



# Streettalk

Streetwise Newsletter Edition No. 1

## All go on the wayfinding front!

Wayfinding seems to be very high on the agenda of towns and cities so far this year and Streetwise has seen a brisk start to the year winning three new projects and holding discussions with a number of Local Authorities and Business Improvement Districts who are keen to improve wayfinding in their area.

At the end of 2014 we completed a major project in Plymouth – one that involved 19 on-street monoliths containing both mapping and interpretive content plus a range of information provision at transport points and car parks.

We have made this project the focus of our second edition of Streettalk and we have highlighted some of our initiatives applied in Plymouth that we feel are relevant to many areas.

Feedback from both the Plymouth City Council and visitors alike has been very encouraging, and we are delighted to have been appointed by Sutton Harbour Holdings PLC to examine how we could develop a new system for what is Plymouth's historic port, based on our work in Plymouth City Centre.



**Streetwise Orientation & Navigation Systems Limited**  
89-91 Morrison Street, Edinburgh, EH3 8BU

Tel: 0131 229 5441  
Email: [info@streetwisesystems.com](mailto:info@streetwisesystems.com)  
[www.streetwisesystems.com](http://www.streetwisesystems.com)



RE-CENTERING THE CITY



TAKING CARE OF CYCLISTS



ENCOURAGING VISITORS TO EXPLORE OTHER DISTRICTS

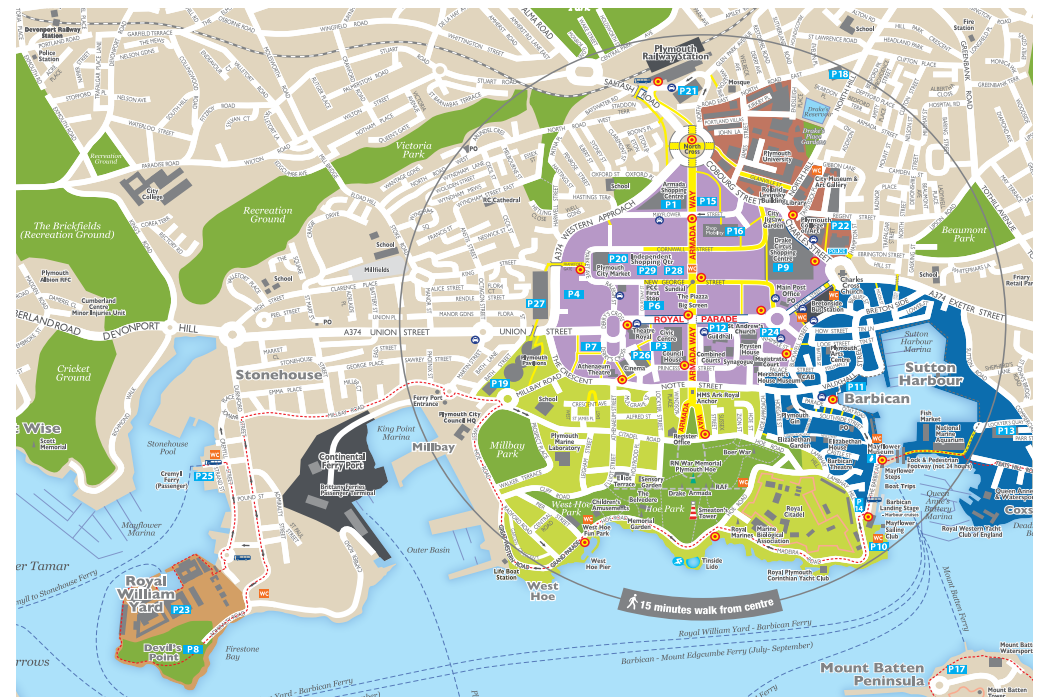
## RE-CENTERING THE CITY

One of the key objectives for our work in Plymouth was to strengthen the connection between its city centre and its coastline. How a place is represented on a map has a significant effect on how it is perceived, more so for visitors who have little or no knowledge of the area.

