



WOKING JOINT COMMITTEE

DATE: 23 SEPTEMBER 2015
LEAD OFFICER: KEVIN ORLEDGE
STREET WORKS MANAGER

SUBJECT: B380 OLD WOKING ROAD – UTILITY WORKS – GOOD PRACTICE

DIVISION: WOKING SOUTH EAST / THE BYFLEETS

SUMMARY OF ISSUE:

The purpose of this report is to inform Members of the good practice associated with works by Southern Gas Networks on the B382 Old Woking Road with specific reference to communications to stake holders, giving residents and highway users information to make educated travel decisions.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

The Woking Joint Committee is asked to note the contents of this report

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS:

The Committee has requested this Information Report

1. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND:

- 1.1 Forming part of the programme of main gas supply pipe replacement by Scotia Gas Networks, directed by the Health and Safety Executive, Southern Gas Networks (SGN), via a risk rating score system, identified a need to replace approximately 1 ½ miles of old metallic pipe work with new polyethylene pipe along the B382 Old Woking Road between the junctions with Sheerwater Road and East Hill.
- 1.2 This section of the B382 is known to be an important link in the Surrey highway network running with significant traffic levels particularly in the morning and evening periods. It could reasonably be predicted that road works with any form of traffic management on this road could cause considerable travel disruption.
- 1.3 Public tolerance of road works is generally not high. This can be exasperated when significant roadworks appear without prior warning. Experience from previous, similar projects supports this with the level of enquiries and Complaints received which commonly show a trend of an initial higher volume reducing as awareness of the works becomes known.
- 1.4 Whilst policies and procedures are in place to advise of forthcoming road works, with this project having a predicted duration of up to six months it was important that all delivery channels for publication of information on the works were explored and employed where appropriate to ensure effective dissemination of information.
- 1.5 A meeting was held with SGN representation, Surrey Officers and the local Surrey Member in the lead up to the start of the works to agree a publicity strategy to capture as wide an audience as practically possible.
- 1.6 It should be noted that the works promoter can be instructed to undertake a certain level of pre publicity via conditions attached to the Permit, however cooperation is required to enable the level of publicity undertaken on this project.

2. DETAIL:

Publicity Methods Employed

- 2.1 **Variable Message Signs.** Large variable message signs are known to have a high impact value for advising of forthcoming road works. Four signs were placed two weeks prior to the works commencing, the sites being selected to capture maximum exposure and having a suitability to accommodate large signage. Locations selected were:

www.woking.gov.uk
www.surreycc.gov.uk/woking

Old Woking Road junction with East Hill
 Pyrford Common Road junction with Upshot Lane
 Sheerwater Road junction with Albert Drive
 Parvis Road junction with Dartnell Park Road



- 2.2 **Advanced Information signage.** At the same time as the VMS were sited, black on yellow information signage was positioned along the affected section of the Old Woking Road and at other relevant locations. In total 22 signs of this type were positioned.



- 2.3 **Surrey County Council External Information Sheet.** The Street Works department at Surrey County Council is not directly resourced to produce external communications however the importance of providing advanced information on projects of this nature is understood and the standard Modus Operandi on projects of this level is to issue a Street Works Information Sheet. See Appendix A.

This sheet has an extensive distribution including affected County and Borough Members, blue light services, postal services, local commerce, schools, churches, residents associations, recreational clubs, Scouts, Guides etc., County and Borough Officers including the Surrey Contact Centre, plus previous known public contacts.

Distribution is by blind copy e-mail with the comment suggesting that it may be forwarded on to anyone else who may benefit.

- 2.4 **Open Public drop in sessions.** Two “drop-in” events were arranged and hosted by SGN, supported by Surrey Officers. These were held on Tuesday 14th July at St John the Baptist Church, Camphill Road in West Byfleet and on Monday the 20th of July at St Peter's Church in Old Woking. At these events details of the project was displayed along with the opportunity to discuss the works and the likely implications.

The events were publicised on the Surrey External Information Sheet and also by a Southern Gas Networks letter drop. Around forty people attended each of these sessions.

- 2.5 **Surrey County Council VMS Signs.** Whilst currently not representing an extensive asset (and completing with the need to advance warn of the Ride 100 cycle event) Surrey County Council have some fixed position VMS signs around the county. These were set to display a warning message with regard to the works.

The signs displaying the message being located on the A245 Byfleet Road and the A245 Portsmouth Road, Cobham and also on the A320 St Peters Way Eastbound & Westbound.



- 2.6 **Letter / SGN Information Sheet distribution.** A letter drop was undertaken by SGN to an area agreed by Surrey Officers which included properties directly fronting the affected area plus properties in roads adjoining the Old Woking Road, including Private Roads and the Marist and International

Schools. This letter drop included an SGN information sheet – see Appendices B and C

