

The Winners

**british
parking
awards
2008**

**Equita Overall Award Winner • Best Refurbishment Award •
Off-street Team of the Year Award • Enforcement Team of the
Year Award • Back Office Team of the Year Award • The
Training Award • Customer Service Award • Joined-up Thinking:
The Innovation Award • The Marketing Award • Best New Car
Park Award • Parking Person of the Year • Judges' Special Award**



Goo



OVER 500 PARKING PROFESSIONALS from across the public and private sector gathered at The Dorchester on Friday 7 March to hear author and comedienne Meera Syal reveal who would win *Parking Review's* British Parking Awards 2008.

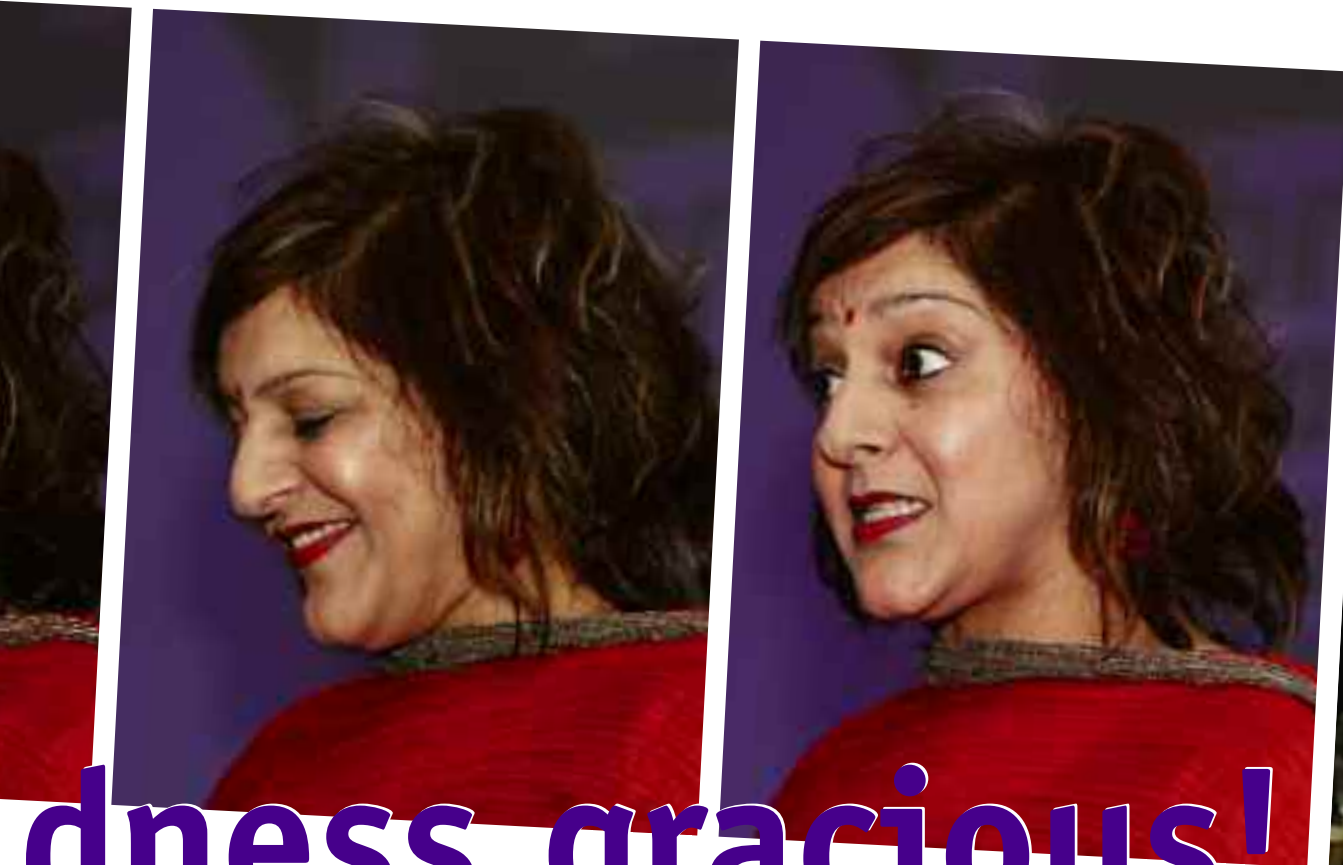
Over 40 of the 95 entries received this year had been ranked as finalists in categories encompassing car park design and refurbishment, innovation, training marketing, and on and off-street parking.

The star of *Goodness Gracious Me* and *The Kumars at No.42* admitted that following in the footsteps of her husband, Sanjeev Bhaskar, as compere was a little daunting — "Everyone keeps saying 'He was really funny'. Thanks for that!". She need not have worried as the audience were entranced by her recollections of her mother's driving experiences in the Midlands during the 1970s and the idiosyncratic approach to road rules in India.

As the awards themselves were unveiled, the event turned into a major coup for parking operator VINCI Park, which won three awards — off-street, training and a special innovation award — before being named Equita Overall Winner for its Hospital Mobility Scheme at Ninewells in Dundee. "This year the theme of accessibility became a recurring one throughout the awards," said judging panel co-chairman Paul Sharpe, of main sponsor Equita. "There were entries which saw car parks, shopping malls, venues and town centres made accessible to the disabled, parents with children or older people. There were schemes that made parking policies and services available online, as well as ones which opened up the decision-making process to scrutiny and greater public involvement. The VINCI Park scheme at

“Some people have asked how I feel about following Sanjeev in presenting these awards. I have no problem I don't mind following my husband because... frankly he looks so much better from the back!”

Meera Syal at the British Parking Awards 2008 at The Dorchester



Business gracious!

Ninewells represented the best of all these innovative and highly commendable ideas.”

Disability issues and parking consultant Douglas Campbell, who was one of this year's judges, said: “Ninewells is a very worthy Overall Winner of the British Parking Awards 2008”

Another key theme at this year's awards was Safer Parking, with awards founder, Parking Review editor Mark Moran, flagging up the fact that the “dark, dingy” multi-storey is increasingly a thing of the past. Contemporary new build and refurbished car parks are of such a high standard that assessing the infrastructure awards is becoming an ever greater challenge. Indeed, all the finalists in the New Car Park and Refurbishment categories were deservedly commended.

Kelvin Reynolds, the BPA's head of Safer Parking, and a judge this year underlined the importance and success of the scheme, announcing over that 3,500 sites now have Park Mark status.

The wide range of schemes entered into the Joined-Up Thinking category — they accounted for a quarter of those submitted — again underlined the fact that the parking sector is brimming over with innovative thinking. Indeed, this year the category generated joint winners — Glasgow City Council's novel car park financing scheme and the Kent Parking Managers collaboration on enforcement protocols — as well as the special award for the Ninewells mobility scheme.

Innovative thinking was also very evident in the training, customer services

and new marketing and back office categories. These all underlined the need for communication, be it with the public, clients, partner organisations or within a team. Indeed, increasing focus on the human aspects of parking emerged when the on-street and off-street operations and team entries were assessed and it was decided that these were rightly best considered as a whole — in fact, most schemes entered both original categories.

The fact that teamwork engenders a sense of comradeship and community was recognised in the special award presented to the team of parking professionals who banded together to walk over 100 miles to support Parasol, a new charity which aids British servicemen injured in recent conflicts.

