

LOCAL HEROES:

# Why a caring contractor is essential

The contractor is the public face of the client, so it is critical to choose a trusted ambassador





Principal Contractors and their supply chains frequently deliver localised transport infrastructure projects in close proximity to the communities they serve. This is why it is essential to choose a delivery partner able to demonstrate that they put community local residents and businesses at the heart of the way they work.

Mature, robust processes embedded in the way Octavius delivers projects ensures consistent, repeatable outcomes in terms of minimised disruption, strong community engagement, support for regional businesses, and development of local talent.

**This approach extends outwards to our choice of supply chain partners, who need to demonstrate that they *share our commitment to community* before they can work with us.**



## Responsive to community needs

**Charfield, Gloucestershire**, is one of many new railway stations being built by regional authorities to relieve congestion and enable growth. The £39 million project is being funded by the **City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement** for the **West of England Combined Authority**. Octavius is the project's lead design and build contractor.

The project illustrates Octavius' approach to involving, and listening to, the communities in which it is working. The project team engaged with community groups and schools to raise awareness of the scheme and its benefits. Community engagement was also required to address residents' initial concerns about the project. This required consultation, transparent communication and the flexibility to make adjustments to the design. A consultative approach was also essential to successfully navigate the planning process which led to revisions to meet both technical and community requirements.

## Listening to business

A pedestrianisation and public realm [enhancement scheme in Eastbourne](#), East Sussex, shows the extent to which Octavius will go to respond to the needs of local businesses. Eastbourne is a summer town. Traders rely on summer footfall to carry them through quieter winter months. In recognition of this the programme was originally scheduled for winter delivery. Circumstances, however, made a spring start and summer work necessary.

In response to businesses' needs Octavius flexed, proposing creative resequencing which eliminated disruption in the main thoroughfare during July and August, but allowed work to progress in clusters of smaller, less critical locations.

Similarly during the project to revitalise [March town centre](#), for which [Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Combined Authority](#) provided funding and oversight, putting the community at the heart of the work meant incorporating local business' needs into planning and methodology to maintain 'business as usual'.

A Halifax public realm project, funded by [West Yorkshire Combined Authority](#) under the Transforming Cities Fund, demonstrates how Octavius' strategic supply chain management can yield community benefits. Traffic management and buried services present some of the project's biggest challenges, and they are both areas in which Octavius' use of local contractors, familiar with the layout and fabric of Halifax, will help minimise disruption.

Accessibility is central to combined authorities' transport strategies, and a rail accessibility project, [Stoneleigh AfA](#), provides another illustration of how Octavius' makes the most of local knowledge. For more than 20 years Octavius' Project Manager Adam Szeremeta has been supporting schemes for Stoneleigh's train operating company [South Western Railway](#). By having deep roots in the area Octavius possessed the strong, established stakeholder relationships necessary to keep the project to schedule and cost. This institutional knowledge was central to flexible and efficient delivery which minimised impact upon people using the station and those living and working around it.

## Creating permanent employment

The benefits of using local knowledge and suppliers extends beyond less disruption and greater efficiency. Project budgets are channelled into communities when local suppliers are engaged, and jobs are created. At Charfield, for instance, local subcontractors have been engaged for key packages of work, and several employment and training opportunities have been created for residents in the surrounding area.

This picture is repeated for virtually all of Octavius' projects, and the number of regions in which Octavius is creating jobs, directly and indirectly, is expanding. Draw a line from the Bristol Channel to The Wash and, historically, the company had a greater presence south of the line. But that has changed.

By securing numerous recent frameworks that cover northern England, and increasing the volume of northern work won on existing frameworks, Octavius is consolidating its position nationally as a leading provider of transport infrastructure.

On its current National Highways frameworks covering northern England, Octavius' highways business has created more than 30 permanent jobs in the last four years. As Octavius' work on Network Rail's northern England frameworks ramps-up new jobs are being created, with 80 per cent of roles on the northern frameworks new to the company. And this is the picture for just one region, the businesses' reach is national both through frameworks with National Highways and Network Rail, and frameworks used by combined authorities and local authorities – for example: Eastern Highways Alliance 4, PAGABO and YORcivil Major Works 2 and YORcivil3.





## Committed to social value

As well as creating direct and indirect employment and upskilling opportunities Octavius also leaves a rich community legacy through a commitment to creating social value. The company has set itself the target of delivering social value equivalent to 30 percent of turnover, which was exceeded the last financial year with more than £110 million of social value created – here is more information about how that was achieved and the communities that benefitted [\[add SV link\]](#).

The transport infrastructure Octavius creates, renews and maintains is probably where the company leaves its greatest local legacy.

Octavius has delivered all modes of transport infrastructure – in virtually every combined authority region – by supporting combined authorities' projects and the national bodies whose infrastructure criss-crosses their regions. In addition Octavius has helped facilitate broader regional prosperity by supporting national transport programmes which provide combined authority regions with national connectivity.







We hope you found this helpful,  
here is some more information  
you might find valuable:



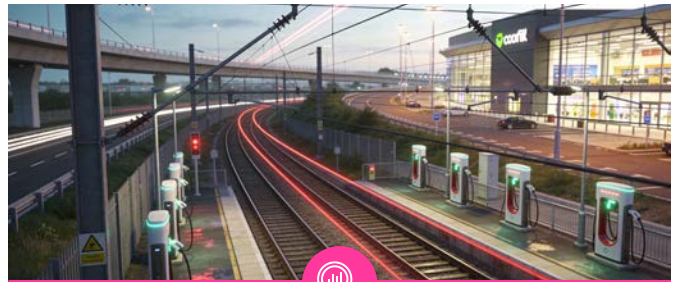
Frameworks: Embedding repeatable  
social value success



Will Somerset's new approach to  
highways contracts catch on?



Collaborative working comes  
to the forefront



Electrification in the age of  
enterprise delivery



Contact us at [Transformative@Octavius.co.uk](mailto:Transformative@Octavius.co.uk) if you  
want to know more about the way in which we can  
support combined authorities' transport strategies.