



## **A390 Truro: Improving the Entrance to the City Maiden Green, Truro, Cornwall, UK**

**Client: Cornwall Council / Contractor: Cormac Solutions Limited**

### **BIG Biodiversity Challenge Award Category: *Client-Led Project Award***

#### **Project overview**

This Public Realm Project follows, and enhances, the £10M infrastructure project to improve the entrance to the City of Truro. It fully utilises previous grassed landscape areas to improve the biodiversity of the area in this high profile location in Cornwall's capital.

#### **What were the biodiversity conditions on site, prior to the enhancement?**

Prior to the enhancement project the local environment and street scene was one of an urban infrastructure corridor; - bland grass verges and central reservations cried out for a greener approach. Cornwall Council, whilst addressing the pressures of road capacity, traffic engineering and multi-modal infrastructure; decided to take an opportunity to increase the visual quality of this 3.9Km route. The Council has clear policy drivers. Cornwall Council's 2015 Environment Growth Strategy has already identified that protection of the environment on its own is insufficient but requires investment and growth in the environment of Cornwall. This is one such investment.

#### **What were the reasons behind this project ?**

Truro is undergoing a period of growth with an established approach to provide 4,500 new homes and 3000 new jobs by 2030. This is aimed at reducing the 18,000 daily commutes and the associated traffic congestion in the morning and evening peaks. Park and Ride facilities have been developed at two gateway locations to the city, the most established site being on the Threemilestone to Maiden Green A390 corridor. That site has been landscaped to a high degree, but it was seen that the entry experience to the city required visual improvement; a concept supported by the local community.



*Bee Friendly Planting – Maiden Green  
Roundabout - Truro College*



*Improving Biodiversity and visual quality*

### What were the biodiversity measures taken?

Cornwall Council commissioned its in-house Landscape Architect for design options to be drawn up using both hard and soft landscaping to form a strategic plan on the A390 corridor into the City. The Council, the residents of the city and students of the adjacent Truro College are very aware of the need to restore natural habitat to improve biodiversity and increase the richness of plant species.

The 10.97ha Langarth Park and Ride Scheme, situated at the Threemilestone roundabout, has 1.3ha of native woodland and shrub areas and 2.26ha of new meadow. It is an interesting fact that the change of land use from agriculture to urban infrastructure has increased biodiversity a remarkable seven fold, using the Defra biodiversity offsetting process, from 5.22 to 37.68 biodiversity units. It has over three times more soft landscaping than similar sites in the South West, inspiring millions of visitors to respect the environmental quality of Cornwall's landscape and this theme will now continue into the City approach road. Two main roundabouts on the route, at Threemilestone and Maiden Green became the subject of tree and shrub planting with the central reservation between the two and onto the Treliske roundabout having the existing grass replaced by wildflower meadow. At Treliske, the junction to the Royal Cornwall Hospital and Knowledge Spa training facility; specific tree planting has been carried out and is having an immediate visual effect. Planting includes bee-friendly species and planting has been selected for its appropriateness to the local environment.

New habitat areas have been created, contributing to Cornwall's Biodiversity Action Plan and the green infrastructure aims of the Cornwall Biodiversity Supplementary Planning Document supported by; Natural England, Cornwall Wildlife Trust, The RSPB, Buglife, The Woodland Trust and the Environment Agency. As the project develops than biodiversity will increase further.



*Cherry Trees and ground preparation*



*Treliske Roundabout and Knowledge Spa*

### Further information

The project required a high level of health and safety, risk assessment and work method applications. The project needed to connect the City closer to the environment, but with regard to its sustainability. The subsequent maintenance will be looked after by Truro City Council and the project includes the installation of a specific maintenance bay to assist this. The bee-friendly species planted include:- *Virburnum Opulus*, *Weigela 'Florida Variegata'*, *Cytisus scoparius 'Burkwoodii'*, *Skimmia Japonica*, *Lonicera periclymenum serotina*, *Calluna Vulgaris 'Firefly'*, *Erica Cinerea 'Velvet Night'*, *Lavender*, *Calluna vulgaris 'Mullion'*, *Nepeta cataria*, *Borago officinalis*, *Calluna vulgaris 'Sunset'*, *Prunus Umineko*, *Prunus cerasifera 'Crimson Point'*.

Monitoring and evaluation will be carried out by Truro City Council as part of their work to maintain this new asset. Additionally, in this high profile location, members of the travelling public can be relied on to give feedback and make comments and suggestions on a regular basis. Indeed early feedback has already given a positive response to the sensitive nature of the works and the environmental objectives of the project.

An interesting side to this project was in dealing with the unexpected in the world of nature! Shortly after the completion of the landscaping work a multitude of comments were received from residents praising the lively and vibrant colours of the flowering plants. This was somewhat unexpected and investigations proved that this was caused by oilseed rape seeds having blown in from neighbouring farmland – however it was a great start to the public perception of this work!



*Before: Bland Grass Verges and central reservation*



*After: A colourful start to the project!*



## **Project Team**

Client/Funder; Cornwall Council: Matt Philips

Design Team: Landscape Architect: Agnieszka Gwizdz CMLI DipLA DipHort:

Project Manager Adam Warden

Contracting Team: Cormac Contracting Limited: James Mylod and K Hill  
and Partners Limited.

## **What was the motivation for carrying out the enhancement?**

The motivation came from a wide source of users of the entrance to Truro; the community and Cornwall Councillors all felt that the recently improved transport corridor should take the opportunity to enhance the local landscape and environment.