There was also recognition of individual endeavour when NCP Services' Jason McFadden was named Parking Person of the Year for his work on the massive Northern Ireland Roads Service contract. Like so many of this year's successful entries, there was an honesty about recognising problems which led to a real desire and commitment to making an operation work. And, as with so many of the winners, there was a tangible recognition of achievement by clients and colleagues. The real purpose of the British Parking Award is to shine a spotlight on people who are achieving the best in a vibrant, often misunderstood, and always engaging business. As Paul Sharpe of main sponsor Equita said: “I don't care what the newspapers say. You should pat

yourselves on the back and say ‘I did a very good job.’”

To find out what we will be looking for in 2009 keep 12 September free and come along to the British Parking Awards Launch Party. You can find out about the party and also download images from this year's awards by visiting: www.britishparkingawards.co.uk

The winners

- Overall Award Winner:**
Mobility Parking Scheme at Ninewells Hospital, VINCI Park UK
- Best Refurbishment**
Edmonton Green, Makers Parking
- Off-street Parking Team**
VINCI Park UK at UWIC
- Enforcement Team of the Year**
London Borough of Haringey
- Back Office Team**
ParkWise, Lancashire
- Training Award**
VINCI Park for Leicester City Council
- Exceptional Customer Service**
Legion Parking at the Barbican
- Joined-up Thinking 1**
Glasgow City Council
- Joined-up Thinking 2**
Kent Parking Managers' Group
- The Marketing Award**
RingGo
- Best New Car Park**
Ocean Village, Southampton
- Parking Person of the Year**
Jason McFadden, NCP Services
- Judges' Special Award**
Parasol



VINCI Park UK launched the UK's first Hospital Mobility Scheme at Ninewells Hospital, Dundee

Health benefits

ON 1 AUGUST 2007, the UK's first Hospital Mobility Scheme for disabled outpatients began operating at Ninewells Hospital in Dundee, Scotland. In addition to being a major teaching hospital, Ninewells also incorporates a Maggie's Centre — one of a network of specialist day-care centres for cancer victims, and numerous other specialist facilities and research establishments.

VINCI Park has, since 2003, managed the hospital's car parking concession on behalf of NHS Tayside, one of 14 Scottish regions of the National Health Service which provides healthcare in the city of Dundee and throughout the surrounding areas. The operation covers some 17 car parks — 14 surface, two deck and one multi-storey — offering a total of 2,440 spaces.

The free Hospital Mobility Scheme is a pioneering initiative between the Ninewells Hospital and Medical School and VINCI Park. VINCI Park's commercial director Philip Herring says: "It has taken up the concept of a proven, value-added service, familiar in the retail sector — Shopmobility — and adapted it to meet

the needs of disabled patients and visitors in a specialised hospital environment."

It results from a review of the hospital's car parking operation, which followed on from the findings of an independently-chaired 2006 Parking Review Group, made up from representatives of NHS Tayside and VINCI Park, together with a number of individuals representing other independent bodies and interested groups.

The scheme operates from a purpose designed and built Hospital Mobility Office on the ground-floor level of Ninewells Hospital's disabled "Blue badge holder-only" car park, which is designated for exclusive use by disabled patients and visitors. VINCI Park offers them the free use of a fleet of electric scooters and wheelchairs, which can be booked in advance either on-line, or over the phone. "A newly recruited and fully-trained customer service agent is on hand to administer the project, and to train and help users of the service, which was up and running on time and within budget, six months from initial concept," Herring reports.

The Hospital Mobility Office is designed to be highly visible to hospital patients and staff, with a purpose-built office consisting largely of glazed panels and a high level of internal illumination. "A high quality finish has been provided throughout, with a welcoming reception area for users of the service," he explains. The new office is fully DDA compliant, with every aspect designed with disabled users in mind. It is protected by an alarm, fire sprinkler system and comprehensive CCTV coverage.

The team

The project was jointly developed, designed and implemented between VINCI Park's head office staff in London, led by Phillip Herring (commercial director), VINCI Park's local management in Dundee, led by David Laurence (contract manager) and Ninewells Hospital and Medical School's management, led by Brian Main (head of support services).

Innovative thinking

The new mobility service is the latest example of partnership working between VINCI Park and the hospital to result in additional free added-value services being provided at Ninewells. In 2005, it was identified that due to the size of the site and the location of the more remote car parks, many patients were experiencing lengthy journeys by foot to reach their appointments. Following discussions with NHS Tayside, VINCI Park introduced a free mini-bus shuttle service for all staff, patients and visitors. "This service was well received and continues to provide a valuable service, operating throughout the hospital site," Herring says.

Consultation and partnership

VINCI Park worked closely and continuously as an active member of the Parking Review Group since its inception. This has involved monitoring and reporting on the hospital parking situation, and finding ways to accommodate and implement the group's suggestions for improvements, most

notably in the form of the free minibus service and the new Hospital Mobility Scheme.

VINCI Park has found the experience highly positive in jointly developing this innovative introduction of a value-added service in the hospital parking environment, which is highly replicable in other hospital environments.

The Parking Review Group identified a number of areas where changes to the parking regime would benefit day-to-day users of the hospital and also ways in which recent changes in local and national guidance, and considered best practice could be incorporated onto the hospital site.

"Some of the changes were simple to implement and were taken on board by VINCI Park with immediate effect," says Herring. "There remained, however, a number of challenges that would take longer to resolve." The most important were:

- Non-disabled motorists using disabled 'blue badge holder only' parking bays;
- Difficulties experienced by people with mobility problems in getting around the hospital; and
- The mounting cost of parking at the hospital for people needing to make regular visits over an extended period of time — such as the long-term ill (as identified in MacMillan Cancer Support's June 2006 'Cancer Costs' report).

In October 2006, the Parking Review Group decided, in consultation with VINCI Park, to introduce charges for disabled drivers, in order to prevent the misuse of reserved disabled 'blue badge holder only' parking bays. In parallel it also decided to offer 2,800 free parking permits per month for the use of outpatients such as cancer and renal sufferers needing frequent visits for long-term treatment, and their relatives.

Herring says: "VINCI Park agreed that it would not profit from the implementation of parking charges for disabled patients, and that it would reinvest any resulting surplus for the benefit of that user-group by helping them to move independently



Mobility scooters

around the hospital. Hence, the innovation of the Hospital Mobility Scheme."

Technical innovations

"The Hospital Mobility Scheme is, at user level, a relatively low-tech — but high-specification — common sense, people-oriented response to identified patient mobility issues," says Herring.

Users can, for example, pre-book by phone or in person, as well as via Ninewells Hospital's or VINCI Park's websites, making for ease of access. "In addition, through the simplicity of the product offering, the concept has the capability for ready replication elsewhere in the NHS, or indeed other non-retail sectors within the parking industry," he adds.

VINCI Park spent a lot of time on research, working with local suppliers in the selection of the scooters, to ensure their suitability for the hospital environment (such as setting speed restrictions) and the availability of an adequate range of products to meet different user needs. "The Hospital Mobility Office is designed with accessibility in mind, and allows all of the scooters to be stored and the batteries re-charged at the same time overnight," says Herring.

In specifying new pay & display machines for the disabled car park, VINCI Park opted for solar-powered equipment supplied by Parkeon. As much of the car park is under cover, it was essential to source equipment using solar technology that did not rely upon direct sunlight, but was capable of drawing energy and operating on a long-term basis from lower levels of ambient daylight.

A successful scheme

After just three months, approximately 100 patients had signed up for the Hospital Mobility Scheme. This has now increased to over 200 members after five months and continues to grow. Ninewells head of support services Brian Main comments: "We see this as a very exciting development, which we believe demonstrates our commitment to improve access for disabled patients and complements our courtesy bus service, another earlier successful joint initiative with VINCI Park".

