

How Wiltshire Council used QRoutes to choose the best site for £20m new school

QRoutes
Future Space
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Lower emissions

'We were amazed by the accuracy of the route timings'



Happier clients

Fast and clear answers for families, teachers, and support staff



Happier teams

Total confidence for a highly sensitive decision



Lower costs

Quick comparison of different locations to keep ongoing transport costs low

When Wiltshire Council realised it needed to choose the best location for a new school for children with special needs, its transport planning team turned to QRoutes to help with the strategic decision making. Their final choice on where to build the new school really surprised them as they had assumed a different site would be the most suitable.

SEND transport manager Adrian Weissenbruch said: "I have been planning schools transport for almost 20 years, but I'm not embarrassed to admit when QRoutes finds something I didn't see."

The council wanted to calculate the quickest and most cost effective route for each pupil after committing £20m to the building of the new school - but it had to choose the best site after six potential areas were identified. Transport was deemed to be the key factor as the major ongoing cost beyond the initial investment.

The transport planning team has been using QRoutes digital routing software since 2017 for its home-to-

school journeys in both mainstream and SEND schools and is responsible for 1,250 SEND students and 600 external contracts.

Over the past two years, Wiltshire Council has had six reviews - four for under-16 provision and two for post-16 - and in each review, using QRoutes helped the team to find more than £100k of savings. The total amount saved by using the digital planning tool and the ongoing reduction in contracted vehicles is now approaching £1m. The council described QRoutes as a "life-saver" and recognised how the software could help them in their strategic planning for the new school.

Adrian Weissenbruch said: "We were amazed by the accuracy of the route timings. This gave us confidence in our reporting which would be subject to considerable legal and reputational challenge."

Transport planners were able to evaluate detailed scenarios for each site quickly and comprehensively. As the project developed, parents became involved and they

introduced new ideas for locations. The team was able to review them quickly and provided detailed transport route data back to those involved.

Teachers, teaching assistants and care assistants were also consulted as they were concerned about the possible impact on their travel times if they moved to a different school. Using QRoutes, the team spoke to each staff member and talked through their journey options.

The sensitivity of the project and the size of the investment, meant Wiltshire Council needed to have total confidence in its decision and its ability to be able to explain the reasons behind the chosen location.

QRoutes enabled the team to check the options to a level of detail that would not have been possible otherwise. The council was surprised when it found the best site for the new school was not the one they had anticipated. The new development has since been approved and building the new school is now under way.