

Wise plans for The Sage



The latest attraction to open in the regenerated Gateshead Quays is the magnificent Sage Gateshead concert venue. It's a new-look attraction that needed some new-look signs.

Directional signs installed as part of a new signing scheme are amongst the first in the UK to be made using 3M™ High Intensity Prismatic (HIP) Reflective Sheeting



Designed by world-renowned architects Foster & Partners, and situated close to the Gateshead Millennium Bridge, The Sage Gateshead has a dominant presence on the banks of the Tyne. Yet it's just one of several new developments in the Gateshead Quays. Luxury apartments have been constructed at BALTIC, there's a new Hilton Hotel and there are proposals for new leisure facilities and more residential properties. The Baltic Business Park is also currently under construction.

Routing traffic into and around the new developments is the responsibility of Gateshead Council, and the approximately 40 directional signs installed as part of a new signing scheme are amongst the first in the UK to be made using 3M™ High Intensity Prismatic (HIP) Reflective Sheeting.

Top of its class

HIP was launched late last year, and is a high performing Class 1 material. Using the same microprismatic technology developed for use in 3M™ Diamond Grade™ reflective sheeting, HIP delivers improved visibility and colour contrast when compared with standard Class 1 materials. It is also backed by a 3M 12-year durability warranty for a better return on investment.

Environmental strategy

Traffic engineer Garry Hoyle is Team Leader for Parking and Regulation in Transport Strategy, the department that has responsibility for routing traffic through the area.

"Under normal conditions, traffic is directed into or around the Gateshead Quays area from major routes via brown tourist ADS signs," says Garry. The signs were installed recently as part of the Council's strategy to adopt the most cost-effective and environmentally friendly signing options.

The Gateshead Council Parking Plan places great emphasis on making the most efficient use of existing or planned parking resources in the town centre and on Gateshead Quays, and integrating these two areas to effectively "share" parking resources.



Both the new ADS, and the new HIP directional signs were manufactured by William Smith & Sons Ltd.

"Within the Gateshead Quays development, the HIP signs take over, directing traffic to car-parks which are also served by Variable Message Signs that indicate the number of spaces available. This combination of fixed and variable message signing has major benefits in reducing congestion by removing circulating and queuing traffic" comments Garry.

It's still early days for the signs and the parking plan, as it is for The Sage Gateshead, but everyone expects that Gateshead's new music venue, and the whole Gateshead Quays development, will be HIP for many years to come.