Comments from users, recorded in the scheme's visitors' book, include: "What Ninewells has needed for a long time", "Good idea. Hurray!" and "Makes such a great difference getting to the clinics".

Meanwhile, disabled drivers have reacted favourably to the introduction of parking charges, because they are now much less likely to be denied spaces by non-blue badge holders, and can see the benefits associated with the new services being provided for their exclusive use.

During the implementation of the new service, there was considerable interest from local and national press, television stations and radio stations. This resulted in ongoing positive press coverage over a period of some two to three weeks, which was managed jointly between VINCI Park's and NHS Tayside's Press Offices.

Implementing the scheme

The cost was approximately £100,000 for the design & build of the Hospital



Ninewells Hospital's Brian Main and Mark Evans of VINCI receive the award from Paul Sharpe

“The Hospital Mobility Scheme is a common sense, people-oriented response to identified patient mobility issues”

Philip Herring, VINCI Park UK

Mobility Office to VINCI Park's specification (by Dundee architects Gaudie Wright & Partners and local contractor Alexander Oastler), which had to fit within the disabled car park but be highly visible to users. The cost was approximately £20,000 for the wheelchairs and the fleet of scooters, which will be replaced every four years.

"This now-proven concept could be taken up and implemented to a more basic standard, or on a lesser scale, dependent upon the requirements and demand of other sites," suggests Herring.

VINCI Park has developed a specialised training module as part of its VINCI Improvement Path training package. This has been developed with the assistance of Dundee City Centre's Shopmobility scheme and locally-based Allardyce Healthcare, who supplied the wheelchairs and scooters, complementing 'on-the-job' training by VINCI Park's local contract manager. The company believes that now it is in place, this could be re-used for future similar projects.

During the lead in to the service commencing, the newly recruited Customer Service Agent spent time with experienced staff at the nearby Dundee Shopmobility Service to learn and understand the specific requirements of the service. This included learning how to train disabled people in how to use the mobility scooters and how to assess their capabilities prior to formalising membership of the service.

Potential for wider use

"It is increasingly becoming the norm, for practical reasons, to charge for disabled parking," says Philip Herring. "At the same time, in the hospital environment, it

is extremely important that disabled spaces are well located, of sufficient number and are effectively reserved for use by the people that are entitled to use them and need them most.

"The attention now being given at Ninewells Hospital to the needs of mobility-impaired patients, is not only improving their parking experience, but also their overall experience at the hospital. In addition, better management of the disabled 'blue badge holder only' parking spaces and the provision of the additional mobility service, is reducing the incidence of stress and frustration. This has enabled a more effective and less contentious management of the hospital's parking overall.

"As a result of the initiative, the number of non-disabled motorists parking in disabled bays has rapidly decreased, resulting in a more efficient service for the disabled users, who now also benefit from a free value-added service."

VINCI Park believes the Hospital Mobility Scheme is providing a real benefit for mobility-impaired patients and visitors by increasing their independence and reducing the stress of a hospital visit. It is also making a positive contribution to the increasingly politically-contentious issue of hospital parking.

"All too often the parking industry is associated with negative press coverage, particularly in relation to charging users to park in certain environments, such as hospitals," says Herring. "In this case, through partnership working, innovation, and the introduction of new value-added services, in a joined-up and well communicated way, it has been possible to generate positive press coverage and considerable goodwill from customers. Clearly had the problem been

approached in a different, less joined-up manner, the outcome could have been very different.

"Much of the innovation that takes place within the parking industry is aimed at developing improved technology to find more efficient ways of enforcing parking restrictions and capturing increased revenue from car park users. In this case, it has been proven that innovation can be applied towards enhancing service provision and customer experience, with no financial gain for the operator or client.

"By generating an extended period of positive press coverage, across a number of different media, and being seen to be giving something back to the end user, the image of the parking industry, as a whole, can only benefit."

The judges comment:

This year the theme of accessibility became a recurring one throughout the awards. There were entries which saw car parks, shopping malls, venues and town centres made accessible to the disabled, parents with children or older people. There were schemes that made parking policies and services available online, as well as ones which opened up the decision-making process to scrutiny and greater public involvement. The VINCI Park scheme at Ninewells represented the best of all these innovative and highly commendable ideas. A very worthy Overall Winner of the British Parking Awards 2008.

Best Refurbishment



The new look Edmonton Green multi-storey



Looking-up – the Makers team surround our host



Makers Parking took a 1960s car park and made it fit for 21st Century shoppers

Making a difference

THE REFURBISHMENT of the Edmonton Green Shopping Centre car park by Makers Parking demonstrates that refurbishment is not just about painting surfaces.

This project involved creating a new parking environment from a mature structure. It addressed issues associated with the integration of the car park into a shopping centre that was itself being upgraded. The works, which included changing the exit/entrance areas from the end, to the side, has improved vehicle movement and freed up an area outside of the car park for further expansion of the shopping centre.

History

The car park serves the busy Edmonton Green Shopping Centre, which itself, is undergoing a major upgrade. The car park has 12 split-levels with a capacity of some 600 cars.

Edmonton Green Car Park was acquired by property company, St Modwens Plc after many years of being under the control of the local authority. St Modwens decided that works should be undertaken due to ongoing deterioration of the structure and the need to upgrade this 1960s facility.

Makers Parking won the project in open tender and undertook the project on a design & Build basis

The structure

The car park was of a unique design in that it had an insitu reinforced concrete frame with precast and pre-finished planks spanning the beams. "These were tied with an in situ 'stitch' at each beam. Parapet walls were formed by precast panels attached to an insitu edge beam," said Makers Parking marketing director Peter Cowlard.

"It was recognised that to extend the car park's effective life and enhance the parking 'experience', significant monies

needed to be expended in all areas."

These were to include:

- Structural repairs including deck coatings.
- Top deck waterproofing
- New lighting scheme
- New ground floor staff facilities
- Security at ground level
- DDA (Disability Discrimination Act) complaint facilities
- Re-decoration of the stairwells
- Coating to external face of parapet panels
- Provision of a new stair/lift core

"As the facility was nearly 40-years-old, its design could not be changed," says Cowlard. "However, the Makers team set about enhancing the parking experience by introducing modern technology, energy efficient lighting and durable deck coating materials. This combined with upgraded security, ensures safety for both the public and their prize possession — their car."

The works

The facility is heavily used by shoppers, local business personnel and tenants of the adjoining office block, consequently phasing of the works was essential in order to minimise disruption to parking activities. "Bearing in mind the car park's important role to the shopping centre activity, this had to be accomplished, ensuring adequate parking and keeping contract time to a minimum, careful planning of such phasing was therefore necessary," explains Cowlard.

This was achieved by carrying out works to the upper deck, levels 11, 10, 9 and 8, followed by decks 7, 6, 5 & 0, then finally levels 4, 3, 2 and 1. Traffic management and safety barriers were put in place to ensure continued smooth running and trafficking through the work areas. The project was completed in a

period of 42 weeks.

In tandem with the deck works, refurbishment of the No 3 stair cores took place, in a phased sequence, ensuring emergency access/egress at all times.

There was also the requirement to construct a new external stair/lift core. "This construction was essentially a steel frame, clad with brickwork, to match the modern look achieved with aerofoil sections on the front elevation," says Cowlard. "The external parapet elevations were painted with an anti-carbonation coating to enhance and protect the structure."

The electrical system within the car park was renewed as the phased work progressed. This required the installation of a modern system, comprising of Holophane fittings, having good uniformity, in order to light all areas of the car deck.

Additions to the structure

A new stair/lift core was installed to allow access to all levels by disabled motorists, with dedicated spaces being allocated on the car decks, in close proximity to this access core.

