



# One Dig Policy

Autor: Paul Gaffney (Novegen)  
Approved: Gary Walsh, Senior Engineer  
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## Executive Summary

Available road space is quickly becoming a constraint to development in South Dublin, particularly in Areas of Critical Infrastructure such as Bridges, Villages & areas around Business Parks. In order to maximise the available road space available for services a more robust management of road space allocation is required and South Dublin County Council are implementing a One Dig Policy in order to achieve this. A One Dig Policy is designed to minimize public disruptions caused by repeated roadworks, optimize resource use, and promote efficient deployment of digital and utility infrastructure. By coordinating infrastructure projects across multiple agencies and utilities, this policy seeks to integrate digital and other critical infrastructure within a single excavation wherever feasible.

## 1. One Dig Policy Overview

### 1.1. One Dig - Definition

A collaborative approach to infrastructure development where utility providers (e.g., telecoms, water, electricity) and local authorities coordinate their work to install or upgrade infrastructure during a single excavation.

### 1.2. Objectives

#### **Objectives**

1. **Management of Road Space allocation:** Control the allocation of road space so that the maximum number of services can be accommodated in the road.
2. **Minimize Public Disruptions:** Limit repeated excavations by coordinating roadwork and infrastructure projects, reducing the inconvenience to residents and businesses.
3. **Cost and Time Efficiency:** Reduce costs and project duration by synchronizing multiple infrastructure upgrades, such as broadband installation, electricity, water and gas networks.
4. **Environmental Benefits:** Lower carbon emissions and resource use by minimizing roadwork frequency and integrating environmentally conscious construction practices.

### 1.3. Key Policy Elements

#### 1. **Collaboration Across Stakeholders:**

- Local authorities need to work with utility providers, telecom companies, and other stakeholders to schedule and plan projects in tandem.
- Regular coordination meetings and shared project timelines need to be established to align infrastructure upgrades and routine maintenance.

#### 2. **Integrated Digital Infrastructure:**

- Encourage the installation of fibre and broadband networks during any roadwork or utility maintenance project, especially in underserved areas.
- Include telecoms ducting in new constructions, aligning with other construction initiatives and projects to future-proof connectivity needs

#### 3. **Advanced Planning Tools:**

- Use digital mapping and project management tools to plan and track upcoming projects, creating a long-term framework for coordinating infrastructure projects.

## 1.4. Advanced Planning Tools

To effectively coordinate and execute a One Dig Policy, advanced planning tools are critical. These tools support data-driven project management, improve efficiency, and ensure that multiple infrastructure needs can be met simultaneously with minimal disruption.

Key aspects include:

### 1. Digital Mapping and Geographic Information Systems (GIS):

Use of GIS technology to map out existing infrastructure and upcoming projects, identifying overlaps where simultaneous work could occur. GIS provides a real-time view of assets to avoid redundant roadworks and streamline project planning. Mapping tools help track areas due for maintenance and identify future connectivity needs, ensuring each dig considers both current and long-term infrastructure demands.

### 2. Centralized Project Coordination Platform:

A shared digital platform where stakeholders can input and view project timelines ensures that planned projects are visible to all, reducing redundant digs and schedule conflicts. This platform allows for public-private collaboration, helping identify "shared dig" opportunities and managing timelines to minimize community impact.

### 3. Environmental Impact Modelling:

Planning tools incorporate environmental assessments, estimating carbon savings and material use reductions achieved by limiting repeated digs. This supports sustainability goals and aligns One Dig projects with environmental standards

South Dublin County Council would be a facilitator in this area, identifying areas of mutual interest and putting the relevant parties into contact with one another.

## 1.5. Open Communication, Engagement & Information Sharing

The active engagement of stakeholders is crucial to the success of a one dig policy.

### 1. Stakeholder Identification:

Identify relevant departments within councils, utility providers, telecom companies, community representatives, and regulatory bodies to ensure comprehensive engagement.

### 2. Initial Consultation and Needs Assessment:

Conduct public surveys, workshops, and technical feasibility studies to gather feedback and assess the areas that would benefit most from the One Dig approach.

### 3. Develop a Shared Project Plan:

Provide stakeholders access to a centralized digital platform for real-time updates on project timelines. Allocate tasks in a way that minimizes overall disruption while ensuring compliance with environmental and regulatory standards.

