TexPrint helps Coventry to successfully deliver city-wide 20mph Zone

Coventry is the second largest city in the West Midlands, with a population of more than 345,385. Located at the very heart of England, the city is a gateway to a region steeped in history from cathedrals and castles to Shakespeare and Godiva.

Over recent years, the city has been transformed through an ambitious and highly successful series of public realm schemes aimed at improving road systems and the safety of the network in strategic areas. To promote a safer road system, Coventry was the first major city in the UK to be designated a 20mph zone.
The Challenge

Coventry City Council required an innovative road marking or surface engineering solution that would contribute to the "low speed environment" of the new spaces by enforcing 20mph speed limits in a clear and effective manner. It was important that a strong visual signal was provided to drivers when entering these zones through the use of road markings alone. The council also wanted to ensure that the surfacing solution worked in harmony with adjoining high quality paving materials whilst having the resilience and durability to handle high volumes of traffic over long periods.

The Solution

After evaluating all available solutions, Coventry City Council specified TexPrint Roundels for the 20mph zones. Formulated and manufactured by Hitex Traffic Safety and installed by L&R Roadlines, both part of Hitex International Group, this solution comprises a thermoplastic speed table formed from TexPrint decorative embossed surfacing, with reflectorized HiBrite reflective road marking material inlaid into the surface to form the roundels. The unique installation process ensures markings will not wear, crack or fade, and provides consistently high levels of retroreflectivity for optimum safety, particularly in low light conditions.

The decorative surface of the finished installation delivers a clear visual and sensory message to the road user. When laid on a raised speed table, the roundel effectively combines two traffic calming measures in a single engineering solution. In addition, because it mimics the attractive appearance of traditional brick setts, the TexPrint system offered multiple design options to enhance the widened footways and newly installed shared pedestrian areas.

A 12-month study conducted following the installation of the TexPrint 20mph roundels as part of the overall speed reduction scheme showed a reduction of accidents in Coventry. According to statistics collected by the emergency services, there had been 26 serious injuries in the five years before the "shared space" was installed at the Gosford Street junction. Following the introduction of the new measures, that number drastically fell to just 3. Further to this, a council report focusing on the Gosford Street "shared spaces" confirmed that motorists were observing the 20mph limits effectively. Councillor Lindsley Harvard, cabinet member for city services at Coventry City Council, said: “What we’ve noticed from the statistics is that collisions have gone down, recorded injury accidents have gone down, average speeds have gone down from 21.5 mph to 18.5 mph.”

TexPrint roundels provide a unique solution for local authorities looking for a balance of decorative surfacing and safety performance. The continuous surface eliminates the problem of moving setts, which often leads to dangerous trip hazards, water ingress and growth of weeds and vegetation. It also removes the costly maintenance requirements associated with traditional decorative setts.

Coventry City Council has built a highly successful partnership with L&R Roadlines, which includes working together on a number of innovative projects such as this. “We have found L&R Roadlines to be very competitive on tenders, flexible on timescales and the quality of the work is very high. I am sure we will continue this working relationship and recommend the company to others,” added Chris Young, Senior Project Manager at Coventry City Council.

“...The public realm spaces are, by their nature, in very open areas with high pedestrian counts. TexPrint allows the council to provide a clear visual delineation without compromising the high quality finish of the public realms. The use of roundels clearly indicates to users that they have entered the 20mph zone.”

Hakan Bikim
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