

London Borough of Ealing

“... without fail the customer service and support has been second to none...”

Ben Clutterbuck – Tree Service Manager



A WoodPlan Case Study

Providing integrated desktop and mobile tree asset management software for one of London’s largest boroughs



Ealing Council Offices

Introduction

Located in West London, Ealing has a rich cultural history and has become a preferred destination for shopping, dining, entertainment and nightlife.

Home to around 310,000 residents, Ealing is London’s third largest borough with the management of over 44,000 trees being handled by the council’s tree service.

The Challenge

Ealing had a computerised tree management system in place for nearly 20 years; the system had become an integral part of the day to day running of their tree service. Regularly updated to meet the growing demands of the busy tree department, there came a need to look for a more modern solution when support for the existing system was due to end. Any new system would need to support the migration of the comprehensive level of data already stored. It was a key requirement that it would be a Microsoft® SQL Server® or Oracle® based product and be fully capable of integrating into the corporate workspace, interfacing directly with MapInfo Professional®, PlanWeb® Intranet GIS and the CRM System being developed internally.

Evaluation

The tree service team at Ealing had two options available, either an off the shelf tree management system or a bespoke product built to a set brief. After evaluating both options involving on-site demonstrations and technical discussions with IT personnel, it was decided that WoodPlan provided the most suitable solution. The WoodPlan system was able to provide the tree service with many of the requirements of a bespoke product but as an off-the-shelf system at an off the shelf price.



Ben Clutterbuck comments – “Having seen a number of systems that were available as tree management databases it was these factors where WoodPlan stood out”:

- The flexibility and versatility of the system and its ability to deliver to us on different levels - operational and management
- The user interface based on an Excel® layout was familiar to users
- It was based on a stable and therefore 'IT department acceptable' SQL Server®
- Price was very good
- Clear indications to take suggestion and ways to develop the system
- Happy to take on all our old tree data
- Good customer care

The Solution

Once the tree service team had chosen WoodPlan as their preferred system, it was time to begin the migration of data. The data from the original system needed to be migrated into WoodPlan whilst the original system was still in use, minimising down time and disruption to the running of the service. Data was supplied in sections over a set period with regular integrity checks carried out by the Tree Service Manager. The data to be migrated included tree details, previous inspection and work records, work orders, historic contract information including historic contract rates and budget details. With a section of data migrated, members of the Ealing tree service team were able to run WoodPlan in a test environment on their desktop PCs. The test environment was also set up on the departments Motion LS800 Tablet PCs, allowing the migrated data to be tested on site using WoodPlan alongside the old system. This form of rigorous end-user testing allowed the tree service team to get to grips with WoodPlan well in advance of going live.

The Result

Following the successful migration of data, the WoodPlan system went live at the London Borough of Ealing at the beginning of August 2009. The old system was switched off and day to day workflow, such as on-site surveying and office based management was transferred to the WoodPlan system. WoodPlan has provided the tree service at Ealing with a newer and more flexible tree management system. Its powerful analysis and reporting capabilities not only give the Ealing tree service a greater insight in to the value of their historic data, but also provides tools to improve the efficiency and management of a rapidly growing dataset.

The Future

Ground Control are now in discussions with the tree service to look at new and innovative ways of enhancing service delivery and contract management via web services.

<http://www.ealing.gov.uk/services/environment/trees/>

<http://www.woodplansolutions.com/index>

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