

Year 17 | April 2013

Annual report

Creating and caring for safe, efficient highways

A30/A35

Connect
roads

Welcome

WE ARE CURRENTLY IN THE MID-TERM OF OUR 30 YEAR ROAD MAINTENANCE CONCESSION CONTRACT WITH THE HIGHWAYS AGENCY, AND REMAIN PLEASED TO REPORT ANOTHER SUCCESSFUL YEAR OF OPERATION.

Major roads operation and maintenance is surprisingly dynamic, with rarely two days being quite the same. New operating challenges and performance requirements are never too far away, which means there is no room for complacency, even with some 17 years of local knowledge. This is why Connect Roads remains committed to innovative ways to seek continuous improvement.

In this report we highlight some of the initiatives which we have implemented to enhance our service, in a safe and sustainable manner, with due regard to the diverse needs of our client (the Highways Agency) and our customers, the road users and affected residents.

Should you have any comments about this report or wish to discuss other issues, please do not hesitate to contact us at the address found on the back cover.

We hope you enjoy the read.

Andy Dean
Regional Manager

In partnership with



OUR PROJECTS

CONNECTING THE UK

A30/A35

A30 Opening date

1st February 2000

A35 Opening date

16th April 1999

Length

102km



About us

CONNECT ROADS OPERATES AND MAINTAINS THE A30 FROM THE M5 JUNCTION 29 TO THE EASTERN END OF HONITON BYPASS AND THE A35 FROM HONITON TO BERE REGIS.

The concession commenced on 1st October 1996 as part of the Government's Private Finance Initiative (PFI). The contract runs until 2026 and has included the construction of the A30 Exeter to Honiton Improvement and the A35 Tolpuddle/Puddletown Bypass.

The contract was let by the Highways Agency, on behalf of the Secretary of State, the highway authority for the route. In partnership with our maintaining agent contractor, South West Highways and Balfour Beatty (SWH/BBjv), Connect Roads undertakes

all the road maintenance requirements and working with its client, the Highways Agency, identifies and delivers network improvements focusing on road user and road worker safety, journey time reliability and road user information.



Did you know?

EAST TO WEST

The A30/A35 between Exeter and Bere Regis is one of the few east to west trunk road routes in the south of the UK. Traffic volumes vary hugely throughout the year, with peaks during annual holiday periods.

The number of cars using the route varies from approx 40 million vehicle kilometres during the winter months, to over 60 million in the summer months, peaking at 64 million vehicle kilometres in August. That's a lot of potential visitors to the South West!





Continuous improvement

ACCESS TO OLYMPIC SAILING

Last year's Olympic Games went off without a hitch and Connect played its part in ensuring the smooth running of one of the traditional sporting disciplines. Weymouth was the venue for the sailing competitions and the A35 around Dorchester was the main access to the event.

In the two week period of the sailing competition there was little congestion on the A35 which was a testament to the forward planning and organisation of the event.

In advance of the Games, Connect had discussions with the Highways Agency to identify ways of working and plan for contingency arrangements to ensure the route remained congestion free for the expected visitors. Temporary park and ride sites, capable of holding 9,500 vehicles, were established adjacent to the A35 at Stinsford Road and Weymouth Road roundabouts. Our contingency plans included assuring adequate staffing levels for the competition fortnight, placing

additional signage and traffic management equipment in temporary stores close to the predicted 'pinch points'. Plans also included daily telephone conferences with all relevant stakeholders to discuss and review network intelligence that may have had an affect on the A35 and surrounding roads.



Proactive management

ROAD CLOSURE SUCCESS FOR SAFETY OF WORKERS

Pursuant of Connect's road maintenance strategy, a full 36 hour closure of the A35 in May 2012 was agreed with the Highways Agency to undertake specialist surface treatment of the carriageway.

Whilst closure of a trunk road for general highway maintenance is not common, especially during the day, the treatment type to be used required the works to be undertaken during daylight hours. For the road workers on the A35, closure of the road gave an enhanced safety benefit when considering the escalating levels of road worker abuse at conventional traffic control. The opportunity was therefore taken to carry out as many maintenance activities as possible whilst the closure was in place, in line with Connect's Zero Harm and the Highways Agency's Aiming for Zero health and safety strategies.

The closure involved a 36 hour possession of 13.8km of the A35 single carriageway, within which:

- 18 different maintenance activities were undertaken.
- Six different sub-contractors were used.
- Over 100 operatives were employed.
- Over 6,500 man/hours of work were recorded.

The benefits of the road closure included:

- Safety of the work force as the closure reduced the requirement for traffic management installations by 80%.
- Safety of the road user by eliminating the key risk of the public's interface with road works.
- An increase in productivity as there was increased working time available.
- A noticeable community spirit with co-operation from local people utilising the road closure as a property maintenance opportunity.

Due to its success, a similar road closure was repeated in May 2013. Two open days were held and over 25,000 letters were delivered to residents along the affected part of the route to advise them of these intentions.