People try to assess distances and are often easily misled if maps do not deliver a realistic impression of how far a district or attraction is from where they are. In Plymouth we found the existing map acted counter to their objectives as it focused attention on the commercial district and its zoning and treatment of streets gave the impression that the coastline was further away and less accessible than the reality. So we set about re-centering the city. There is not space here to go into all that we considered but the two maps tell the story. The top map is the original. The two most important streets are the north – south running Armada Way, a tree lined boulevard and the east – west running Royal Parade. As you can see on the original map, the presentation of Armada Way left it obscured due to the tinting used to signify pedestrianised sections and it was cluttered with graphic elements to the extent that you could virtually not see that it was a continuous street leading from the rail station down to The Hoe, Plymouth's amazing coast side park offering stunning views along the coastline. In addition to this the use of non connecting zones and their respective tinting

led to the city's shopping district in pink leaving visitors believing that the centre of this area was the heart of the city centre as opposed to the reality of it being the junction of Armada Way and Royal Parade.

In the bottom map you can see the measures we put in place. First of all we made it clear that Armada Way and Royal Parade were the principal streets, this also allowed the direct route towards the coastline to be clear. We introduced further zone indicative tints to connect the shopping district to The Hoe and avoid what had looked like a set of 'islands' and a 'no mans land' in terms of visitor interest. These changes were immediately welcomed by all of the stakeholders in this wayfinding project and these measures gave a much stronger mapping foundation for us to develop the new wayfinding system for the City. You will see that we also introduced a circle on the map which showed that from the new centre, almost all parts of the city's places of interest were within a 15 minute walking distance, a fact tested by us and many others since!





## TAKING CARE OF CYCLISTS

Of increasing importance in towns and cities is the desire to encourage people to use their cars less and take public transport, walk and of course cycle. The needs of cyclists are not the same as other road users and the routes they can take are not necessarily the same as vehicles so signage intended for motorists is not always relevant to the cyclist.

In Plymouth we were asked to review a series of fingerposts dedicated to the cyclist but also to consider how the new wayfinding system could be used to assist them as well as pedestrians. In looking closely at the different needs of both pedestrians and cyclists we recommended that the new monoliths for the city centre should carry a specific map for cyclists. Why a separate map? A number of reasons led us to this.

The first was that in trying to cater for all requirements on one map, the number of symbols and markings cluttered a single map making it harder to use for all and led to an even longer map key.

Another aspect was that the cyclist, due to the potentially greater distances they would travel compared to the same time on foot, would benefit from a map covering a greater area of the city.

The third reason is that Plymouth City Council already published a cycle route map and we felt that the on-street map should be consistent with this. Lastly we also felt that the provision of this map reflected the City's policy of encouraging cycling in and around the city centre.

When developing a wayfinding system it is necessary to consider the variety of users and to look at how a new system can cater for differing needs without compromising its usability for all.



## City Centre

### Go explore

#### Barbican & Sutton Harbour

Our city has been shaped by the fortunes of sea, trade and war and this is nowhere more evident than in Plymouth's delightful old port, the historic Barbican. Full of narrow cobbled streets you will be delighted by its Elizabethan warehouses, specialist shops, art galleries, cafe and restaurants.

Nestled with the Barbican is Sutton Harbour Marina, its vibrant quayside offering you a wide range of cosmopolitan waterfront bars, restaurants, cafes and shops to enjoy while discovering the location for the National Ice Cream Aquarium, offering an amazing insight into our underwater world.

#### The Hoe & Seafront

Feel the exhilaration of cycling on Plymouth Hoe with its magnificent coastline and fresh sea air that embraces you. Only five minutes walk down Armada Way from Royal Parade, the Hoe and Seafront offers a place to relax, to enjoy walking or cycling and helping you to identify cafe and restaurants with views to the city that are truly stunning. Strolling overlooking the Hoe is an impressive statue of St Francis Drake commemorating his brave achievements including his victory over the Spanish Armada and his circumnavigation of the globe.

#### Cultural Quarter

With its history dating back to 1822, Plymouth University is one of the UK's largest, a polytechnic, it was awarded university status in 1992 and is a partner in the Combined Universities in Cornwall.

