

Case Study

Durham County Council

Driving success by transforming
mileage expense claims



Introduction

A recent collaboration between Zellis and Durham County Council led to significant improvements in the MyView expenses module, specifically focusing on improving the accuracy of mileage expense claims. This successful project resulted in integrating the enhanced functionality into the core program.

In this case study, we talk to Ben Newby, Team Leader – Payroll and Employee Services at Durham County Council, as he shares how this project came to fruition, addressing a common challenge faced by HR/Payroll departments nationwide.



Durham County Council is a local authority in Northeast England with approximately 17,000 employees. They have been using Zellis' ResourceLink and MyView since 2006, using core functionality whilst also utilising software customisations to fit business needs.

Regular auditing of mileage and expense claims highlighted that employees were often submitting inaccurate mileage expense claims. A report in June 2020 highlighted the need for better accuracy in submitting employee mileage in MyView to ensure accuracy.



The search for the right solution.

Previously, the mileage recording process heavily relied on manual inputs, leading to increased costs due to unintentional inflation of claimed mileage due to rounding up or miscalculations. Durham County Council wanted to find a solution that would accurately track, monitor, and verify employee claims, reducing costs and improving efficiency.



Durham County Council explored various options, reviewing market leading providers of postcode software, including those with custom interfaces into HR/Payroll systems.

However, the anticipated costs associated with implementation and annual fees outweighed the development costs of integrating a Google Maps interface into the MyView expenses module – whilst providing a solution that seamlessly fit into their existing employee/manager self-service process.

They aimed for a user-friendly experience for their employees with a streamlined process for claims.



The collaboration.

Durham County Council and Zellis worked together to develop an integrated MyView solution to allow employees to map their journey using a reliable route planner that would force employee to map each journey point.



To make sure everything went smoothly, they first tested the solution in a test environment. This allowed the council to do thorough checking, give feedback, and resolve any further functionality and/or configuration issues.

Throughout the project, the council and Zellis closely cooperated and listened to feedback. They made continuous improvements to make sure the solution met the council's specific needs.



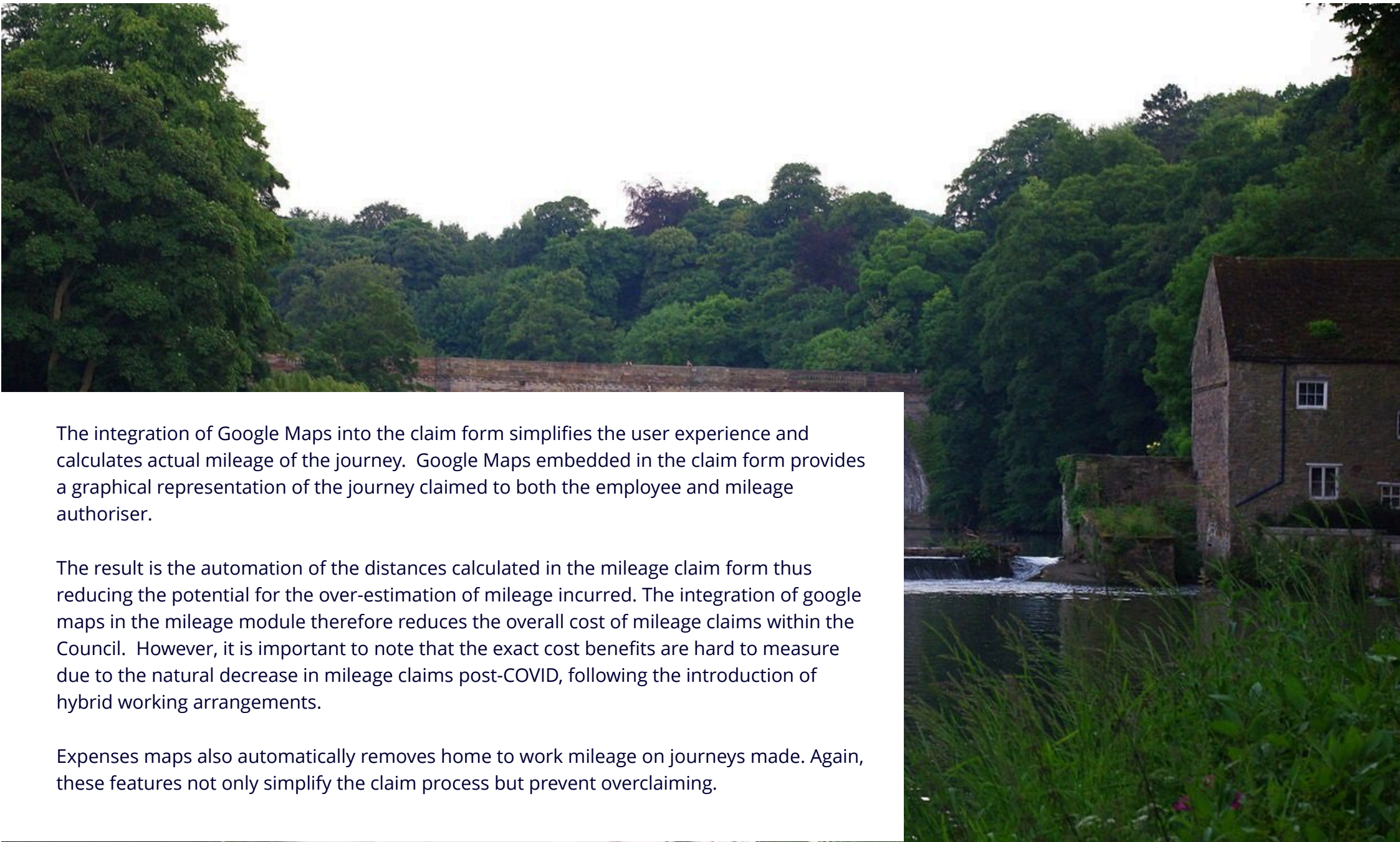
Key features of the module include:

