



City of London submission for NJUG Partnership Award 2013

“Communal Entry Chambers & Early Installation Initiative”

Overview

The City of London Corporation (the Local Authority for the Square Mile) has promoted the use of “Communal Entry Chambers” to enable “Early Installation” of telecoms services into new City office developments. The initiative has encouraged greater collaboration between the City of London Corporation, telecoms providers and developers, leading to faster, more coordinated installation of telecoms services, **avoiding disruption to vehicle and pedestrian movement**, which throughout 2013, **will have saved a total of 396 days working in the public highway in the City of London.**

Background

- There are 12 “tier 1” telecoms providers offering their services to businesses in the City of London, each with their own independent fibre network in the ground.
- Over 120 new office developments are planned for construction throughout the next 10 years within the Square Mile, with an average of 3 businesses occupying each office building. Many City offices are multi occupied with in excess of 10 businesses in individual properties.
- Most businesses in the City of London commonly have 2-3 separate telecoms networks installed for resilience purposes.
- Telecoms supplies are the last services to be installed into new developments, and generally occur when the customer signs an order with any one of the 12 providers. This has invariably led to several telecoms operators excavating newly landscaped areas surrounding new developments, one after the other on an ad hoc basis to connect their services.

Communal Entry Chambers

- Working alongside developers of new offices, the City of London Corporation has promoted the use of “Communal Entry Chambers”, which are installed in the public highway to provide **quick and easy access for “Early Installation” of telecoms services** into new City offices. The chambers allow **greater coordination of telecoms connections** to new developments, and to reduce the number of telecoms provider’s manholes in the street.
- The City of London Corporation has amended its planning powers (section 106) to require developers to fund the building of communal entry chambers under the public highway to supply new developments. Chambers are funded, owned, and maintained by the developer, under a section 50 highways licence – *“private apparatus under a public street”*, and on-going access and is managed by the building owner.
- Where chambers cannot be provided due to cable congestion in the highway, developers have provided “sleeved ducts” for providers to connect to.





Early Installation Initiative

- The City of London Corporation has gained agreement from the largest tier-1 telecoms providers in the Square Mile (BT Openreach, EU Networks, COLT, Level 3, Vodafone, Geo, Verizon and Zayo) for them to install their services into new developments via “Communal Entry Chambers”, in advance of customers signing orders for new services and occupying the building. The cost of installing services is met by the telecoms providers.
- The initiative allows the City of London Corporation **greater ability to coordinate installation works** to new office developments, and **avoids the need to disturb newly paved areas around new developments, reducing disruption to highways users** as all works must be undertaken using the same road closure / permit.
- Businesses taking space in new offices also benefit from, **faster and more efficient installation of telecoms services**, which will be pre-provisioned for when they move into the building, and which adds to the marketability of the new development.



Collaboration with developers and telecoms providers

- The most challenging element of the “Communal Entry Chambers and Early Installation Initiative” was securing the involvement of telecoms providers who were not only in competition with each other, but were unaccustomed to having to work together to install their plant in a coordinated fashion using communal infrastructure, instead of using their own manholes and seeking their own access arrangements to new developments.
- To overcome this, the City of London Corporation held a number of round table meetings with telecoms providers and developers, outlining the benefits of the initiative and that it would provide a first mover advantage to those telecoms providers who could offer their services to businesses occupying the new office space. Widespread use of section 58 notices has been instrumental in ensuring that telecoms providers undertake work within agreed timescales.
- The City of London Corporation continues to meet with developers of forthcoming developments to discuss and agree proposed locations of communal entry chambers with telecoms providers and to agree likely timescales for works.

Number of days saved

- By the end of 2013, 11 new office developments in the City of London will have participated in the “Communal Entry Chamber and Early Installation Initiative”, which will have **saved approximately 396 days working in the public highway, and avoided significant disruption from street works.**



Testimonials

“The “Communal Entry Chambers and Early Installation Initiative” has been invaluable in ensuring rapid connection of telecoms services into the 20 Fenchurch St development, ahead of new tenants’ occupation of the building, which has helped to avoid disruption to vehicles, pedestrians and cyclists, and coordinated all installation works ahead of the commencement of new paving works around the building”.

Andrew Heath-Richardson, Canary Wharf Group Ltd

“The bringing together by the City of London Corporation, of the major communication utility providers in a coordinated fashion will provide the best chance of meeting the future requirements of prospective tenants at the new 100 Cheapside scheme. The initiative will ensure the tenant occupation process is much simpler by omitting the need for lengthy pavement closures and minimising unsightly opening up works for the connection purposes.”

R. Pavlos Clifton, GVA Second London Wall

“Hines’ Cannon Place development (completed in 2012), included a large element of new paving and security bollards around the site, which not only complicated service connections, but meant that a section 58 notice had to be served on the streets surrounding the development. Early Installation of telecoms connections using Communal Entry Chambers, installed ahead of the paving and security measures, not only allowed pre-provisioned infrastructure for future tenants, but also avoided future excavating of the newly landscaped areas around the development. This was an example of how Hines and the City of London forward planned the building’s infrastructure to ensure it was in place on time but importantly, also minimised disruption to the public.”

Mark Swetman, Director Hines

The One New Change development has attracted a wide range of companies including international lawyers, financial sector companies and an internet business, all of which needed high bandwidth, resilient data and telecommunication services. Working with the City of London on this initiative enabled us to meet the demands of our occupiers in installing resilient routes for these services, whilst achieving the minimum impact on Cheapside, which was particularly sensitive to the City of London and TFL due to the recently paved footway and carriageway resurfacing. The entry point to the building was several metres below ground, and coordinating all provider’s connections was definitely the best way forward.

Neil Pennell, Head of Engineering & Sustainability, Land Securities PLC

“The City of London’s Early Installation initiative has allowed Vodafone and other telecoms network providers to be able to install plant into new developments ahead of new companies moving in, which not only provides commercial advantages to all, but means less intrusive works in the highway and easier and shorter installation for customers. By encouraging telecoms companies to work alongside each other in installing new plant en masse, the City of London has rationalised what was previously a disordered and cumbersome process.”

Keith O'Brien, NRSWA Legislation Officer, Vodafone

The City of London Corporation is proud to have spearheaded the “Communal Entry Chambers and Early Installation Initiative” which has fostered improved communication, and greatly reduced unnecessary disruption to the public highway around building sites. There is nothing more frustrating for businesses and the general public to see high quality newly landscaped areas of public realm being excavated so soon after their completion, and by working in partnership with telecoms providers and developers, and by fully exercising the City of London Corporation’s powers as Highways and Planning authority for the Square Mile (section 58 / section 106), we have set new standards of acceptability and best practice, in installing telecoms services into new developments in dense urban areas.

Deputy Michael Welbank, Chairman of Planning & Transportation Committee, City of London Corporation



Developments taking part in the Communal Entry Chambers & Early Installation Initiative



One New Change
completed 2011



Cannon Place
completed 2012



20 Fenchurch St
completed 2013



70 Mark Lane
completed 2013



100 Cheapside
completed 2013



Centurion House
completed 2013



6 Bevis Marks
completed 2013



8-10 Moorgate
completed 2013



72 Fore St
completed 2013



67 Lombard St
completed 2013



122 Leadenhall
completed 2014