“Just wanted to pass on my thanks for all your efforts and the high standard of works you continually set yourself and for delivering the new footbridge ready for operational usage and meeting our Stakeholder requirements”.

Network Rail
Asset Manager

octavius

Case Study

Godalming Station ‘AfA’
‘Access for All’ opens 4 weeks early

PROJECT	Godalming Station AfA
CUSTOMER	Network Rail
LOCATION	Wessex Route
CONTRACT	IP Southern Framework
COMPLETION	2017

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Need

Everyone should be able to safely access our rail transport network using an obstacle free route from the station entrance to train. Quite a challenge with many stations ‘listed buildings’, or located in busy town centres and major cities like London.

In 2006 Network Rail embarked on a programme of station upgrades to install lifts and ramps, supported by the government ‘Access for All’ fund. Now, over 10 years later, a wealth of knowledge has been accumulated.

There is recognition that every station is unique, but the approach to design and construction is fundamentally the same. Most importantly, people and trains have to keep moving safely.

Solution

Developing the best solution requires a collaborative input from Network Rail, the TOC, Osborne our designer Arcadis and supply chain. Retrofitting within a live station environment is complex and the team must share a commitment to be flexible, think differently and find creative solutions to overcome challenges.

Capturing the needs of the station operators early in design is essential. Workshops with the Route Asset Managers (RAM) and the TOC are used to identify ‘what good looks like’ to them. Alongside this, site ‘walkover’ sessions view the pros and cons of current solutions. The result is a design that makes life easier and safer for the operator.

A simple example is the heritage bridge at Godalming where ventilation louvres were added between the top structural cord and footbridge roof. This eliminated the need for tilt window ventilation, saving cost with simpler turn-only windows and protecting passengers from driving rain.

Space at stations is often limited and passenger flow must always be safely maintained so off-site fabrication and pre-assembly is the best approach. Success is dependent upon close attention to quality to ensure every section fits seamlessly into place during planned rail possessions.

At Godalming Station, off-site pre-fabrication reduced risk from working at height and in proximity to railway hazards; and allowed the lift and stairs to be craned in a single night, minimising disruption to the live station environment.

To meet planning conditions the steel lift shaft was brick clad. This post installation element put the shafts on the critical path. The team absolutely committed themselves to the programme and overcoming the challenges to achieve the key milestone. They delivered a text-book overnight installation of the steel, which was followed by a clever cantilevered access scaffold to lay the brickwork. The scaffold released space to keep passengers moving safely on the platform below.

Outcome

Godalming Station finished 4 weeks early. The modern AfA was seamlessly integrated within the 1859 Heritage Listed building. Along with step free access, passengers and operators now benefit from platform and electrical upgrades to keep everyone dry and moving safely.

Network Rail praised the professional execution of the project and the quality of finish. Handed back with no defects, it was a fantastic achievement on a project of this complexity.