- Triangulation to calculate private mileage between home and work, with the ability to recognise and record HOME and WORK locations. However, maintain option to include payment of private miles if required.
- A rule that requires users to record all claims for a single date on the same claim line ensures accurate calculation of private miles.
- Route override functionality for clear audit trails when the recommended shortest route is unavailable due to roadworks or other reasons.
- The ability for authorisers to view the route selected by the employee, which helps them to make informed decisions when approving or rejecting claims.

The impact.

By adding mapped journeys to the expenses claim process, Durham County Council has improved business intelligence re: mileage data. Mapped Journeys would allow for greater depth of data to review/audit. The standardised information provided by employees reduces error rate and has allowed the Council to implement further policing of mileage claims using the google maps data to maintain compliance with business policy.





The integration of Google Maps into the claim form simplifies the user experience and calculates actual mileage of the journey. Google Maps embedded in the claim form provides a graphical representation of the journey claimed to both the employee and mileage authoriser.

The result is the automation of the distances calculated in the mileage claim form thus reducing the potential for the over-estimation of mileage incurred. The integration of google maps in the mileage module therefore reduces the overall cost of mileage claims within the Council. However, it is important to note that the exact cost benefits are hard to measure due to the natural decrease in mileage claims post-COVID, following the introduction of hybrid working arrangements.

Expenses maps also automatically removes home to work mileage on journeys made. Again, these features not only simplify the claim process but prevent overclaiming.

Rolling out the new MyView module at the earliest opportunity complemented the Council's digital transformation program by empowering system users to be engaged in a digitally enabled system as means to work more smartly, improve decision making and make the best use of time.

The new functionality has replaced the need for manual calculations and logging, streamlining the process for both employees and managers. Clear and accurate descriptions of journeys make it easier for managers to review and authorise claims.

The solution has also received positive feedback from end users, indicating a better overall user experience.

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Managers can now rely on the accuracy of what's being submitted by the employee based on the journey points that they've said they've been to. It's a much easier and quicker process now."

- Ben Newby, Team Leader, Payroll and Employee Services, Durham County Council



An ongoing partnership.

Durham County Council values their ongoing relationship with Zellis. They have regular customer relationship meetings where they can have honest conversations and share feedback.