A revised entrance and exit area now allows further retail expansion of the site adjoining this car park. "In order to accommodate this, a new internal ramp was added to aid circulation and bring into play the new front entrance/exit," says Cowlard.

On the ground floor, adjoining the entrance area and the parking office, provision has been made to securely park both motorbikes and pedal cycles.

The link bridge between the shopping centre and car park was extensively refurbished and re-clad. New edge protection, compliant with the latest codes and recommendations, was installed at all levels. This included full mesh protection for pedestrian safety.

Works externally also included the re-modelling of the access road, to feed both the car park and the shopping centre service road.

Concrete repairs

Concrete repairs were defined and carried out, these being mainly to the deck surface, although there were extensive repairs to external panels and the main stair core external walls

"Extensive use of new non-invasive technology has been used in the form of surface applied corrosion inhibitors, this is in line with the requirement to control the effects of chloride activity," Cowlard says. "Repairs were carried out utilising polymer modified repair mortars. All vertical and soffit surfaces were coated with anti-carbonation coatings to prevent further degradation."

Decking

The decking systems were designed firstly to ensure waterproofing of the

Finalists

Guildhall Multi-storey, Exeter Exeter City Council (Commended)

This was part of the "Refreshing Exeter" project. Local shops, residents and motorists appreciated the regular briefings and Concrete Repairs being a considerate contractor.

The Mall Arndale Shopping Centre, Luton Laser Special Projects (Commended)

The Central and Market Car Parks used to be gloomy and difficult to use. Since the refit they have become bright, secure, high quality front doors to Luton's main shopping centre.

Best Refurbishment

structure, to prevent further chloride laden water permeating the concrete decks. "These also provide a safe, slip-resistant, aesthetic wearing surface for pedestrians and vehicles alike," says Cowlard. "The slip-resistant values conform to current requirements in both wet and dry conditions, being rated as a low potential for slip, by the TRRL

was further enhanced, by allowing automatic adjustment of lighting levels based on ambient light conditions, thus ensuring that the system can contribute towards energy savings."

The system was extended into the stair cores, which together with the enhanced level of decoration, gave a significantly greater level of illumination. All

amount of spaces, close to the new stair/lift core have been dedicated to the needs of disabled motorists, giving close access to the surrounding footpaths and parking office. These offer a larger area in which to park.

Coupled with this, greater use has been made of deck signage, showing both demarcation, dedicated parking for

“The Makers team set about enhancing the parking experience to ensure safety for both the public and their most prized possession — their car”

Peter Cowlard, marketing director, Makers Parking

testing method. The system is lined and logo'd to demark parking bays, car driving aisles and disabled parking bays. Emergency light fittings are positioned to give a safety lit passage to exits in the case of power failure. The decking colour chosen was a single grey, lined in black."

Lighting

The car park's existing system was as originally installed. The fluorescent light fittings provided inadequate lighting and had high power consumption.

A new lighting scheme was designed to give a greater uniformity of illumination to parking bays and drive aisles alike. Cowlard adds: "The system

emergency lighting systems are fully integrated and provide for automatic testing, to assist with the client's on-going statutory obligations to show system testing.

Signage

The signage has been re-designed to give drivers a fuller understanding of how to use the car park, removing doubt in terms of circulation, rights of way and the ability to understand better their parking position within the facility.

"All the signage has been designed to lift the car park image. All decks are now colour-coded and numbered, giving better clarity, both visually and sensually," says Cowlard. "A limited

user groups, flow direction and obligatory stopping positions.

The exterior

The outside appearance was further enhanced by coating of the existing pre-cast, exposed aggregate, concrete panels. The addition of aerofoil finning to the front, adds a further architectural touch in lifting the aesthetics.

Maintenance

"In line with the previous car park works, the refurbishment has been designed with future maintenance and repair in mind," says Cowlard. "The lighting has a low energy requirement, when compared with the system which



Peter Cowlard and Kelvin Reynolds shake on it

it replaced and gives substantial benefits."

The emergency lighting system has an automated checking system. The performance of the electro-chemical corrosion treatment will be monitored over the life of the structure and early warning given of anything un-toward.

Makers operates a deep clean and inspection regime for its clients, where the deck is cleaned and inspected at least annually. This is on-going at all the refurbished car parks, Cowlard reports.

Secure parking

A requirement of the design brief, was to achieve a secure car park, this has now been accomplished with the award of Park Mark accreditation.

Lighting **Expansion joints** **Refurbishment**

Cleaning **New build** **Decking** **Partnering**

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SEE US AT PARKEK ON STAND D17



Freda George from UWIC and Mark Evans of VINCI Park alongside Joanna Miller of Cobalt Technologies

Top marks for safety

VINCI Park UK ensured the University of Wales Institute, Cardiff gained five Park Marks

IN SEPTEMBER 2006, VINCI Park UK was awarded the contract for car park management across the University of Wales Institute, Cardiff's (UWIC's) five campuses (four academic and one residential). Under VINCI Park's management, each of the five sites has been successful in achieving Park Mark status under the Safer Parking Scheme.

The car parks cater for the needs of 9,000 students, as well as over 1,000 university staff. Previously, UWIC managed its own free parking in-house, with a single person employed part-time to patrol the sites and attempt to detect unauthorised use. Such limited control was clearly open to regular abuse and led to heavy traffic build-ups at peak times. In 2006 UWIC decided that it was time to outsource the task to a specialist company and introduce charging.

VINCI Park's operations director Graham Gunn says: "We were already managing the parking contract at the nearby University Hospital of Wales (UHW) since 2003, so we were able to use our local knowledge and existing resources in Cardiff to offer a tailor-made solution for UWIC. The initial challenge was the completion to a tight schedule — within six weeks — of a substantial upgrade of the existing parking infrastructure. UWIC decided that this should be in place in time for the start of the new academic year."

Quality of the parking environment
VINCI Park completed a major upgrade of the existing parking environment on

time and within budget, to produce the enhanced quality required by UWIC. The programme of works carried out in delivering this solution included:

- 8,500m² of new parking surfaces
- 5.6km of new markings
- Installation of 22 new Parkeon Stelios pay & display machines
- Dual-language (Welsh/English) signage throughout the sites
- A short-term, low-cost temporary solution — using a grasscrete-type surface — to provide 50 replacement spaces during the construction work.

VINCI Park is now providing specified services designed to improve traffic flows. The most important of these are: consistent enforcement and supervision at all five campuses, with higher visibility of its car park attendants; regular first-line equipment maintenance and second-line maintenance on an as-needs basis; and cash collection, counting and banking — using the existing cash counting resource based at UHW — to achieve economies of scale

Training and good practice

In addition to their core skills training under VINCI Park's VINCI Improvement Path (VIP) training programme, the newly recruited UWIC team (three attendants and a supervisor) have taken a number of specialist modules.

These include Welcome Host (customer care), a nationally-recognised qualification certified by the English Tourist Board (ETB) and designed to

“The contract exemplifies the VINCI Park ‘Buddy Trainer’ scheme — the first in the UK parking industry”

Graham Gunn, VINCI Park UK

equip employees with key customer service skills. Also used is Welcome All (disability), another ETB-certified qualification custom-designed to enhance accessibility, in terms both of the physical environment and the service provided by individuals, and aimed at ensuring that VINCI Park employees communicate in a positive way with the disabled community

“Diversity” is a module designed to heighten employees’ awareness of the range of cultures and conditions of people they will encounter, and of the legislation protecting their rights. “Manual Handling” is a course designed to equip personnel whose tasks involve moving loads to work safely and follow correct handling principles, for example, collecting cash.

