

Charles Cross Transport Improvement Scheme



Charles Cross Roundabout is within Plymouth's busy city centre and the vast majority of Plymouth's bus services use the route. At the centre of the roundabout is Charles Church, a listed building that is maintained as a monument to those who lost their lives in the Second World War.

A key objective of the scheme was to improve capacity for vehicles through additional traffic lanes, reducing congestion and improving air quality while providing enhanced facilities for pedestrians and cyclists, offering more consistent and improved journey times.

Challenges and solutions

The project benefitted from early contractor involvement via the Scape Framework, from feasibility to the pre-construction phase. This early engagement enabled the team to undertake surveys and audits, resulting in a revised proposal saving approximately 25 weeks and around £463,000.

Minimising disruption to commuters, businesses and local residents was a key driver for Plymouth City Council. As a result, public consultation and engagement began early with an extensive pre-construction communications campaign, enabling people to prepare and plan journeys accordingly. A stakeholder workshop informed preferred phasing, traffic management and working hours.

There were significant challenges to overcome, including substantial utilities diversions, complex geometric design, constraints on all site boundaries and limited working space. Works were intricately phased to minimise disruption and restrictions.

From the outset, the project had a 'one team' ethos, overcoming challenges by working on ideas together. One example was the redesign of part of the junction to avoid a telecommunications chamber while still producing the desired outcome for the project within an acceptable timeframe.

- **Date of completion: Oct 2019**
- **Cost: £7.4m**
- **Location: Plymouth, Devon**



Benefits and achievements

A proactive approach to communications utilising numerous platforms such as social media meant the public were kept well informed throughout. A Considerate Constructors Scheme score of 42 out of 50 was achieved alongside a certificate of excellence. At the end of construction, the scheme demonstrated 92% customer satisfaction.

The team satisfied the overall project objectives and enabled growth for the regional economy; 89% local labour was achieved; and 82% of the total contract value was with SMEs. Health and Safety was of paramount importance for staff and the public, evidenced by zero RIDDOR and Lost Time Injuries (LTIs).

The Charles Cross scheme has provided increased capacity for all vehicles while improving pedestrian crossings and spaces. The work was completed in time for the busy Christmas shopping period and the opening of Plymouth's new multiplex development, The Barcode.



Fascinating facts

- ❑ Charles Cross Roundabout is a key junction on Plymouth's network, handling high volumes; over 40,000 vehicles use the route every day, including 120 buses every hour!
- ❑ Utilising the social value portal, Balfour Beatty recorded £2.3m worth of added social value, including engaging women through work experience, charity events and 268 students visiting the site.
- ❑ Considering the challenges of a constrained city centre site, the team demonstrated an exceptional Health & Safety record, achieving zero LTIs during over 44,000 hours worked.

People who made it happen:

- Client Team: Plymouth City Council
- Design Team: AECOM
- Project Manager: Balfour Beatty (Southern)
- Framework Provider: Scape Group

More about this project:

plymouth.gov.uk/charlescross