Supporting visitor experience alongside revenue generation

Site Overview

Attracting 750,000 visitors every year, the Portsmouth Historic Dockyard is the leading maritime heritage attraction in the UK, and forms part of the Royal Navy Base. The site houses a cross section of British Naval history, from the Mary Rose and HMS Victory to modern day aircraft carriers. It is also home to the National Museum of the Royal Navy, the ever-popular Harbour Tour boats and numerous restaurants and cafes.

The car park at Portsmouth Historic Dockyard has 295 spaces, 13 of which are disabled and four are electric.

The Challenge

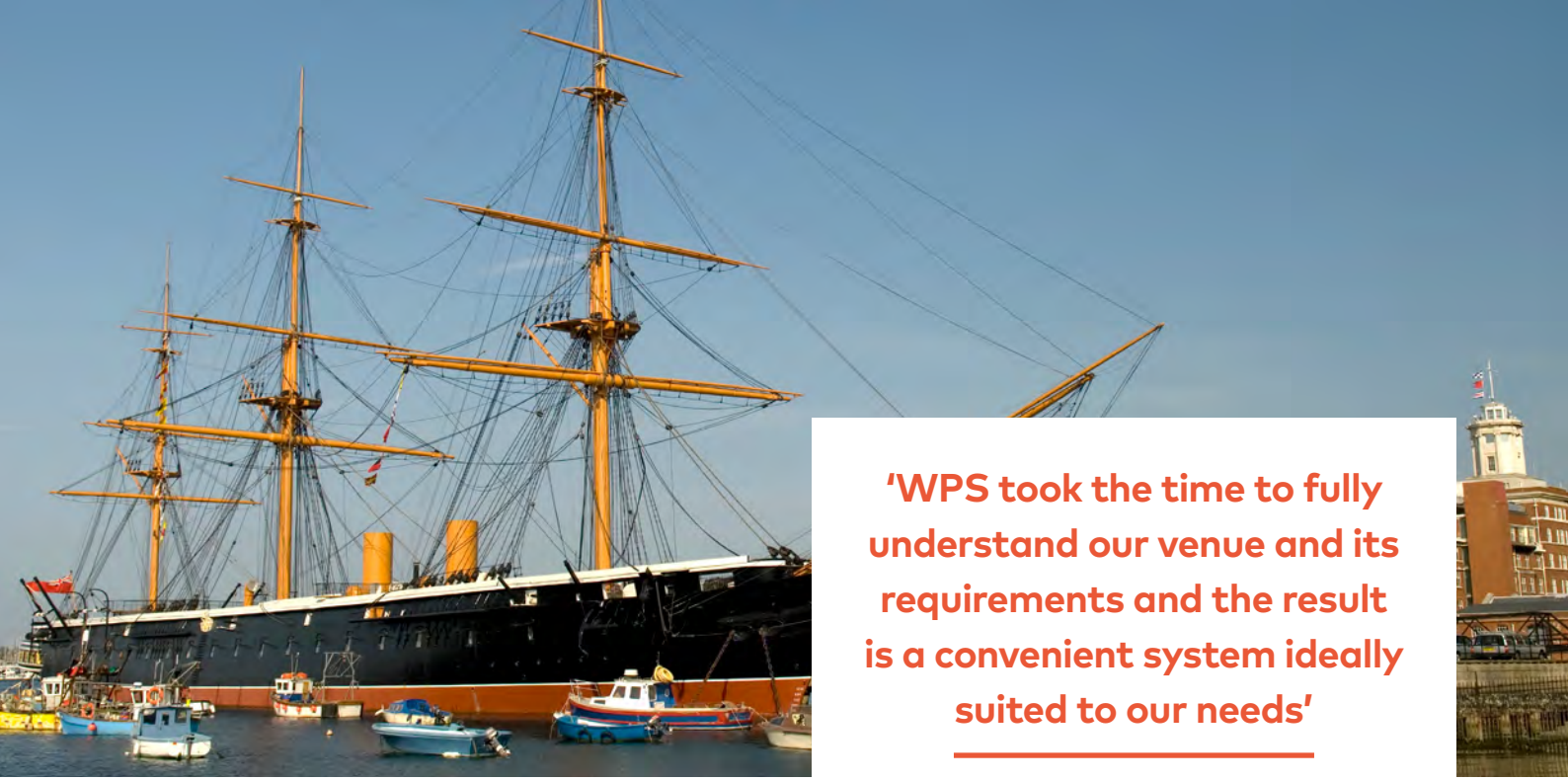
Adjacent to a ferry, train, coach and bus station, the attraction is well set up for visitors to arrive by public transport, but Patrick Holmes, Deputy Chief Executive of the Portsmouth Naval Base Property Trust, says with 90,000 cars arriving each year, it is important to provide a well-presented, modern and reliable parking facility:

"For those travelling by car, the visitor experience starts and ends at the car park, so it has to make the right impression. We chose the WPS pay-on-foot system because we had already been

convinced it is an efficient alternative to pay & display requiring fewer staff and not having to rely on enforcement – which is vital for the customer experience. It is also completely self-service, supporting COVID safety."

Solution and Benefits

A sophisticated pay-on-foot ticketed parking system from WPS, one of the UK's leading parking equipment providers, is being installed at Portsmouth Historic Dockyard to deliver seamless access for visitors, local hotel guests and residents of the development above the car park, with revenue generated going to support investment in the curation of 500 years of naval history.



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Two of WPS' ParkAdvance™ pay stations, one that is cashless, will support chip & pin, contactless, Apple and Google Pay functionality, and feature an intuitive 12-inch, fully-customisable colour screen and IP intercom. Chip & pin and contactless payment functionality will also be installed at exit barriers to support a smooth exit for customers who forget to pay.

Supporting the business in providing its visitors with a COVID-safe experience, the system includes touchless ticket dispensers and scanners.

High-performing automatic number plate recognition (ANPR) cameras will be installed at the entry and exit barriers, enabling the use of parking payment apps. The app provides pre-payment, season ticket and truly-free-flow access options with subscribers entering and exiting automatically when the ANPR system recognises registered car number plates. RFID proximity readers will provide straight-forward access to residents.

The system is compatible with Portsmouth City Council's latest variable massaging signage (VMS) communication system to enable the real-time communication of number of spaces available on key routes into the City Centre.

With a sophisticated IP-based operating architecture the WPS ParkAdvance™ system provides a flexible, future-proofed and intelligent solution, and Patrick says this was an important aspect of the purchase decision:

"Setting up different access for various users, local hotel guests and residents for example, is very straightforward," he says. "And future-proofing our investment, we can add functionality as and when required – for example when feasible, we may introduce loyalty promotions such as discounted parking for customers that eat in our restaurants in the Dockyard.

"WPS took the time to fully understand our venue and its requirements and the result is a convenient system ideally suited to our needs," concludes Patrick. **"And with the revenue our car park generates supporting us as a charity and enabling us to re-invest profits into preserving history and providing a fun and educational public attraction – it was essential we got it right."**