All team members are also trained to undertake first-line maintenance of parking equipment, with selected team members trained to undertake more extensive second-line maintenance.

Graham Gunn says: “The contract exemplifies the VINCI Park ‘Buddy Trainer’ scheme — the first in the UK parking industry. This trains senior team members to give on-the-job training to new recruits in basic skills, such as fire safety and performing job requirements correctly.”

Over and above their technical capabilities, VINCI Park expects its car park attendants to act as ambassadors for the university in providing a high standard of service to both first-time and repeat visitors. All car park attendants work closely with the University in the administration of staff parking permits, which can be pre-paid via salary deductions.

Customer relations

The decision to introduce charges for parking at the start of a new academic year necessitated a carefully-planned communications programme. From the start of its appointment, VINCI Park worked with UWIC to deliver a user information service covering the impending changes.

Key elements included a dual-language leaflet, temporary signage, guidance in the university’s information pack and consultation with the Student Union. The attendants invested time in demonstrating the new equipment to users.

Uniformed staff

In contrast to the previous system, in which UWIC employed a single part-time car park attendant, VINCI Park now deploys four employees across the five campuses during term-time. As a demonstration of the company’s flexibility

and recognition that during university holidays parking activity is significantly reduced, savings have been made by the client through the deployment of just two car park attendants at this time.

“By ensuring a visible human presence in the car parks, we are able to maintain the high levels of customer service upon which it prides itself, and which UWIC rightly demands, whilst at the same time improving the security of the car parks,” says Gunn. “Duties fulfilled by the car park attendants include patrolling, checking tickets, first and second-line maintenance and cash collection.”

Tackling car crime

Previously, the university had little visible presence in its car parks, with resulting risks. The increased level of patrolling now provides a visible deterrent to car crime, which has been reflected in the recent Park Mark awards. Care is taken to vary patrol routes in order to deter potential offenders.

Enforcement systems

The car parks are patrolled by Car Park Attendants using handheld computer terminals and printers to undertake enforcement activity. The contract uses Imperial Enforcement System’s Complex 360 software and Psion Workabout Pro hand-held computer terminals. Downloading of data takes place at VINCI Park’s nearby operational base at UHW, which has established communication links. This combination of technology has been tried and tested by VINCI Park across many of its contracts and proven to be an efficient, reliable and cost-effective solution.

Upon commencement of the contract, VINCI Park issued warning notices in preference to penalty notices, whilst students and staff became accustomed to the new car park management operation. This proved to be very beneficial, as when the full enforcement commenced, most users had become aware of the need to pay to park, resulting in good levels of compliance and acceptance.

Success in attracting more custom

During term time, UWIC’s car parks benefit from a largely captive audience. One of the benefits of the new system is that weekend users looking for free parking are now being deterred, and available spaces can now earn revenue at weekends from shoppers, and visitors to a nearby leisure centre and rugby club.

Amongst the most important outcomes, are greatly improved traffic flows, orderly car park use and management, and a regular and reliable revenue source for UWIC.



“The fact that all five campuses have now achieved Park Mark Safer Parking Award designation, coupled with the overall improvement in the standard of car parking provision, has also contributed to UWIC’s success in achieving Charter Mark status,” says Gunn. “The improvements that VINCI Park was able to bring about across the five UWIC sites, in such a short time frame, were a direct result of VINCI Park’s capability to provide a complete ‘one-stop-shop’ solution.”

The works included:

- The design and supervision of civil engineering and car park surfacing

works

- The design and layout of the new car parks
- The design and implementation of new signs and markings
- The specification and supervision of installation of the new pay & display parking equipment
- The investment for all aspects of the improvement package
- The management of the public relations for the changes, including the design and printing of dual language leaflets to educate users of the changes
- The ongoing management of the parking.

F i n a l i s t s

Huntingdon Street Car Park, Nottingham Metro Car Parks

Metro Car Parks runs a crime-free facility. It also offers drivers baby-changing facilities, umbrella machines and a courtesy bus to the town centre at busy shopping periods.

The Quay to Excellent Customer Services Gunwharf Quays Management

Gunwharf Quays is a major retail centre in Portsmouth. The car park is the first and last impression for its 3.5 million users, many of whom use a new air-conditioned waiting room and a mobility centre.

New benchmark for effective hospital parking set by the UK’s largest NHS Trust

Leeds Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust (Commended)

25 staff manage 5,000 parking spaces across six different sites. Their main aim is to keep hospital roads clear for emergency vehicles. The Traffic Department has introduced an electronic enforcement solution as an alternative to clamping.

Worthing Borough Council & NCP Joint Venture National Car Parks

NCP is upgrading four multi-storey car parks and lots of surface sites around this seaside town. The car parks are vital to the town’s economy, so NCP works closely with the town centre manager, local business forum and Chamber of Commerce.



The team photo

Cleaning up the streets

HOME TO TOTTENHAM HOTSPUR and Alexandra Palace, Haringey is a north London borough. Demand for parking is high, with terraced townhouses, multiple car ownership and a large number of commuters. There are also many end of life, unregistered, untaxed and abandoned vehicles.

Creating a Better Haringey: cleaner, greener and safer is a major priority in the borough. Gaining, and retaining, "three-star" status in the government's comprehensive performance assessment has been the measure of its success in this endeavour.

"Our high profile Better Haringey programme is committed to creating visibly cleaner, safer and smarter streets and to tackling difficult environmental issues. Parking enforcement has been a major player in delivering this priority, working with our partners to make Haringey's streets cleaner and safer and also addressing the green agenda and climate change."

"In 2006 we rose to the ninth highest issuer of penalty charge notices in London," says Haringey's Rebecca Smiley. "Along with this growth in our service we have made a determined

effort to improve performance and provide excellent services to users. This not only applies to our mainstream parking and enforcement services, but also to the wide range of other services we provide — car parks, pay & display, infrastructure maintenance, CCTV operations, nuisance vehicles removals and concessionary travel."

The in-house parking team has sought to improve its efficiency and effectiveness. Its achievements include:

- Parking debt recovery has risen from 48% in 2002 to 64% in 2007.
- 100% of nuisance vehicles are inspected and removed with 24 hours.
- Despite increases in tickets issued, it cancels less than 2% due to error.

Tackling nuisance vehicles

Haringey used to have one of the worst abandoned car problems in London. As well as being a visible nuisance, problems with anti-social behaviour, vandalism and arson were well-recognised by the police and fire services.

Working with our contractor Ontime Parking Solutions, we have improved inspection and removal times. Our

nuisance vehicles team investigates and removes 100% of abandoned cars within 24 hours. All cars unclaimed from our car pound are de-polluted and disposed of environmentally.

The number of vehicles reported, removed and disposed of has dropped as residents have been educated. In 2006-07 Haringey removed 1,084 cars. In 2007-08 this had dropped to around 670.

"Our free 'Take Back' scheme for end-of-life vehicles is very popular, with around 15 vehicles surrendered each month," says Smiley. "Residents can dispose of end-of-life vehicles in full compliance with environmental regulations by visiting their local customer services centre with a completed application form, proof of identity and vehicles registration details."

The council also carries out vehicle licence enforcement in partnership with the DVLA. Haringey is now one of the best performing boroughs for DVLA actions against untaxed vehicles — 2,661 untaxed vehicles have been removed since November 2005. Of these, 580 have since been taxed, 910 disposed of and the rest passed to the DVLA for

prosecution.

"We are also improving customer relations. Officers obtain keeper details from the DVLA and all local residents are visited by the abandoned vehicle officer to discuss issues surrounding nuisance vehicles. In our latest customer survey only 13% of respondents now see abandoned or burnt our cars as a problem, compared with 60% in 2003."