4. Public Communication Strategy:

Create a dedicated public webpage with project timelines and notifications. Host forums or Q&A sessions to address community concerns and gather ongoing feedback.

5. Monitoring, Feedback, and Continuous Improvement:

Track progress, gather feedback, and make improvements based on stakeholder and public input. Adjust future project plans as needed to optimize the One Dig process.

## 2 Implementation

### a. Application Process

Any party who wishes to install services within the public roads of the county must submit a T0 application form to South Dublin County Council. South Dublin will review the request and issue a response in line with the below timelines

- Non-notifiable work: 2 weeks
- Notifiable Work (see section 3.3): 1 year

For the scheme to be successful stakeholders need to share proposed plans in a timely manner that will allow other stakeholders align plans. For this reason it would be suggested that the application process is submitted at the very start of a preliminary design

An approved application form must be included with your Road Opening Licence Application.

### b. Advance Notification of Works

For any schemes that are considered notifiable (see section 3.3) an application process must be made to South Dublin County Council at least one year in advance of works commencing. This extended time limit is to allow time for other stakeholders to assess their needs in the area and if necessary align future schemes under the one dig policy.

### c. Notifiable Schemes

SDCC has mapped it's critical infrastructure network which consists of;

- National, Regional and Local Primary roads
- Villages and Towns
- Bridges
- Areas of high utility demands

Works on this network are notifiable if they meet any of the following criteria;

- excavations greater than 50m in length
- provision of new/larger access chambers

### d. Information Sharing

South Dublin County Council will issue a map every month that shows where applications have been received for notifiable schemes. The information provided here will be restricted so as to protect identity of the application.

If another stakeholder has an interest in working on a segment of road that has an application submitted then SDCC will put the parties in touch and direct them to deliver the schemes under a one dig process.

### 3 One Dig Policy Enforcement

One Dig policies can be enforced through a combination of regulatory frameworks, permitting requirements, coordination agreements, and ongoing monitoring. Below are some common enforcement strategies:

1. Permitting and Approval Processes:

Councils use a structured permitting system, often integrated with street works and planning applications. This system requires utility companies and contractors to apply for permits before digging. Through the permitting process, councils can ensure that One Dig principles are upheld by requiring joint projects or coordination with other planned works in the same area. Some councils impose conditions on permits, such as scheduling requirements or the inclusion of digital infrastructure ducting, that align with One Dig policy goals.

2. Coordination Requirements:

Councils may mandate that all infrastructure projects in a designated area be coordinated through a centralized project schedule, often visible on digital platforms accessible to stakeholders. This platform lists upcoming projects, allowing utilities to coordinate and avoid unnecessary excavations. Utility companies and other stakeholders might be required to participate in regular coordination meetings to review planned work, explore shared project opportunities, and commit to shared timelines.

3. Financial Incentives and Penalties:

Some councils implement a system of financial penalties for non-compliance. For instance, companies that dig without proper coordination or approval may incur fines. These penalties discourage repeated or redundant digs that contravene the One Dig policy. On the flip side, councils might offer fee reductions or incentives to utilities that proactively collaborate on joint projects, particularly for installing digital infrastructure in underserved areas.

4. Long-Term Framework Agreements:-

Councils sometimes enter formal agreements or memorandums of understanding (MOUs) with utility providers and telecom companies. These agreements establish shared objectives and provide a legal framework that guides One Dig coordination, with each party committing to follow certain standards for minimizing roadworks. Such agreements help councils enforce standards for collaboration while creating accountability among participants.

5. Public Communication and Transparency: By providing public access to project timelines and status updates, councils maintain accountability and build community support. Transparency about



upcoming projects helps keep utility companies aligned with the One Dig policy, as there is visibility on project overlaps and any redundancies. In some cases, councils engage directly with communities to gather feedback on projects, using this input to hold stakeholders accountable to the policy and its objectives.

6. Performance Monitoring and Compliance Checks: - Councils monitor projects in real-time using GIS and other tracking tools, ensuring that companies are adhering to the agreed timelines and conditions. Compliance audits may be conducted periodically to review how well stakeholders are meeting One Dig requirements. If non-compliance is identified, councils may withhold future permits, impose corrective actions, or enforce penalties to ensure that companies adhere to coordinated project plans. These strategies create a structured approach to enforcing One Dig policies, balancing regulatory oversight with incentives for collaboration and proactive engagement with stakeholders.