customisation, as well as Brightly's experience and resources to deliver the project."

By centralising asset data into a single, accurate source of truth, the council now has the foundation for informed, data-driven decisions aligned to community needs and regulatory compliance. Integration with key systems – including GIS, CRM, finance and document management (EDRMS) – will also give the council a more holistic view of its operations, reduce duplication and simplify reporting.

Early Results

The biggest shift to date has been establishing the fundamentals of good asset management – clean and reliable data, accurate registers, and structured planning processes.

“Right now, the Brightly solution is helping us set ourselves up for success by getting the building blocks in place,” Ari said. “While some organisations sort their data pre-implementation, we started by getting the system in place to help us understand what data we needed to increase operational efficiency, reduce costs, and improve service delivery.”

The council has focused heavily on data cleansing, identifying missing information and using Confirm to clarify what should be recorded for each asset. One major early step was creating a unified asset policy with clear definitions. “If you asked what an asset was, you’d get different answers from Finance (anything that can depreciate), Property (anything nailed down) and Strategy (anything with value),” Ari said. “Establishing shared definitions helped align our teams and guide data collection going forward.”

Accurate asset location was another challenge, particularly in parks and open spaces. Detailed geospatial data is now improving accuracy and consistency, replacing previously ad hoc maintenance practices.

Brightly’s implementation team and subject matter experts have been key to establishing these foundations. With ConfirmConnect, field teams now capture real-time asset information, moving the council toward a single source of truth.

“As we’ve progressed, the system has helped align our teams on what proper asset management looks like, like what an asset register should include and how a work plan should flow. Before, maintenance was ad hoc and reactive. Now we’re building consistency,” Ari said.

Looking ahead, the council expects significant efficiency gains. One example is with renewing mowing and bush-clearing contracts. “It will be far simpler once everything is accurately mapped and linked to

assets. Integration between GIS and Confirm will also allow contractors to provide real-time updates on work,” explained Ari.

“We’re still early in the journey, but every step is helping us move from firefighting issues to proactive planning. You can’t expect a system to solve everything on day one, but it can show you what good looks like. What matters is starting – aiming for progress, not perfection.”

Brightly’s Senior Sales Executive, Jim Apostolovski, adds “the council’s investment in the Brightly EAM and SAM solution provides a centralised, accurate, and reliable source of asset data. By standardising asset definitions, integrating with key systems, and enabling real-time field updates, the council is now positioned to shift from reactive maintenance to proactive, data-driven planning. This foundational approach is set to drive operational efficiencies, reduce costs, and support informed decisions that deliver improved outcomes for the community.”

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Ari Houshangi
ICT Manager
Whanganui District Council