Improved refuse collection

Haringey's Waste Management team often faces access problems due to parked cars, causing missed collections. "Together we identified areas needing additional yellow line restrictions and now we enforce these," reports Smiley. "Missed collections and complaints have dropped and the cleanliness and customer service have improved."

Partnership working

The parking team also make a major contribution to Haringey's Sustainable Communities Strategy and Safer Communities Partnership.

Jean Croot, head of safer communities at Haringey, says: "The parking team has been an integral partner in delivering

The London Borough of Haringey used enforcement to tackle nuisance vehicles, crime, dangerous parking outside schools, and to save the planet

crime reduction messages around vehicle crime. They provide the eyes and ears and act as 'capable guardians' around vehicle crime hotspots. Joined-up working practices tackling stolen number plates has allowed the partnership approach to be embedded and the team to work effectively with Community Safety and the police crime-reduction agenda."

Smiley says "We enjoy an exceptionally good relationship with the police, sharing operations, intelligence and training. A police officer is seconded to our removal operation and plays a key role in delivering the service, recovering stolen cars and dealing with forged tax discs. Over the past year we have also led 15 successful joint operations with the police to crack down on blue badge fraud and motorists suspected of other illegal activity. A phone hotline has also been introduced to enable any officer coming across a badge to check whether it is legally held or stolen."

Inspector Mark Hembury from Haringey Police Safer Neighbourhoods says: "Haringey Police has established a close and effective working relationship with Haringey Parking Services. This is particularly evident in blue badge operations that have now become a monthly event as part of our drive against vehicle crime in the borough."

The police also provide the parking enforcement team with a weekly electronic briefing setting out crime trends and patterns, including vehicles that have been, or are suspected of being, involved in crime. These details are communicated to all parking attendants, removal crews and CCTV teams.

Smiley adds: "Details of our top 20 persistent evaders are stored on the police national database. If a vehicle is flagged up through police activity, up-to-date owner details are provided to the council to allow us recover the debt. In addition, we share information with the police on cars that are accumulating PCNs to help them in the search for specific cases of criminal activity."

For example, the abandoned vehicles team has worked with the police to remove vehicles used for drug dealing and prostitution.

Clamping and removals

The nature of enforcement evolves all the time, which requires flexibility. On-time Parking Solutions became the council's clamping and removals contractor in 2004. When the council decided to cease clamping, On-time was able to shift its energies into alternative operations such as tackling hotspots where foreign lorries park on street overnight — removing the vehicles if necessary.

CCTV enforcement

Camera enforcement is becoming an ever more important tool for Parking

Services, which developed and manages the council's new CCTV control room. Community safety and traffic enforcement teams can now work side-by-side.

"Operators previously only engaged in traffic enforcement are now able to track an incident, using their local knowledge to direct the police to crime scenes. The control room is used to enforce crime in and around high-profile Tottenham Hotspur home matches," says Smiley.

The council also operates a mobile Smart car with mast-mounted CCTV.

School parking enforcement

A major aim of Better Haringey is to reduce road accidents. The school parking enforcement scheme plays an essential role in this. Many primary schools identify parking issues as a priority in their School Travel Plans and the enforcement of "School Keep Clear" areas is essential.

Parking attendants carry out this enforcement role regularly and produce a report for school officials to sign to confirm that they have seen them carrying out their duties. The report also allows both the parking attendant and school official to give remarks about the level of enforcement and traffic activity at the time of the patrol. This information is then used to plan future enforcement visits.

Haringey's latest figures, for 2005-06, show there was a reduction of over 25% in the number casualties from the previous year.

Nisha Parma, senior school travel advisor at Haringey Council, said: "Schools have found the parking enforcement to be very beneficial in encouraging sustainable transport and reducing illegal parking outside schools. This not only contributes to road safety but also reduces congestion around some schools. This has had a positive impact on parental choice and led to an overall increase in walking and cycling to school in Haringey."

Emissions-based residential permit charges

Haringey introduced residential permits based on carbon emissions last July. An extensive public consultation was carried out which included a leaflet drop to all households likely to be affected by proposals. Officers also visited all seven of Haringey's area assemblies to engage residents in discussions and answer questions.

The sliding scale agreed by the council contributes to our commitment to tackle climate change at a local level, following our signing of the Nottingham Declaration on Climate Change in December 2006. It has halved the cost of a residential permit for owners of energy-efficient vehicles, while owners of high-emission vehicles can pay up to six times as much."



Abandoned cars – one problem tackled by the team



Two faces of the 'Better Haringey' programme

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Parking Enforcement Team Leeds City Council Parking Services

Leeds Parking Service has 112 staff. They tackle blue badge fraud and are working with Neighbourhood Policing Teams to fight anti-social behaviour and crime. The city has developed a BTEC Level 2 for all staff involved in enforcement.

Enforcement in Oxford Oxfordshire County Council & APCOA Parking Services (UK)

Oxfordshire County Council's Civil Enforcement Group became the first in the UK to be awarded a Charter Mark. The Cabinet Office said: "There is a genuine willingness to provide the community with a service, despite the inevitable challenges of being in an enforcement role."

Heading West & Low Emission Zone (LEZ) launch Transport for London Enforcement Operations Congestion Charging (Commended)

The Western Extension of the London Congestion Charge scheme has built on the success of the original scheme. The Enforcement Operations Team also worked on the new Low Emissions Zone, launched in February.

The 19-strong ParkWise back office team administers parking enforcement across Lancashire

Sharing the wisdom

THE PARKWISE decriminalised parking enforcement partnership sees Lancashire County Council and 12 district councils working together to provide on-street and back office services. Launched in 2004, the partnership has provided a template for several other shire counties.

The county council assumes responsibility for setting the strategic parking policy framework, allowing a central management system which maintains equity of enforcement across the county and ensuring that resources are deployed relative to transport need.

The district councils manage the scheme on a day-to-day basis, in accordance with parking agency agreements. Districts report annually to the county council on the operation of the scheme to ensure that it is meeting agreed objectives for on-street enforcement.

Lancashire and the 12 districts meet

once a month, while a DPE project board meets quarterly to discuss ParkWise issues at a more strategic level. Information from these meetings is fed back to the chief executives.

On-street

On-street parking attendants are currently supplied by NCP Services, which also provides the attendant training package. The contract also means NCP Services has a single point of contact with ParkWise, reducing potential communication problems.

Laura Padden, ParkWise's communications officer, says: "This approach means there is increased manoeuvrability of parking attendants across the districts to cater for required periods of increased or decreased cover. It is their responsibility to issue penalty charge notices to vehicles parked in contravention of parking restrictions and

to be mindful that they are the face of ParkWise at all times."

The back office

The back office operates from a central office based at Lancashire County Council. "It is here that is the real heart of the operation, where only 19 members of staff complete a full range of jobs vital to the partnership, from strategic and business planning to day-to-day processing of all PCNs as well as acting as the sole point of contact for the entire ParkWise partnership. These are the stars that make ParkWise shine."

The centralised administration processes 120,000 penalty charge notices (PCNs) a year and creates 4,000 letters a month. It operates a telephone call centre that takes 3,000 calls a month.

The team also manages informal challenges prior to the Notice to Owner

(NtO) and NtO correspondence by arrangement with the districts.

The partnership also shares an IT system, provided by Traffic Support Mouchel Parkman and managed by the back office. This network means that all districts, back office staff and NCP Services can access the same information about all PCNs issued across Lancashire. This helps reduce the amount of time spent relaying information and ensures that the quality of information shared between the back office and the districts is not only consistent but correct.

