Southampton Legible City aims to improve the image, identity and user experience of Southampton for the benefit of residents, businesses and visitors, as well as for developers looking to invest in the city.

A new range of products and services are proposed, linked by a specially commissioned visual identity. The new identity has been designed to promote and market the city and improve the quality of the city’s streets and spaces by taking a ‘whole street’ approach to the design of the public realm. The new range of products and services will make it easier to move around and will promote active travel, wellbeing and healthy lifestyles.

This book introduces you to the project, explaining how it has been developed and how it will evolve in the future.
Southampton Legible City has a major role to play in promoting outstanding design quality across a range of products and services that will transform the user experience of the city. Over time, it will help to reconnect Southampton to its waterfront and highlight its many assets – revealing the special character of districts and hidden quarters as places to shop, meet, relax and play.

Southampton Legible City will also promote sustainable transport choices and create a radically improved public realm that will connect destinations, attractions and services, improving the long-term economic competitiveness of the city.

High quality pedestrian-friendly places, and an information system delivered where and when people need it, will encourage people to explore the city on foot and spend more time outdoors, supporting local businesses and creating safer streets and spaces for everyone.

On-going regeneration schemes are dramatically changing the face and fabric of Southampton. This transformation is evidence of a stronger belief in the city’s future and recognition of its potential to lead the South of England region forward.
The role of information is changing. Increasingly, people look for more personalised and tailored information to suit their needs.

Direct
Sometimes people need to know the quickest way from A to B – for example, a business visitor late for an appointment or passengers meeting a cruise ship.

Southampton Legible City will provide information products and services that meet the needs of different audiences.

Guide
At other times, people need information that will guide them and help them make the most of their time – for example, a local family Christmas shopping or a day trip to discover the historic city.

Show
With more time, people need information to help them explore and discover the city themselves – for example, a new resident or a local family wanting to be more active.

Southampton Legible City has been developed with a clear understanding of user needs. Thanks to extensive research and testing, user-centred products and services will deliver a range of coordinated improvements to the city’s streetscene and provide relevant information at every stage of the journey.

The system has been designed to work at different levels – meeting the needs of those who need to get from A to B quickly and efficiently, as well as those that wish to discover and explore the city’s hidden assets at their own pace.

Meeting people’s needs

Southampton Legible City will provide information products and services that meet the needs of different audiences.
Products and services will be delivered through all channels – web, mobile, print, signs and people. They will span the complete journey from the moment you search for Southampton online, through to your arrival, getting around the city and finding and enjoying your destination.

The illustration shows the potential range of products and services that will be developed to meet user needs and deliver information at each stage of the journey.
Southampton Legible City will encourage a more active lifestyle – promoting walking, cycling and other sustainable forms of transport.

Creating a healthier, more active nation is a priority of Government at national, regional and local level. Southampton Legible City will deliver products and services that support Active Southampton and its promotion of sports and leisure facilities, programmes and events. This in turn will help to build stronger, safer communities, developing the skills of local people and meeting the needs of children and improving health.

“An active lifestyle is key to improving and maintaining health. However, at present only 37% of men and 24% of women are sufficiently active to gain any health benefit. The challenge we now face is to encourage more people to become more active.”

Choosing Activity: a physical activity action plan, Department of Health
A unique visual identity has been developed for Southampton Legible City that supports the Southampton brand and the Southampton Vision 2026.

The visual identity captures the spirit of the city and is inspired and informed by the city’s past, present and vision for the future. It is underpinned by a set of values that will inform how information graphics, mapping, products and streetscapes are designed and delivered. The result will be a set of high quality, innovative products and services that speak of the city.
Building the system

The products and services to be delivered as part of Southampton Legible City require a set of design resources consisting of elements – materials, colours, graphics, data, cartographic bases – to help build a robust and extendable information system. Unique design elements will ensure products are fit for purpose and that the system is easy to manage and maintain. It will be a cost effective means of delivering products and services that are owned and managed by the city and its partners.

The design elements have been created as a reflection and celebration of the colours, shapes, textures, landmarks and materials found in the city, reinforcing a sense of place and supporting the Southampton brand.
A base colour palette has been inspired by the light, water, parks and fabric of the city. Highlight colours have a function in representing the features of the city helping to distinguish types of information such as transport, heritage, shopping and leisure. Each colour has been carefully tested for consistency across different materials and for levels of contrast for legibility.
Unique typefaces have been designed exclusively for Southampton. Southampton Display echoes the super graphics of the city’s container and shipping industries. Designed to be used at scale and read from a distance, it is the more characterful, extrovert member of the family of typefaces that are highly legible and fit for purpose. During development, the typefaces have been tested and verified by the Department of Typography and Graphic Communication, University of Reading and the Royal National Institute for the Blind.

An integrated pictogram set has been designed to work with the visual form and character of the typefaces. The pictograms are fit for purpose, intuitive and legible. The symbols have undergone extensive user testing to ensure high levels of recognition.
A range of shapes and forms inspired by the city have guided the design of graphic and product design elements.

Frames and volumes are used as information containers that structure information and build products with a clear hierarchy and order of read.