Known for its progressive approach to education, it is the first modern UK university to set up its own medical and dental school. It was awarded a Queen's Anniversary Prize for higher and further education in 2012 for its marine and maritime work and is the first university in the world to receive a Social Enterprise Mark in recognition of its sustainability.

#### Royal William Yard & Millbay

Starting construction under the reign of his brother King George IV who died five years before its completion, it was renamed after the new King, William IV. Designed by the engineer Sir John Rennie, Royal William Yard was built between 1820 and 1824 to serve the Royal Navy. For over two centuries the complex built its own brewery, bakery and slaughterhouse. Since the Royal Navy left the site in 1992, the yard has been carefully redeveloped to provide a business and creative setting for contemporary restaurants, galleries, apartments and retail businesses making Royal William Yard a 'must do' for any visitor to Plymouth.



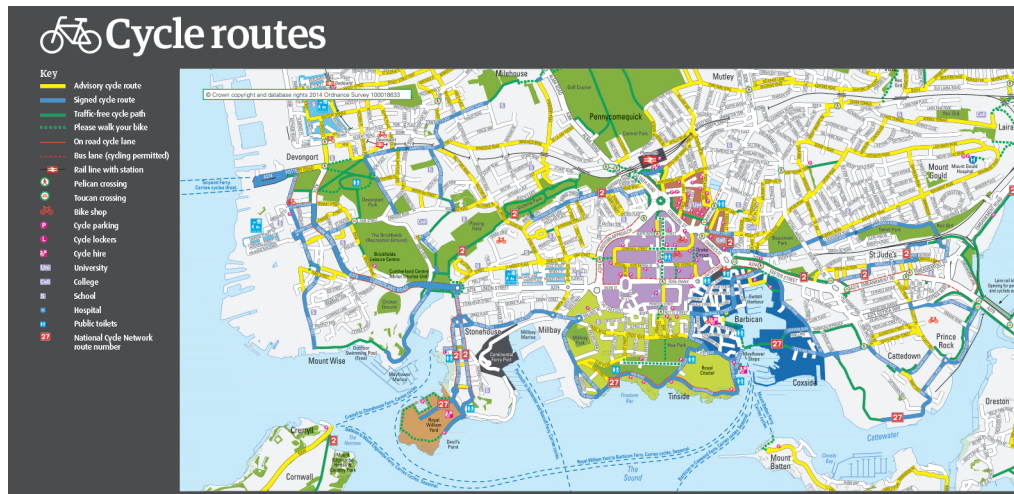
## ENCOURAGING VISITORS TO EXPLORE OTHER DISTRICTS

Almost all towns and cities will have their 'well trodden path' areas where people gather naturally. Although it is still the case that visitors must be shown what is in these better known areas, it is often the case that we would like them to explore other parts thus enhancing their visit and spreading the economic benefit.

The key to this is to tap into two things, the natural curiosity of people and their desire not to miss out on something. How can this be done?

In Plymouth as elsewhere we have looked to ensure we consistently promote other districts, particularly those adjoining where the visitor is standing, making it an easier reach in terms of distance. In Plymouth

there are five key areas and on each monolith under the title Go Explore we presented a short synopsis of these other areas as well as an interesting image. The use of zones and the tinting of them on the map also helps with this as visitors can be shown that there are different districts and this encourages the feeling that their visit should include the exploration of them.







READING



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## HOW CAN WE HELP YOU?

We are happy to respond to all enquiries, not matter how large or small, and offer a full range of services from initial scoping through design, manufacture and installation.

Efficient routing of visitors around a town or city is in everyone's interests and ensures the best possible enhancement of the local economy. Many projects include a high degree of interpretive information to give visitors and local residents a full appreciation of the attractions and points of interest within an area.

Our scoping report is undertaken on a no obligation basis and sees us visit a town or city and conduct an in-depth survey of current wayfinding provision followed by a comprehensive report of recommendations, together with budgets – the cost of this report is not prohibitive and a quote can easily be provided.

For an informal discussion, please contact;

**Graham Macready**, on **0131 229 5441** or email him at [g.macready@streetwisesystems.com](mailto:g.macready@streetwisesystems.com)



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