



Victoria Embankment

Cadent Gas Lane Rental Industry
Publication

Introduction

In November 2016 a gas escape was reported on Victoria Embankment. The large diameter, medium pressure main lies 3 metres under the surface of the Cycle Superhighway East/West and required excavation to gain access to the pipe and expedite a repair. This required a deep excavation and the technical engineering works were expected to take significant time and cause considerable disruption on a busy London road.



The Project

When an emergency gas escape is reported, due to the risk to life and property, time is critical in establishing the cause and repairing the leak. This urgent task is safety focussed with efforts concentrated on ensuring legislative requirements are met and customer disruption is kept to a minimum. Within this fast paced operation a wider view of alternative ways of working will be reviewed however, due to the regulated cost demands, the high value options are normally discounted.

Given the level of traffic, special measures were agreed to ensure the impacts to cyclists and traffic were minimised. Instead of asking cyclists to dismount and use the footway two sections of segregation island were removed in order to give access to a temporary cycleway segregated in lane one.

To avoid subsequent impacts to traffic arising from the loss of a lane, further enabling works were carried out to provide and reline narrower lanes, maintaining the current number of running lanes. It was agreed to provide for the presence of enforcement officers and a traffic order to reduce the speed limit to 20mph past the works.



Outcomes

The objective of the project was to maintain traffic flows. By carrying out the works in this fashion all lanes of traffic were maintained, as well as cyclists, ensuring the best possible outcome for all concerned. Positive public feedback was also received on social media, demonstrating the success of the project.

Lessons Learnt

Collaborating with TfL and involving them at an early stage of works, despite the urgent nature of this particular incident, meant that both parties could work together and holistically approach the task. This resulted in a more successful outcome for all stakeholders, particularly cycle and road users in reducing congestion.

Social media has the potential to be a good tool when used to communicate positive steps taken to improve roadworks and has the ability to change public perception.



Conclusion/ Recommendations

The success of this project is a result of early collaboration between Cadent Gas and TfL which included joint site visits and both having a clear understanding of the positive consequences if both proceeded together using the special measures available. By encouraging the use of extraordinary measures, TfL are incentivising works promoters to further consider options that would usually be deemed out of scope economically.

Good working relationships between utility companies and highway authorities ensure that when incidents such as this occur, specialist teams within both can mobilise swiftly, share knowledge and expertise and ultimately keep London moving.



TfL Lane Rental Scheme

Optimising customer journeys through the delivery of safer, innovative and sustainable roadworks



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