Case Study

IMPROVING THE ARRESTER BEDS

To prevent drivers getting mistakenly stranded in gravel beds, a great idea has been commissioned to create escape lanes for errant vehicles.

The A35 through Devon and Dorset is a narrow (in parts), winding single carriageway road. At Charmouth roundabout and at the east bound approach to the village of Chideock there are three 'escape lanes' for vehicles which find it difficult to stop due to brake failure.

One issue with the arrester beds within these escape lanes is that drivers who are not in difficulty have sometimes assumed these pull-off areas to be solid and available to park off the main carriageway, only to find that they become stuck in the gravel beds.

An operative from our maintenance contractor suggested we form ridges across the loose stone in the beds and spray the tops of the ridges with yellow paint, making it clear these are not a place to park. This has worked extremely well, with a marked reduction in vehicles becoming stranded unnecessarily.

The operative received a commendation for his suggestion and the innovation was submitted to a national safety award event, which received a Highly Commended award.



Case Study

ASSISTING IN THE COMMUNITY –

FLOODING AT WINTERBOURNE ABBAS

In July 2012, an intense rain storm caused the A35 through Nine Stones and Winterbourne Abbas to flood requiring some immediate and longer-term actions from the team.

The rainfall caused the water table in the Winterbourne Abbas area to raise by some ten metres in a very short space of time, flooding houses, businesses and the road, resulting in the A35 having to remain closed for eight days.

Our maintenance contractor had road workers on site throughout the period of the closure manning the road closure points, clearing ditches and drains overwhelmed by flood debris and providing sand bags to assist the home owners to reduce the flooding to their properties.

After the flooding subsided, Connect attended a number of meetings with Dorset CC as Flood Authority, the Environment Agency and the Highway's Agency to look at further practical measures which could be undertaken. One such measure is to develop a coherent maintenance strategy for the Winterbourne River that passes through the village, where currently the maintenance is a joint responsibility between the adjacent landowners under ancient riparian rights. Connect has been asked by the Highways Agency to propose a potential maintenance strategy of the Leat that carries the river through the village alongside the A35. Other potential medium and longer-term measures have also been identified.



Zero Harm

CCTV AT ROAD WORKS

CCTV cameras are hoping to improve motorist behaviour and safety at traffic management for road works.

One of the biggest issues faced by our road workers undertaking traffic management is the growing number of motorists who ignore the advance signage of works ahead and drive through the works area regardless of the risk to the road worker and themselves. At times this includes both verbal and physical abuse of our people and is becoming a serious social issue.

In order to provide some additional protection to our workforce, Connect has commissioned CCTV lapel cameras to record such events which can be passed to the police for further action, as deemed appropriate.

Road users will be aware via signing that CCTV cameras are in use. It is hoped that this will encourage respect for our road works and reduce the number of incidents.

A pilot trial of the initiative is planned during 2013.

ZERO HARM
MAKE SAFETY PERSONAL

Road Safety Week

THE BRAKE CHARITY ROAD SAFETY WEEK IS AN EVENT WHICH CONNECT ROADS SUPPORTS, WITH A PARTICULAR SLANT TOWARDS ROAD WORKER ROAD SAFETY.

In 2012 we held events at all five of our road concessions for the third year running. These events spanned the length of the UK from Dorset in the South West to Glasgow in Scotland. We incorporated road safety issues into each event that were relevant to the audience; for example safe crossing at primary schools and navigating roundabouts.

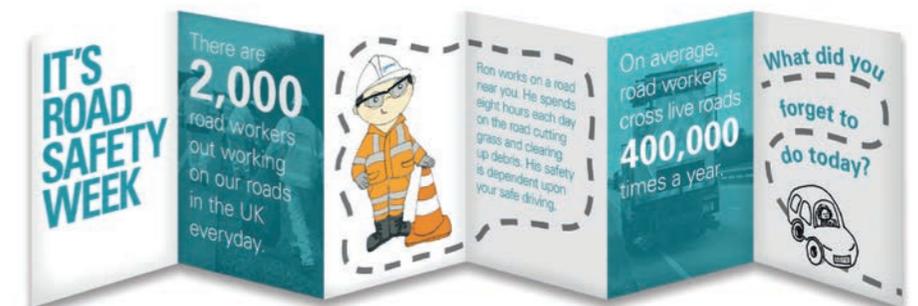
The participation of our operatives added real value to the events as the public were

able to put a face to the person in the hi-vis jacket and ask them questions about the work they do. We also had attendance from the local police and fire services helping to convey the importance of our message.

In order to promote Road Safety Week on the A30/A35, Connect visited the Winterbourne Abbas Primary School, which lies adjacent to the A35. The school no longer has a lollipop lady. Therefore,

informing the children about road safety is an important priority. A local police officer joined the team to assist in educating pupils on the safe way to cross a road.

