

Case Study title: A303 Sparkford to Ilchester – Virtual Public Information Exhibition

Scheme name: A303 Sparkford to Ilchester dualling scheme

Project stage: 5 **Date Case Study submitted** 02/09/2021

Category: Customer and Stakeholder

Scheme context:

We're upgrading a three-mile section of the A303 between Sparkford and Ilchester, to make the road safer and more reliable. The delivery of this scheme is part of a long term aim to create a high-quality dual carriage way link between London and the South East and the South West.

The scheme is starting construction in September 2021 and we held a Start of Works publicity campaign including a virtual Public Information Exhibition in July 2021.

Case study details:

This case study aims to explain how we held a successful Start of Works publicity campaign which incorporated an innovative bespoke virtual exhibition platform and a scheme animation and flythrough that explains the stages of construction:

Campaign objectives

- Demonstrate our commitment and progress in delivering the scheme.
- Update customers including road users, local stakeholders, local communities and those with an interest in the project on next steps/construction
- Build community relationships ahead of construction

Campaign development

- Handling plan developed
- Research potential scheme advocates
- Research lessons learnt from previous virtual exhibitions
- Research on demographic and customer groups to inform public engagement requirements
- On-going engagement with key stakeholder groups
- Specified, designed, built bespoke virtual exhibition platform, created and populated content
- Press statement drafted
- Design stakeholder mailshot
- Drafted stakeholder letters and stakeholder resource pack
- Created scheme animation and fly-through
- Updated FAQ
- Held training sessions for team hosting live chat

Campaign delivery

- Stakeholder supporting information pack issued to key stakeholder's
- Proactive press release issued
- 7 social media posts (Twitter and Facebook)
- Project webpage updated
- Bulletin sent to 4,436 webpage subscribers.
- 3,428 mailshots issued to local community and stakeholders

What are the benefits?

Results • 22 local news articles • 2 radio interviews • 556 unique scheme webpage views between 22 & 30 July. • Email bulletin: 4,082 delivered, 869 unique opens, 376 total click throughs. • 388 virtual exhibition hits between 22 & 30 July. Average viewing time of 1m 51s. • 14 live chats. • 8 tickets raised. • Facebook: 24 reactions, 4 comments, 10 shares. 371 views of fly-through snippet. • Twitter posts: 11 retweets, 1 reply, 15 likes • Social-media: advocates including local MPs, Federation of Small Business and local media shared comms on their social media channels • 7 enquiries to project inbox between 22 July and 30 July. • 20 responses received to customer communications survey • 550 views of fly-through video between 22 July and 30 July,

Outtakes • Largely positive media coverage. • High level of advocacy from stakeholders. • High webpage hits on exhibition launch. • Overall customers were happy with the level of information provided • Traffic impacts on local communities a key issue • Customer survey, 20 responses, 18/20 understood scheme objectives 'very well'.

What went well? • Teamwork: We worked well together across different functions and suppliers. • Good support from local partners sharing content on their channels. Positive feedback from customers on exhibition. The number of visitors to the virtual exhibition exceeded our expectations • Development of bespoke virtual platform with a local SME web developer with ability to manage content, created a cost-effective exhibition that can remain live and be updated throughout scheme construction. • Incorporation of lessons learnt from previous virtual exhibitions has resulted in a very easy to use and comprehensive information resource for stakeholders • Developed comprehensive content including an innovative scheme animation/flythrough and information sections covering STEM and work opportunities.

How can others apply your learning?

Develop a thorough implementation plan with allocated responsibilities to a suitably skilled team. Fully involve team in regular development and approval review meetings to avoid any major 'last minute' changes. Understand lessons learnt from previous campaigns as they will help address common challenges. Feel free to copy our virtual exhibition platform.

Visual materials that explain your approach / outcome

<https://a303sparkford.engagement-event.com/lobby>

[Start of Works PIE Lessons Learned presentation](#)

Contact for more details: philip.farrar@gallifordtry.co.uk

Further information:

<https://a303sparkford.engagement-event.com/lobby>

<https://vimeo.com/577717805/222d4dc68b>