

## CASE STUDY Arcadis – June 2023- Sept 2023 Birmingham Highways – Expect Respect Campaign

### Introduction

Over the last three years Arcadis have been a lead partner on the Birmingham Highways Limited (BHL) Interim Works Programme (IWP). This was an integrated team known as the Integrated Programme Alliance (IPA) comprising Birmingham City Council, BHL, Arcadis, Kier, Tarmac, WJ and HTM assembled to deliver £130m of renewals work to the city's highways infrastructure. During the period, over 465 incidents of physical and verbal abuse had been reported on the contract. We felt this was totally unacceptable and Arcadis as HSW Lead proposed that we instigate a campaign to raise awareness and look to reduce the number of incidents. The Expect Respect Campaign resulted.



### Overview

As Chair of the IWP HSW T&F Group, Arcadis challenged the group to drive up standards and deliver HSW improvements. To do this we held weekly meetings where we analysed our near misses. This identified a trend toward an increasing number of roadworker abuse incidents and the exasperation and negative impact this was having on the workforce.

We challenged the group to formulate a roadworker abuse campaign, to really highlight the challenges that were being faced. Initially we had some resistance in terms of 'what would it achieve' and 'how would we do it', but we highlighted the potential benefits a successful campaign could bring, which won the group over. Our aim was to improve the way that abuse was reported, handled, and escalated, and get the message out to the wider Birmingham public to demonstrate how critical our workforce was to Birmingham.

We wanted all our partners to align as responsible employers tackling the problems our roadworkers were facing.



### Challenges

In setting up the campaign we faced a number of challenges:

- Ensuring the workforce engaged early and throughout.
- That all partners aligned on what we were trying to achieve – i.e. raising public awareness.
- Ensuring the Client (in this case the City Council) had signed off the campaign well in advance.
- Providing clarity with media when initially engaging on the purpose of the campaign and who would be involved.



BHL Lead Michael Murray said "Dave Pugh chaired and was central to the H&S Task and Finish group throughout the IWP. Arcadis drove up standards across the integrated team and instigated the Expect Respect campaign along with our IWP partners. This highlighted the unacceptable verbal and physical abuse that our workforce was facing and continue to face in some instances. Led by Dave, the media campaign (and wider Expect Respect strategy) was put together by the integrated team and really raised awareness around Birmingham and the West Midlands and is now likely to be used in a wider context further afield. We have high hopes that over a long period this will result in reduced severity and occurrence of roadworker abuse"

## Action Taken



- Arcadis as Chair of the T&F Group instigated the development of the Expect Respect campaign and lobbied Senior Management from the various organisations to ensure that we had the full support of each organisation. This was a truly collaborative campaign involving the whole integrated team.
- We analysed the near miss data to fully understand the issues our workforce were experiencing.
- Arcadis obtained support from the Client (BHL) who provided funding to deliver advertising and marketing.
- Arcadis set out the clear aspirations to ensure that all partners aligned on what we were trying to achieve – i.e. supporting the wellbeing of the staff, the raising of awareness of the issues to the wider public through the media, highlighting the importance of the work our team was delivering, and sharing the negative impact the abuse was having on staff.
- As a result, the IWP Partners, led by the Arcadis and the Principal Contractor undertook 5 online 1 to 1 interviews with the integrated team's site-based staff to highlight the serious nature of the incidents taking place and the effect this was having on the workforce. These were issued-over a 6-week period during the summer to maximise the impact.
- We were able to highlight that:
  - Abusing our workforce was a criminal offence. That we would not tolerate abuse of any form and would provide evidence and escalate incidents to the relevant authorities.
  - Our people did not deserve to be abused. That they were carrying out their job and that closing a road was for the safety of them and the public.
  - That driving through a road closure was irresponsible and an unsafe act, putting the lives of many people in danger.
  - That drivers should help roadworkers to do their job safely by driving carefully through or past a closure, or by following the diversion route when needed.
  - That the role of a roadworker is an important job. Without roadworkers our roads wouldn't get fixed.
- We used the feedback to improve our reporting processes and educate our workforce.