Graphic shapes set within a grid are used consistently to highlight information – making it quick and easy for people to find what they are looking for.
Routes are highlighted to promote activity and encourage use of parks and open spaces using different line thickness and colour. Those best suited to strolling, walking, jogging, skating and cycling are emphasised. Route mapping is supported by information that encourages people to be more active in their everyday lives.
Textures and illustration have been used to highlight buildings, features, water, parks and open spaces. This detail adds personality to city marketing and promotional material and also creates information that is more engaging and easier to use.
Information that will feature in products has been gathered through on-street recording and consultation with the project partners. Data such as road names, destinations and facilities have been collated into a structured database to ensure consistent use and accuracy across the system.

The following pages show how data is applied to mapping bases which have been drawn from aerial photography. Information and cartography has been developed as a royalty free system, to be shared by the city and its partners and delivered through print, web, mobile and on-street products.
This map section is shown at the actual size it is displayed on street. The mapping has been through a process of user testing and has been assessed by the Royal National Institute for the Blind.

You are here

Bedford Place and London Road
Local independent shops and cafés. Wide choice of pubs, bars, restaurants and clubs.

Bedford Place
A new generation of products and services

Southampton Legible City will deliver products and services through multiple channels of communication that are accessible and of the highest quality. The following pages set out a range of potential products and services that will be delivered as Southampton Legible City develops. The products are structured by journey stage to illustrate the sense of continuity that will be experienced by residents and visitors from the start of their journey through to their destination and return home.

The proposed range of products and services will have physical and visual features that ensure they meet the needs of the user at every stage of the journey.

- Easy to locate
- Easy to navigate
- Easy to use
- Easy to understand
- Just what you need
- Just when you need it
- Just for you
At each journey stage, features of the products and services will be specially designed to meet the needs of the user.

**Pre-journey Planning**

City fact finding
- Personalised journey planner
- Transport links and connections
- Full range of maps from world to city scale
- Personalised content
- Downloadable maps

To help people pre-plan their journey and their visit to the city, information and mapping will be made available on internet sites and formatted for use on mobile devices.

A full range of mapping bases will be developed with content that can be edited by the user and personalised to suit any type of journey.

**Arrival Orientation**

Welcome
- Detailed map of the city
- Transport connections
- Overview diagram
- Nearest services
- North point
- You are here
- Scale/mark distance

On arrival in Southampton – at the station, a cruise or ferry terminal or a car park – visitors will be greeted with a detailed map of the central area to help orientate themselves and plan their next steps either on foot, by bike or by public transport. An overview diagram will help to build a mental map of the city.
Encouraging walking and active lifestyles

The Southampton Legible City information system will highlight different areas and neighbourhoods to help people locate and explore places to shop, eat, drink and relax, as well as areas of historic and cultural interest. Using colour, pictograms and the highlighting of streets, mapping will clearly identify Southampton’s hotspot areas which will each have an information tab. This will describe what’s on offer, or provide more detailed information such as shop opening times or transport connections.

These techniques will provide an easy and intuitive way for visitors to plan their time and will also encourage people to explore new areas of the city.

Southampton Legible City will promote walking by providing clear walk times, safe routes and connections to public transport for longer distances.

Minutes are used to calculate walk distances with an approximate number of calories burned. The health and fitness message is a strong theme and the system supports Active Southampton in encouraging people to increase their level of activity to improve health and fitness.

A mental map is a simple, easy to remember image of the main areas of the city and where they are located in relation to each other. It is a useful way of helping people orientate themselves, direct their journey and understand how the different parts of the city are connected. User research has helped to inform the drawing of a simple map which will be used consistently on all information products within the system.

Mapping forms a central part of the information that will help people to get to and travel around Southampton.

On-street map displays will be heads-up - orientated to match the view of the person looking at the sign - and will be at a scale to suit the level of information and the geographic area that people need to see at each point in their journey.

Information design features will be used consistently across the system. Important landmarks will be illustrated to help people orientate themselves. Pedestrian areas, steps, gradients, underpasses and other access information will be clearly marked to assist in planning routes. Your location, or “You are here” will be consistently marked on each map with a walk circle indicating an approximate walk time of five minutes.
As people travel around the city, a range of information products will help guide them from place to place. These will include street name plates, map panels, direction signs and printed guides.

Map panels like the one illustrated below form the backbone of the system and will present an area map that covers approximately a 10 minute walk or 800 metres from its location. Research shows that this distance covers the majority of journeys made on foot.

A ‘You are here’ is clearly marked on the area map, it is positioned centrally and located at a comfortable viewing height for the user.

At each location, nearest facilities such as toilets, cash machines and chemists – and services such as transport interchanges and information points – are listed below the map with a grid reference.

In selected locations area maps are supported by an index and street finder.

Free printed maps will work with the on-street system to provide continuity throughout the journey.

