

The GPS system



George Parsonage writes:-

The idea of GPS signage came to me after a woman was murdered on the Kelvin Walkway. She had managed to contact the Police but could not tell them exactly where she was. I realised that this was the same in most remote places and especially from my point of view, along our river banks.

In conjunction with Strathclyde Police Storm Control and Glasgow City Council a number system was developed.

One GPS sign on the banks of the Clyde was used over a hundred times with only one of these calls being for an incident in the river. They are used for muggings, persons falling of bikes and breaking ankles etc.—indeed anything for which an emergency service is required.

If one sails down the Clyde what is obvious is that we have yellow emergency gates on the quay wall railings, every lifebelt position, pole or rail, is painted yellow, where possible emergency ladders are painted yellow and every lifebelt position has a GPS sign attached

Our system is proving extremely successful and we hope to expand this throughout Scotland and further afield.

The GPS numbering is worked out by Glasgow Humane Society in conjunction with One Scotland.



Herald 19.1.2007

Clyde signpost plan to speed up rescues

A system to help the emergency services find people who fall into the River Clyde is being developed because of difficulties locating incidents.

The Glasgow Humane Society, which until 2005 provided the rescue service for the city's waterways, has set up signposts on the river east of the city centre which it hopes will help direct 999 diallers. George Parsonage, who

runs the society, said that identifying areas along the riverbank for rescue services is often difficult compared with directing them to landmarks or clearly identifiable streets.

He hopes Strathclyde Fire and Rescue (SFR), which has provided a rescue service on the Clyde since April 2006, will use the signposts in its response procedures.

He said: "Upstream of Glasgow Green, people often don't know where they are. We would like to see notices every one or two hundred metres throughout the area which people could identify if they see someone in the water."

Mr Parsonage says he has been talking to Strathclyde Police since August about incorporating the signposts, which sit alongside buoyancy rings at regular intervals from Glasgow Green to Rutherglen, into the force's global positioning system.

He said the problem of identifying the location of accidents was particularly acute east of the city centre, where long stretches of riverbank are not near any street signs or visible landmarks. Callers often use colloquial names for bridges which would not automatically be known to emergency call centres, he claimed.

28th May 2008 Strathclyde Police newspaper Upbeat

"Vital labels will help 999 callers"

New marking systems are being put in place at two parts of Strathclyde where it can be difficult to pinpoint the exact location of 999 calls.

The lifebelt positions at the water next to Glasgow Green and the wind turbines at the currently-under-construction wind farm at Whitelees (near East Kilbride) are being labelled with individual high visibility coding. This is so that callers can quote the code of the nearest lifebelt position or turbine in order for call-takers to get emergency services to the right spot ASAP.

These codes are being detailed on STORM (Systems for Tasking and Operational Resource Management) so the Force's call-takers can, at the click of a button, find out exactly where a caller (or the person being called about) is located.

Paul Fairhall of STORM, who is the command and control computer system admin manager, told *Upbeat*: "There can be delays in attending incidents when the caller is unable to say exactly where he or she is.

"The Whitelees Wind Farm is seven miles long and four-and-a-half miles wide, with plans for a final total of around 140 turbines. Before the 'labelling' idea was investigated (in association with police mountain rescue), it was almost impossible to locate a person in this area.

"The emergency services had to call at the site office and be taken out to look for the person. However, if each turbine is marked with a unique number, we can instantly find out where the person is calling from."

Paul added that, equally, having the lifebelts all location-coded means help gets there quicker. These have also been made more visible to the public by being properly mounted next to the water and having new yellow no-parking boxes painted on the ground in front of each one.

Paul said: "These two projects provide valuable reference points in areas where it is potentially difficult to identify the exact location of the caller. It also

means we have the ability to add specific officer safety information next to such information on the STORM system.”

- The Govan-based STORM Administration Unit does the day-to-day maintenance and updating of STORM databases, giving advice and assistance while ensuring the right developments for STORM are put in place.
- The lifebelt improvements at Glasgow Green were done along with long-standing lifeboat operator George Parsonage.
- A new lifebelt sign is being erected at the Glasgow Science Centre pontoon. The Glasgow Humane Society is in talks with locations alongside the river to find sponsors for more lifebelt positions, covering the length of the Clyde and other waterways in Strathclyde. As these are added, STORM admin will continue to plot the locations and add them to the command and control system.