## Results



- We received extensive media coverage across the West Midlands including through newspapers, local television and radio Stations.
- We raised the profile of the work that was being undertaken with the local communities.
- We involved local Councillors and Politicians who provided greater support to the work we were doing.
- We gave the Workforce greater confidence to report issues and raise areas of concern.
- We provided members of the public with a greater insight into the problems experienced by our workforce.
- We were able to provide a human face to the work that was being delivered.
- We reduced the number of serious incidents being reported.
- We achieved very positive feedback from the Workforce in the surveys we undertook (See Fig 2.).
- We have shared the initiative across our partner organisations and with other industry bodies, including the Highways Safety Hub, Transport for London and the Northamptonshire Waste Team, to enable them to launch similar initiatives (See Fig 2).



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home  
safe  
and well



Figure 1 Expect Respect Presentation available on request

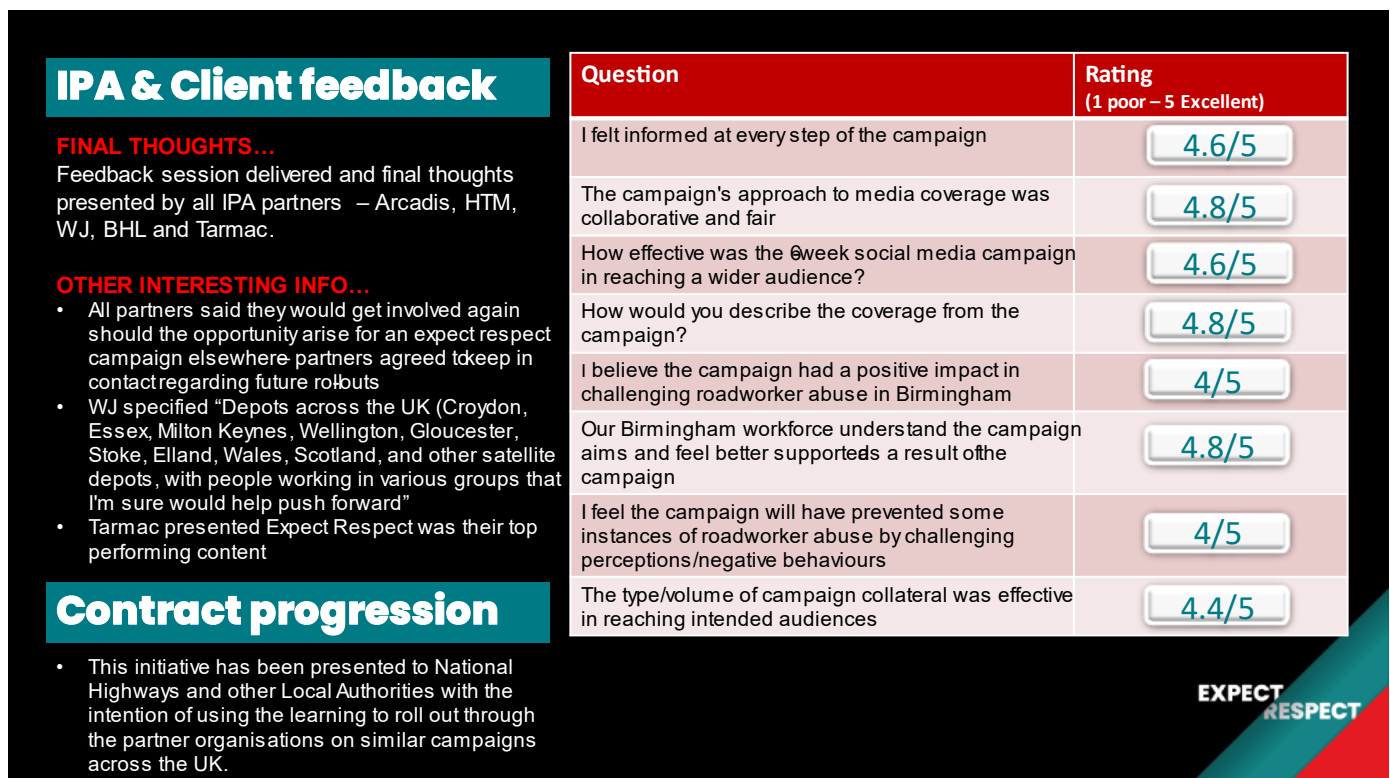


Figure 2 Campaign Outputs