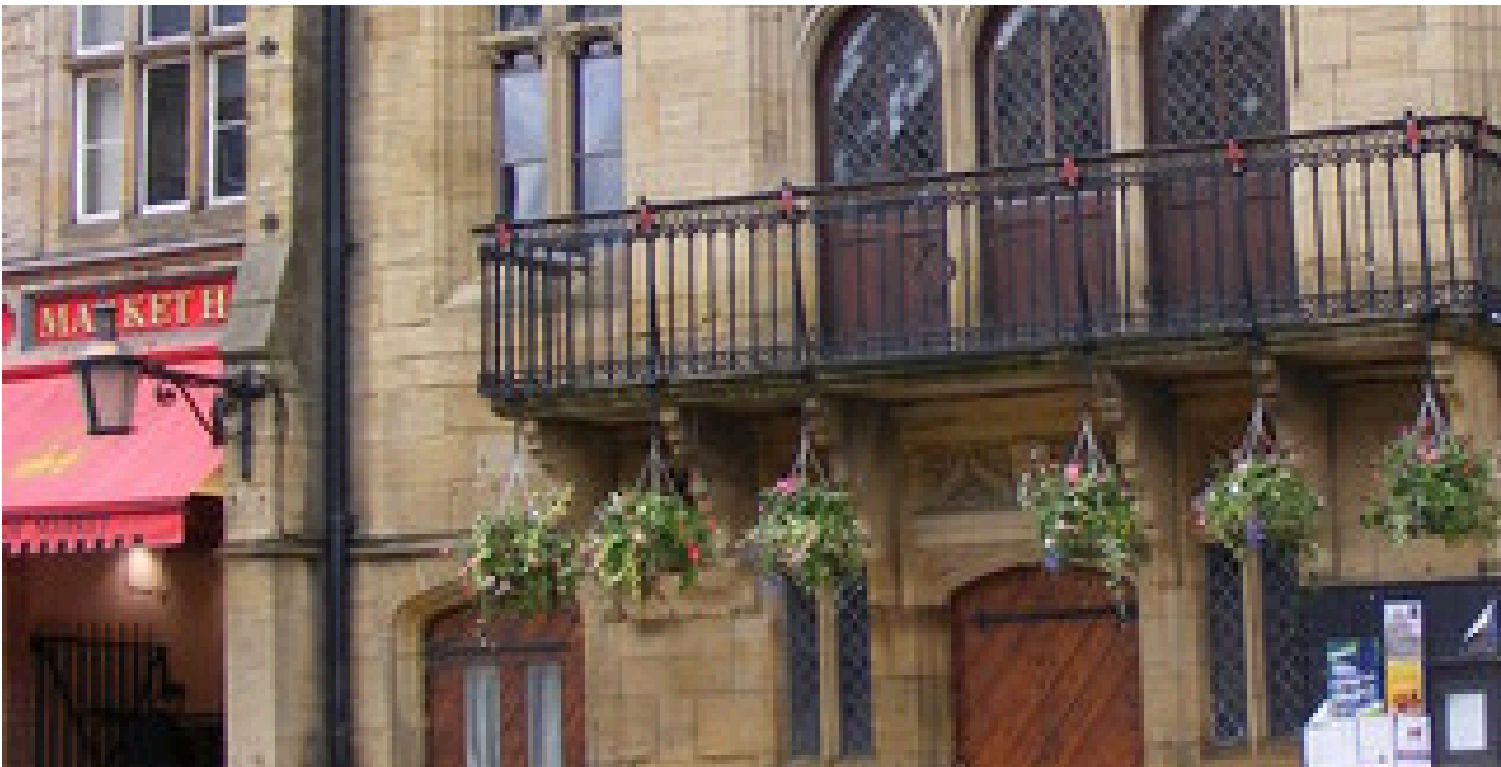




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Our relationship with Zellis is excellent. We have open and honest dialogue and collaborate well. It gives us reassurance and peace of mind."

- Ben Newby, Team Leader, Payroll and Employee Services, Durham County Council



This collaboration between Durham County Council and Zellis has been a big success. By adding Post Code Software/Google Maps to the MyView expenses module, the council has improved accuracy, reduced costs, and improved the user experience better. The changes have benefitted not only the council but also other users of Zellis solutions.

Key takeaways:

- Collaboration between Durham County Council and Zellis improved the MyView expenses module for more accurate mileage claims.
- Adding Post Code Software/Google Maps integration provides a reliable route planner and mapping tool.
- The enhanced module includes features such as triangulation, payment options for private miles, claim line restrictions, route override functionality, and informed decision-making for authorisers.
- The solution saved money, simplified the user experience, eliminated errors, and streamlined the claims process for employees and managers.



Thank you for reading our case study

Durham County Council

If your organisation is facing challenges with expense claims, Zellis can help.

Our specialist expertise in HR and payroll can make your processes more efficient, reduce mistakes, and improve the quality of your data.

Contact us today to discover how Zellis can empower your organisation and improve the employee experience.