The ParkWise team manages the collection of payments via post, telephone and the web. "The back office team processes all the finances and monies received from PCNs, ensuring each district is allocated the correct amount as well as registering all debts and warrants against motorists who do not pay their PCNs," says Padden.

The back office operates central bailiff contracts with two companies — Drakes and Jacobs. It coordinates the debt registration and issuing of warrants for each district. Padden suggests: "The benefits of this are that it allows economies of scale — the bailiffs can be provided with more warrants as the partnership covers all Lancashire and not just individual districts. This means the bailiffs can put more resources into the area with confidence of continued work. It is easier to monitor results by district, which acts as a performance monitor."

The back office also deals with internal communications issues, developed and maintains the ParkWise website, as well as handling media enquiries and answering Freedom of Information requests.

A steep learning curve

As the ParkWise partnership was the first of its kind, the staff and organisation have been on a steep learning curve. Padden observes: "We commenced this journey without much knowledge or experience of the parking industry, which has



Lancashire's back office team

required a very flexible approach from our staff."

In April 2007 a county council "Overview & Scrutiny" review assessed the role of ParkWise in the local community and identified areas where the service could be improved. "The recommendations included the need to address customer contact issues as well as highlighting operational and strategic weaknesses which were affecting the entire partnership," she says.

The first step was to appoint a project manager who would be dedicated to driving the project forward, as well as act as a central point of contact for all district parking managers. "Following the appointment of Paul Riley into this role, a strategic business plan was created with the full involvement of all back office staff and provides the whole of ParkWise with a solid focus and clear direction to follow. It allows each member of the back office to identify where they fit into the partnership and recognise the importance of the role that they play," says Padden.

NCP Services, meanwhile, commissioned a customer survey into public perception of ParkWise, providing greater depth of information in areas the Overview & Scrutiny Report had touched on. "It provided us with the first tangible evidence that customers were unhappy with some parts of the service and provided guidance as to how this perception could be changed," she adds.

The need to communicate

A persistent problem which was highlighted was the lack and quality of communications from ParkWise. "Since its introduction," recalls Padden. "ParkWise has suffered from regular negative local media coverage, heightened by the lack of public understanding of the aims and objectives of decriminalised parking enforcement. This was also due to the lack of a spokesperson for ParkWise, which left us without the ability to answer accusations or challenge criticism by the local press."

This led to the appointment of a ParkWise communications officer — Laura Padden. A change in local press coverage has been detected, with some positive coverage and public reaction. "It is now a ParkWise priority to work towards raising awareness of the general public as well as teaming up with other organisations, such as the Road Safety Group and local transport services in order to reflect the benefits of parking enforcement and reducing the number of vehicles on the road as well as improving safety for all road users."

It was also felt that there was a need to address internal communications. "A series of internal focus groups were undertaken which allowed every member of the back office to voice their own concerns and to address some of the issues raised by customers which directly related to their work. This led to the creating of a research report which addresses each area of internal communications and how each partner communicates with ParkWise. In addition, the University of Central Lancashire was commissioned to assess the validity of the proposed communications activity."

ParkWise's Laura Padden and Paul Riley of Lancashire County Council accept the award from John Dutton of sponsors Civica



Visiting the front line

ParkWise back office staff have first hand experience of parking restrictions in the areas in which they specialise as they make site visits with the district site managers. This helps them get a customer's perspective and experience the intricacies of local parking regulations in each district.

Monitoring

The back office team's performance is monitored via a key performance indicator (KPI) system. Padden says: "This allows any weakness to be identified and relevant training provided where necessary. It also allows us to monitor the workload of staff more closely and create an equal distribution of workload across

being undertaken to achieve Park Mark status for ParkWise, which is being driven by Charter Mark "champion" Kate McArdle.

There is an emphasis on staff development. "Team building initiatives include a 'Focus Group Suggestion Box' which allows staff to enter topics for discussion anonymously and then hold monthly discussion groups based on the suggested topics. This is a positive way for staff to discuss work issues with colleagues," says Padden.

“It is now a ParkWise priority to work towards raising awareness of the general public as well as with other organisations

Laura Padden, communications officer, ParkWise

"This allows them greater insight when dealing with representations and appeals," says Padden. "It also reduced demands made on the district parking managers time to clarify small details. A number of staff have also undertaken parking attendant training through NCP Services so that they are fully aware of how the attendant is trained to operate on-street as well as giving the opportunity to spend some time viewing the parking world from the attendant's perspective."

Public access

ParkWise has redesigned its website to meet W3C compliancy standards for accessibility. "Our electronic resources now cater for customers with visual impairments or difficulties," Padden says.

ParkWise's website also provides 24-hour access to information and an online payment system, reducing the burden on the telephone system. "Customers can now also challenge their PCN online, which provides them with the opportunity to appeal at a time which is more suitable to them."

the teams and districts, helping to deliver a homogeneous service to the customer."

Recognition

ParkWise achieved Investors in People (IIP) status in 2006, which has allowed many staff to undertake extra study and gain more work-based qualifications. The back office staff are involved in work

ParkWise members

- Lancashire County Council
- Burnley District Council
- Chorley Borough Council
- Fylde Borough Council
- Hyndburn Borough Council
- Lancaster City Council
- Pendle District Council
- Preston City Council
- Ribble Valley Borough Council
- Rossendale Borough Council
- South Ribble Borough Council
- West Lancashire District Council
- Wyre Borough Council

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A new approach to parking management Contract Management Team, Islington Parking Services

Islington has appointed a parking advocate, Karen Naylor, with real powers to make improvements to parking policy and cancel parking tickets. In her first three months, she investigated 158 cases where the public sought an independent assessment.

Northamptonshire County Council & NCP Services

In summer 2007 the county's parking services were completely restructured. Changes included rolling out civil parking enforcement, opening a parking shop and increasing customer payment options.

MK Team provides one-stop cash management shop VINCI Park UK

The Milton Keynes Cash Collection Team provides an end-to-end collection, counting and banking service across three counties. It has clients in the health, local authority, retail and leisure sectors.

Training by VINCI Park UK helped Leicester City Council prepare its new parking enforcement regime



The lesson today is...

VINCI PARK UK HAS provided parking enforcement services to Leicester City Council since 1999. This was initially to manage on-street pay-and-display bays and off-street car parks within the city centre, under the Road Traffic Act (RTA) 1984 legislation. The enforcement of all other parking regulations on the public highway remained the responsibility of Leicestershire Constabulary.

The system, under RTA 84, was inconsistent in operation and focussed purely on the city centre, frequently dubbed a 'parking free-for-all' by the local press. In 2006, the council successfully applied to the Department for Transport to decriminalise its parking enforcement in line with RTA 91. Following a successful competitive re-tender, the scope of VINCI Park's contract was broadened and from the beginning of 2007 it also covered the enforcement of all parking restrictions on public highways, including single and double-yellow lines, disabled bays, bus stops and lanes, loading bays and designated taxi ranks throughout the authority's road network.

VINCI Park worked with the council to develop a new solution which was based on the delivery of a quality service and designed to deliver a more consistent approach. This now includes residential areas of the city, in order to ease wider congestion.

Among the benefits, is the freeing up of police time to tackle other areas of law enforcement, while all net revenues generated are being ploughed back into local transport initiatives by the city council.

The training and development team

VINCI Park's Training and Development team is headed by HR director Debbie Hayes, who is supported by two fully qualified technical trainers, Mark Cox and Heena Hirani, both of whom benefit from extensive operational experience within the parking team. "Mark and Heena, who are both qualified in the Certificate in Training Practice, are responsible for developing, delivering and evaluating all internal courses to an industry leading standard," says Hayes.

