



NJUG CASE STUDY

CASE STUDY 71: City of London Corporation- Communal Entry Chambers & Early Installation Initiative

Winner of the NJUG 2013 Partnership Award

The National Joint Utilities Group (NJUG) is the UK industry association representing utilities solely on street works issues. The 38 utility companies and 18 contractors¹ we represent are major contributors to economic growth and work to deliver gas, electricity, water and telecommunications to both individual consumers and UK plc.

NJUG members need to continue to drive forward further improvements. We have therefore developed the NJUG Vision for Street Works, which revolves around six main principles:

1. Safety is the number one priority
2. Utilities deliver consistent high quality
3. Utilities work together and in partnership with local authorities and contractors to minimise disruption
4. Utilities keep the public informed on all aspects of works
5. Utilities maximise the use of sustainable methods and materials
6. Damage to the underground assets is avoided

This case study is an example of the street works sector delivering on these principles and turning the vision into reality.

Overview

The City of London Corporation (the Local Authority for the Square Mile) has promoted the use of “Communal Entry Chambers” to enable “early Installation” of telecoms services into new City office developments. The initiative has encouraged greater collaboration between the City of London Corporation, telecoms providers and developers, leading to faster, more co-ordinated installation of telecoms services, **avoiding disruption to vehicle and pedestrian movement**, which throughout 2013, **will have saved a total of 396 days working in the public highway in the City of London.**

Case Study

Background

Over 120 new office developments are planned for construction throughout the next 10 years within the Square Mile, with an average of 3 businesses occupying each office building. Most businesses in the City of London commonly have 2-3 separate telecoms networks installed for resilience purposes, which are the last services to be installed into new developments. This has invariably led to several telecoms operators excavating newly landscaped areas surrounding new developments, often one after another on an ad hoc basis to connect their services.

Communal Entry Chambers

Working alongside developers of new offices, the City of London Corporation has promoted the use of “Communal Entry Chambers”, which are installed in the public highway to provide **quick and easy access for “early Installation” of telecoms services** into new City offices. The chambers allow **greater co-**



¹NJUG's current members are Energy Networks Association (representing electricity and gas), Water UK (representing all water and wastewater companies), National Grid, Openreach, and Virgin Media. Our associate members are Clancy Docwra, Skanska, Balfour Beatty, Carillion, First Intervention, Laing O'Rourke, Compass, AMEC, Enterprise, Morrison Utility Services, Fastflow Pipeline Services, Kier Group, CLC Ltd, PJ Keary, Murphy Ltd, Murphy Group, Morgan Sindall and SQS. Including members through trade associations, NJUG represents thirty-eight utility companies, eighteen utility contractors.

ordination of telecoms connections to new developments, and to reduce the number of telecoms provider's manholes in the street.

The City of London Corporation has amended its planning powers (section 106) to require developers to fund the building of communal entry chambers under the public highway to supply new developments. Chambers are funded, owned, and maintained by the developer, under a section 50 highways licence – *“private apparatus under a public street”*, and on-going access is managed by the building owner.

Where chambers cannot be provided due to cable congestion in the highway, developers have provided “sleeved ducts” to which providers can connect.

The City of London Corporation has gained agreement from the largest tier-1 telecoms providers in the Square Mile (BT Openreach, EU Networks, COLT, Level 3, Vodafone, Geo, Verizon and Zayo) for them to install their services into new developments via “Communal Entry Chambers”, in advance of customers signing orders for new services and occupying the building.

Results

The initiative allows the City of London Corporation **greater ability to co-ordinate installation works** to new office developments, and **avoids the need to disturb newly paved areas around new developments, reducing disruption to public** as all works must be undertaken using the same road closure / permit.



Businesses taking space in new offices also benefit from, **faster and more efficient installation of telecoms services**, which will be pre-provisioned for when they move into the building, and which adds to the marketability of the new development.

Collaboration with developers and telecoms providers

- The most challenging element of the “Communal Entry Chambers and Early Installation Initiative” was securing the commitment of telecoms providers to install their plant in a co-ordinated fashion using communal infrastructure, instead of using their own manholes and seeking their own access arrangements to new developments.

- To overcome this, the City of London Corporation held a number of round table meetings with telecoms providers and developers, outlining the benefits of the initiative and that it would provide a first mover advantage to those telecoms providers who could offer their services to businesses occupying the new office space.

- The City of London Corporation continues to meet with developers of forthcoming developments to discuss and agree proposed locations of communal entry chambers with telecoms providers and to agree likely timescales for works.

Number of days saved

By the end of 2013, 11 new office developments in the City of London have participated in the “Communal Entry Chamber and Early Installation Initiative”, which has **saved approximately 396 days working in the public highway**, and **avoided significant disruption from street works**.

“The “Communal Entry Chambers and Early Installation Initiative” has been invaluable in ensuring rapid connection of telecoms services into the 20 Fenchurch St development [...] which has helped to avoid disruption to vehicles, pedestrians and cyclists, and coordinated all installation works”.

Andrew Heath-Richardson, Canary Wharf Group Ltd