The team also visited Tesco in Dorchester which was busy with Christmas shoppers. Ice-scrappers and fridge magnets were given to passers-by to encourage them to think about the safety of the road worker when they are using the roads.



Sustainability

SIGN LIGHTING IMPROVEMENTS

As part of the initiative to reduce the A30/A35 carbon footprint, Connect has funded the installation of ambient light-level sensors on all sign lights to ensure they are only lit when required.

Historically, lights used to illuminate road signs have remained lit 24 hours a day, 365 days a year, which is no longer considered appropriate in the context of sustainability.

This work is nearly complete, reducing the amount of carbon produced as part of the route.



Spotlight on...

ANDY CHICK

ANDY CHICK IS THE SENIOR TECHNICIAN ON THE A30/A35

How long have you worked on the A30/A35?

I've worked on the A30/A35 since November 1999. I came here for two weeks to help out and have been here ever since. My role as senior technician involves dealing with works packages, inspections, completion of works and the incident database, site visits, site inductions and responding to/meeting members of the public.

What do you do in your spare time?

In my spare time I breed, judge and exhibit budgerigars and play golf when I have the time. I love to watch horse racing as I have a brood mare in Ireland who is due to have her second foal. This will be her second foal by 'Mr Dinos' the Ascot Gold Cup Winner 2003 (can't wait for when they become racing age!!!). I have three grandchildren who I love to spend a lot of my free time with.



What's your favourite part of the role?

My favourite part of the role is putting together a works package and seeing it carried through from beginning to when the job has been completed, I find this very satisfying.

And what's life like in the office?

The A30/A35 team are a friendly bunch of people to work with.

So who makes the best cuppa?

Tracey likes to think she makes the best cuppa but I must say I score quite highly myself!

Planned major maintenance

THIS LIST IDENTIFIES THE AREAS TO BE TREATED UNDER THE 2013/14 PERIODIC WORKS PROGRAMME. THE MONTHS SHOWN FOR TREATMENT ARE AN INITIAL TARGET AND MAY BE SUBJECT TO CHANGE.

2013-2014

LOCATION	DESCRIPTION	EXPECTED COMPLETION
A30 Honiton Bypass East Bound	Patching	June 2013
A35 Monkton Road	Resurfacing	Autumn 2013
A35 Axminster to Bridport	Surface treatment works, patching, road stud and road marking replacement	May 2013
A35 Sea Road South, Bridport	Patching	July 2013
A35 Vinney Cross	Patching	July 2013
A35 Dorchester Bypass	Patching	July 2013
A35 Stinsford to Cuckoo Lane	Patching	July 2013
A35 Troy Town to Tolpuddle Ball	Patching	July 2013



Performance monitoring

VARIOUS PERFORMANCE INDICATORS ARE REPORTED TO OUR CLIENT AS FOLLOWS:

CUSTOMER SATISFACTION			
	Number	Target	Actual
Number of enquiries and complaints received in year	245	n/a	n/a
Number of the above which were complaints	7	n/a	n/a
Number of the above complaints that required corrective action	3	n/a	n/a
Number of complaints requiring corrective action that were closed within 15 working days	3	95%	100%

RESPONSE TO EMERGENCY INCIDENTS			
	Number	Target	Actual
Emergency incidents for which an immediate response was required in year	107	n/a	n/a
Number of deployments achieved within target response time in year	107	100%	100%
Rolling 12 month average response time achieved for call-outs in year		40 mins	21 mins

REACTIVE MAINTENANCE*		
	Target	Actual
Category one 24 hour defects made safe/repared within 24 hours	100%	100%
Category one 7 day defects repaired within 7 days	100%	100%
Category one 28 day defects repaired within 28 days	100%	100%
Average repair time for Category one 7 day defects	5 days	4.8 days
Category two street lighting outages fixed within target time	100%	100%

NETWORK AVAILABILITY*		
	Target	Actual
Percentage of network available to road user – peak time	98.5%	99.9%
Percentage of network available to road user – off peak	98.0%	99.8%
Percentage of network available to road user – night time	98.0%	99.4%

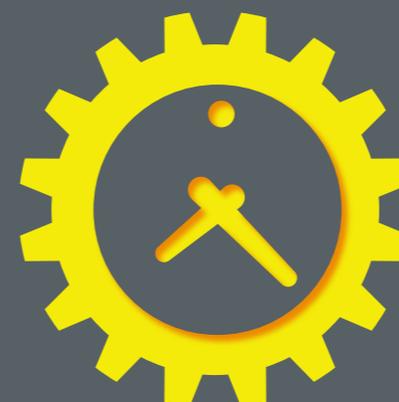
*12 month average



100%
COMPLAINTS THAT
WERE CLOSED WITHIN
15 WORKING DAYS



100%
CALL-OUTS REACHED
IN TIME



100%
CATEGORY ONE DEFECTS
REPAIRED IN 7 DAY
RESPONSE TIME



100%
CATEGORY ONE DEFECTS
REPAIRED IN 28 DAY
RESPONSE TIME

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