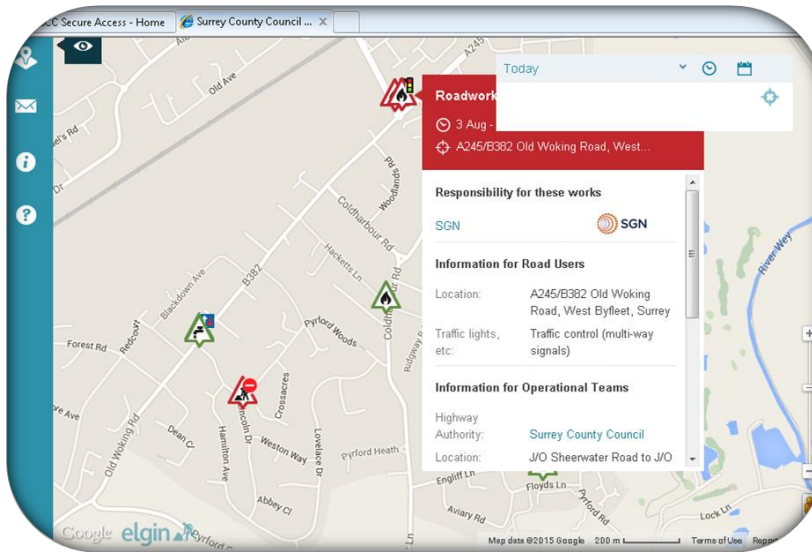
- 2.7 Local Media.** A press release – See Appendix D - was sent by SGN to local media and the Woking Advertiser published an article, albeit suggesting the road would be closed for the duration of the project.



The Get Surrey web site of the Surrey Advertiser published further information on the 4th of August with correct details regarding the works – Appendix E

Information was also sent to Inrix who collate and distribute information for local radio broadcast and SGN utilised social media in the form of “tweeting” to give advanced warning of the works.

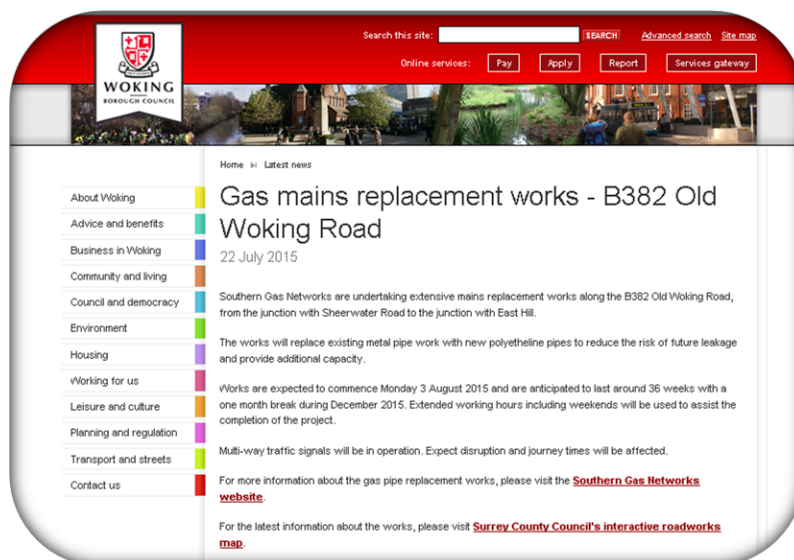
- 2.8 Surrey County Council Web Page.** Embedded in the Surrey County Council web site is the national Roadworks.org site which gives details on road works in the area. The copied screen shot here showing the works in question.



- 2.9 Southern Gas Networks Web Page.** SGN created a dedicated web page accessible via their main website which included details of the works, and included a link to the more detailed information sheet for those not in receipt of this document.



- 2.10 Woking Borough Council Web Page.** From information supplied via the street works Information Sheet, Woking Borough Council supported the publicity drive with information on their own web site



3. FURTHER INFORMATION:

- 3.1 Due to the Old Woking Road being a strategic road on the day of the Ride 100, works could not start until after this event however the advantages of undertaking works in the school vacation periods are well known and with the works commencing on the 3rd of August a “soft” start up to the project was possible.
- 3.2 It was decided to start the works at the Sheerwater Road end of the project extents due to the necessity for a three way temporary traffic signal system at this junction with the aim of being away from this junction by the time the adjacent Marist School returned from the summer break.
- 3.3 To assist with traffic movements on the main Old Woking Road, various side road junctions will be closed where alternative access is available. This enables less disruptive two way traffic signals to be used in place of multi way signals.
- 3.4 Working hours of 07:00 to 19:00 weekdays, 09:00 to 17:00 on Saturdays and 09:00 to 13:00 on Sundays were agreed with SGN to progress the project. 24 hour working was not considered on Environmental Health and Health (noise and light pollution) and Health and Safety grounds.
- 3.5 Works will be lifted as of the 1st of December as this represents the start of the pre Christmas embargo period where works are limited in the build up to the festive season to assist local commerce. A recommencement date has yet to be agreed however it is likely that this will be Monday the 4th of January.

4. CONCLUSION:

- 4.1 In contrast to other typical similar scenarios, one pre event customer enquiry was received regarding these works and at the time of writing no further enquiries or complaints have been received.
- 4.2 Publicity could not have been achieved without the level of cooperation seen from Southern Gas Networks
- 4.3 Principles learnt from this project will wherever possible be carried over to future similar projects and opportunities for further enhancement explored particularly the use of social and local media.

5. ADDITIONAL COMMENT:

- 5.1 Advantage was taken of the traffic management layout set up by SGN to enable Thames Water to undertake a manhole repair, sharing the same works site and TM.

Contact Officer:

Kevin Orledge, Street Works Manager
0300 200 1003

Consulted:

Not Applicable

Annexes:

Appendix A	Information Sheet
Appendix B	SGN Letter
Appendix C	SGN Leaflet
Appendix D	Press Release
Appendix E	Get Surrey Content

Sources/background papers:

Not Applicable