Route markers have been designed to connect to destinations located off major routes. They are designed to be read at a distance – the symbol size corresponds to the Department of Transport Inclusive Mobility recommendations of a 9–12 metre viewing distance.
**Product features**

- Bold and distinctive
- Robust construction
- High quality engineering
- Modular and updateable
- Low whole life costs
- Easy to maintain
- Standard technologies
- Resistant to vandalism
- Durable and ages well

**Reading distances and reading heights**

The structure of the product allows information sections to be clearly identified – natural breaks define each information container clearly, even at a distance. The design allows for sections to be updated or replaced easily. Following accessibility guidance, and responding to user testing, individual sections of the product have been designed at a comfortable reading height.

**Materials and finishes**

The two primary materials used in the wayfinding system are solid stainless steel and vitreous enamel. These high quality, robust materials have been selected to ensure the products are long-lasting, resistant to vandalism, easy to maintain and withstand the coastal environmental conditions.

The information panels used on the London Road pilot project are vitreous enamel which will maintain the colour quality and contrast throughout its lifespan. Glass panels will be introduced in locations where information needs to be updated on a more regular basis.

**Lighting and technologies**

Low energy, low maintenance LED technology lighting is incorporated within the edges of the product to create a beacon effect at night.

The sign panels are designed to incorporate other technologies, such as the RNIB React 3, SFX speaker technology which can provide spoken information for the partially sighted.

Information panels at public transport interchanges will also include real-time ‘next bus’ displays and service change messages.
One of the most significant barriers to the use of public transport is confidence in changing from one mode of travel to another, or from one service to another. Southampton Legible City will span all modes of travel, providing connected information across different modes at train and bus stations, ferry terminals and other interchanges.

Local area maps, with transport connections and facilities will help people orientate themselves, make their next connection or explore the area.
Hotspots of the city are rich in history, have a higher concentration of destinations or offer opportunity for a range of activities. Places such as Old City, Above Bar, or Southampton Common require more detailed information and mapping that includes finders and interpretive information.

Colour is used to indicate the type of information provided, whether it's yellow for shopping and leisure, red for transport, brown for heritage or green for parks and open spaces.

Computer visualisation of proposed hotspot destination product
Southampton’s residents, businesses and visitors are already benefiting from all that has been achieved in developing an identity and range of products and services that are unique to the city. The complete system will have a dramatic effect on the city – both on its streets and spaces and also how it is viewed and experienced.

The benchmark for confidence and quality has been set in London Road with a range of on-street improvements including wayfinding signs. This is a pilot project which has been developed to enable testing and evaluation. A range of printed information products have also been produced and are now in use throughout the city.
London Road
Towards The Avenue
The vision for Southampton over the next ten years is to create an exciting, well-designed and sustainable city with a real sense of place.

The future of Southampton Legible City is the delivery of a complete system of products and services that create a unique and coherent identity for Southampton and that connect the city’s streets, spaces, arrival points, neighbourhoods and people. The development work completed to date represents a wealth of design resources that can now be used in the delivery of a complete city-wide system.

In its delivery, Southampton Legible City will support other major projects in the city including the North South Spine, Central Station improvements, West Quay Three, the Active Travel programme and the delivery of an integrated transport system for the city region. Decisions in the coming months will guide how the project is developed alongside these schemes to maximise their success in creating a city comparable with the best in Europe.
Southampton Legible City

Southampton Legible City is a Southampton City Council project led by a project team that has included: Pete Brunskill, Liz Kite, Phil Marshall, Ian Rothwell and Simon Taylor.

City ID have developed and designed the project with specialist support from Andy Gibbins, Dalton Maag, Design Connect, Endpoint, MK Design/RNIB, Russell Bell and Wood&Wood.

Thanks to those people and organisations that have supported the development of the project including: Business Southampton, Cyclewise, Friends of Southampton Old Cemetery, The Hawthorns Urban Wildlife Centre, Ordnance Survey, Southampton City Council, Southampton Common and the Protection of Parks Society, Southampton Cycling Campaign, Southampton and Fareham Chamber of Commerce, Southampton Orienteering Club, Southampton Partnership, Southampton Solent University, Sustrans, University of Southampton, Walking Distance and West Quay.

Southampton Legible City is supported by the European Regional Development fund through Interreg III B North West Europe Programme, Southampton City Council, Southampton City Centre Management, Southampton Partnership and South East England Development Agency.

About this document

Designed, written and produced by City ID.
Illustrations by City ID. Joining up the journey illustrations by Thirteen.
Photography by Marcus Ginns and Nick Hand.
Computer visualisation by Visual Technology.

If you would like a printed copy of this document please email info@cityid.co.uk.
© City ID and Southampton City Council, August 2008. All rights reserved.

Further information

Phil Marshall
Regional Transport Planner
Southampton City Council
+44 (0)23 8083 2590
philip.marshall@southampton.gov.uk

Liz Kite
Head of Communications
Southampton City Council
+44 (0)23 8083 3040
liz.kite@southampton.gov.uk

Mike Rawlinson
Director
City ID
+44 (0)23 8083 3040
mike.rawlinson@cityid.co.uk

Useful websites

www.southampton.gov.uk
www.southampton-partnership.com
www.businesssouthampton.com
www.discoversouthampton.co.uk
www.activesouthampton.co.uk
www.seeda.co.uk
www.cityid.co.uk