How Whitestone Contracting Optimises Council Service Delivery with vWork

Whitestone Contracting Ltd is a South Island–based civil construction firm, headquartered in Oamaru with depots across Central Otago, Waitaki and Dunedin. It delivers a comprehensive range of civil construction and maintenance services – including roadworks, landscaping, drainage, vegetation control, and waste management. Serving both private and public clients, the company emphasizes quality, safety, and strong local relationships, supported by a skilled team and modern equipment.

Challenge

Whitestone Contracting's Dunedin office faced the need for precise, efficient reporting to meet the detailed requirements of council contracts such as providing time-stamped photographic evidence; tracking diverse tasks across numerous sites; and adapting to evolving client expectations.

Solution

vWork's job scheduling and dispatch software allows Whitestone to capture real-time data – including photos and geo-locations – customize templates for specific contract requirements, and deliver clear, actionable reports to clients such as Dunedin City Council.

Outcome

By adopting vWork, Whitestone improved efficiency, reduced manual effort, and enhanced client trust through transparent and timely reporting. This contributed to contract wins, reduced resident complaints, and strengthened relationships with council clients while positioning the company to further explore vWork's advanced features.

vWork enhances RAMM reporting

Whitestone Contracting's Dunedin branch is a long time vWork user. In fact, Supervisor Ian Mann's first introduction to vWork was when he joined Dunedin City Council as the Vegetation Control Officer for the transport department looking after the vegetation aspect of the Road Maintenance Contract. Whitestone was the contractor concerned, and Ian was impressed by how much more information he was able to see – at a click – from vWork.

"Most councils use RAMM software to manage roading infrastructure. In using vWork, Whitestone would complete the job in the vWork app and the reports would be attached to RAMM," Ian explains. Instead of having to go to the site to verify the job was complete and enter all the associated data himself, Ian was able to complete the required audit of Whitestone jobs from his chair.

"I could open the RAMM job and see the details, then open the attached vWork report from Whitestone. It provided time and date-stamped photographs and all the required details. So much so, I didn't have to leave my seat to do an audit because I could see that the job was done and that was a big plus."

When Ian Mann's role at the council came to an end, he jumped at the chance to work with Whitestone and sit on the other side of the reporting. Ian's experience with Dunedin City Council put him in good stead and he effectively shifted desks into the shared office space to start delivering against council contracts with Whitestone.

Using vWork to maintain grounds for council housing stock

Since coming onboard Whitestone has won a further contract with the property team at Dunedin City Council and Ian is now supervising the team looking after the grounds across 95-plus housing sites.

"It's the highest council owned housing stock in New Zealand, outside of Wellington," says Ian. "I look after the team doing the lawns, hard surfaces and gardens. On the properties contract, the gardeners must demonstrate that we've visited every site at least once a month and that is harder than it might sound."

Ian explains gardeners can spend up to a week at some of the sites because of the variable extent of the work that needs doing. While they're on site, Whitestone's gardeners often identify additional work that needs doing or a tenant may come out and ask for something else to be done.

"In using vWork the team can immediately make a comment against the job in the app requesting the additional work – and we encourage them to do that. I then run the VWork report daily to track work that has been completed and pick up on any comments.

"I can then open the individual job, read the comment and see the related picture. If further approval is needed the report can immediately be sent to the council or it's very easy for me to follow up on the next day."

Proactively mulching using vWork

Photographic-reporting is also used proactively on specific jobs – such as mulching.

"We've recently been mulching sites, using free wood chips secured from another contractor. Before-and-after pictures are taken, helping the team identify the areas to work on, and proving the work has been completed. These are included in the reports sent back to the council."

The council reporting is extensive – often covering 400 lines in a spreadsheet – all of which Ian can extract from vWork.

"The council values the assurance provided by vWork reports. The ability to deliver clear and timely information gives them confidence, especially in addressing resident concerns," says Ian.

"Even though the council doesn't require my more routine work reports, I often send them to show ongoing progress, which helps build trust and reduces complaints."

vWork templates support different contract requirements

Ian is still administering the roading contracts and is also managing a contract to maintain a seven kilometer stretch of waterway – to make sure it's free-flowing, with no blockages from trees or vegetation. vWork created a template specifically to capture before and after photos both of which are geo-located and time stamped. Staff are specifically reminded to take before-and-after pictures from the same angle to ensure clarity and provide proof of completion.

"Early indications are positive," says Ian. "The team is consistently taking before-and-after pictures of anything removed, along with pinned locations. This way, the reports show exactly where the debris was removed from, which the council can verify if needed. It's required a change in reporting format, but vWork's templating has accommodated that. It is a real positive we can adapt templates as needed for different clients or contracts."

Another example of that is the additional safety requirements in completing roading tasks issued via vWork.

"On the roading contract, safety is a top priority. Staff can quickly report issues such as vegetation obstructing road signs. With vWork, they can log these issues seamlessly, and another team can address them promptly. It's absolutely essential for staff to report these issues. And vWork makes this process smooth and quick – ensuring critical safety concerns are dealt with effectively."

Works well – but more to explore

While Whitestone Contracting's Dunedin team are experienced vWork users, Ian Mann still believes there is a lot more to explore. "One area we need to focus on is repeating jobs, as most of our work is recurring, it is functionality we should be using," he says. "I've mentioned to the senior team that, while vWork is excellent and it's working well for us, we're only scratching the surface of its capabilities across the company."

VWORK IN NUMBERS

- 6,000+ Active users
- 5,00K+ Jobs per month
- 10 Countries