Training issues

The resulting training challenge that VINCI Park faced was two-fold. First, the existing parking enforcement team of 15 had been working to one well-established regulatory format. They would now need to learn a whole new set of rules while 'unlearning' the old ones.

Secondly, the team would need to more than double in size — to 35 — in order to meet the requirements of the new contract. This involved a recruitment drive to bring on board an additional 20 personnel.

"Getting the training right first time would be essential to ensure a smooth transition to the new regime," says Debbie Hayes. "Not least, while the new recruits were being trained, the existing team had to maintain expected standards of enforcement under RTA 84, whilst themselves being inducted into the new regime."

Identification of skills required

The new system also had to be communicated to the driving public. This placed a premium on parking attendants having appropriate communication and negotiating skills, as well as the ability to appreciate problems and approach these with discretion where necessary, acting as ambassadors for both the city council and VINCI Park.

Following a local recruitment drive, VINCI Park deployed a brand new parking attendant assessment to screen 80 applicants for the new posts. Created specifically to meet the requirements of VINCI Park by occupational psychologists MENDAS, this competency test focuses on numeracy and literacy, together with recognition and communication competencies — all crucial skills to fulfil the role of a parking attendant. This competency test proved so effective at Leicester, that it has since been rolled-out by VINCI Park nationally.

Those applicants who were successful

in the screening test were then invited to a structured interview, at which they were assessed by the contract management team. This further screened applicants based on relevant experience and suitability for the role.

"As is the case with all new VINCI Park recruits, successful candidates were then offered between two and five days shadowing a parking attendant, in order to provide a full understanding of what is involved in the role, prior to commencing training," explains Hayes.

Selection of appropriate training courses

The company used its VINCI Improvement Path (VIP) training programme. Linked to the British Parking Association's national syllabus, VIP was launched in 2003 to cater for the constantly moving dynamics of the parking services industry. This uses a modular approach to tailor each training course to train and develop employees in both the generic and specific skills needed to meet the requirements of all the various job roles in a given contract.

"It allows for a blending of modules to match specific skill sets needed, drawing on external sources as needed, as with the English Tourist Board modules," says Hayes.

In addition to the core topics incorporated in all parking attendant



VINCI Park's Mark Evans and Jane Wharton shake hands with Penny Winder from Alpha Parking

training, such as fire safety and manual handling, those included for the Leicester contract also included:

- Customer care ('Welcome Host'): a nationally-recognised qualification certified by the English Tourist Board (ETB) and designed to equip VINCI Park employees with key customer service skills
- Diversity: designed to heighten employees' awareness of the range of cultures and conditions of people they will encounter, and of the legislation protecting their rights.
- Disability ('Welcome All'): another ETB-certified qualification, custom-designed to enhance accessibility, in terms both of the physical environment and the service provided by individuals, and aimed at ensuring that VINCI Park employees communicate in a positive way with the disabled community
- Conflict management: VINCI Park has recognised, through experience and its own risk assessment process, the importance of training its staff in confrontation and conflict resolution, through a module designed to minimise the potential for conflict, show the best method of dealing with it, and teach escape strategies.

Due to the high numbers of staff being trained at a time, the initial five-day training was provided at a local venue to make it as convenient and attractive as possible. This was in preference to making use of VINCI Park's dedicated Barbican Training Centre in London.

During the first three months of employment, each employee was

expected to complete a further VIP Core Skills module, including communication and radio training, hand-held computer training and maintaining an on-the-job diary. At the end of each week, a Supervisor assessed performance and planned action necessary to improve any areas of weakness.

Once the initial training had taken place, each employee sat the test to achieve the City & Guilds 1885 certificate. Covering the four key areas of legislation, customer service, health & safety and contravention codes, this

allowed the company to ensure that its training programme had been fully understood, in keeping with industry standards. All parking attendants were successful in achieving this qualification, reports Hayes.

Subsequent to all employees achieving their City & Guilds qualification, a Parking NVQ assessment programme was launched. "This vocational qualification involves the regular assessment of each candidate over a period of time by an official NVQ Assessor," she says. "All employees receive a salary increase on NVQ attainment, which has now been achieved by over half the team at Leicester, with the remaining employees on track to achieve this."

Recognising individual strengths

"Throughout the training process, every effort is made to ensure that each member of staff is multi-skilled, empowering each individual not only to perform their job to the best of their ability, but also to encourage an understanding of how the unit works as a whole," says Hayes. "Not only does this progress the development of the individual and minimise staff turnover, it also ensures adequate cover in the event of unforeseen sickness and absenteeism.

"To ensure that training remains high

benefits of training innovations over the course of 2007.

■ **Leadership and Motivation Training:** "It is VINCI Park's policy to inspire natural leaders to flourish and to provide opportunities for them to progress throughout the organisation" says Hayes. "One way of achieving this is through the Leadership and Motivation Training Course. This is designed to encourage delegates to think in terms of the future, together with their preparation for being proactive rather than reactive in their relationship to change and their role in motivating others."

■ **Contract Managers Training:** The contract manager acts as a hub between VINCI Park's head office, contract employees, clients and customers. "As such," Hayes says, "regular training is essential to equip them with the necessary tools to deliver the company's broader vision. This includes company briefings, as well as a combination of soft and procedural skills to better equip them for managing teams in the workplace, in-line with company guidelines."

■ **Supervisor Training:** "Supervisors are the eyes and ears of the Contract Manager and whilst still maintaining some enforcement responsibilities and attending all parking attendant training, they have additional training requirements to take them to the next level," explains Hayes. "This course equips them with the necessary communication, performance management, problem solving and time management skills to undertake their day-to-day duties effectively."

“Regular training is essential to equip on-street staff with the necessary tools to deliver the company's broader vision”

Debbie Hayes, HR director, VINCI Park

on the agenda of the Leicester contract, a supervisor has been selected and recently achieved the Group Training Certificate. This nationally recognised qualification has been designed to equip participants with the skills necessary to deliver training effectively to small groups. As a result, a resource is now readily available on-site to rapidly address basic skills gaps as they arise."

Continuous development

In addition to the initial programme designed and implemented to meet the training needs at contract start-up, it is VINCI Park's policy to provide continuous development for all employees, at all levels. The team at Leicester, has seen the

Training Award

- **TMA 2004 Training:** All VINCI Park employees have taken part in a tailor-made training course to equip them with an understanding of the impact of the Traffic Management Act 2004. "This has equipped them with the necessary information to perform their duties in line with the changes in legislation," says Hayes.
- **Investigations Training:** "When managing large teams of people, it is important to be able to identify the need to conduct an investigation and to be able to do so in a manner that is correct and fair," she adds. "This course, aimed at managers and supervisors, provides the basic skills needed to prepare, plan and conduct investigations in a variety of work situations."



Jane Wharton and Meera Syal

Beyond Leicester

Testimony to the quality of the training that was delivered in Leicester, VINCI Park was approached by and subsequently delivered the same training package to the rest of Leicestershire County Council, when they decriminalised their parking enforcement and kept the operation in-house.

Better staff, better services

The manner in which VINCI Park has introduced the new regime has earned praise from Leicester City Council, the local driving public, and transport-based services. The city's Events Action Group of emergency services, and local bus operator Arriva, have both commented on improvements in their vehicles' journey times — especially through the city centre — resulting from the effective administration of the new parking regime.

"There has been a notable improvement in levels of parking compliance in the city centre, and the city council has expressed the desire to extend the scheme to additional areas of Leicester," says Hayes.

Nigel Clarke, head of parking services for Leicester City Council commented: "The transition of responsibility for enforcing all of the parking regulations on the public highway from the Police to VINCI Park has been successful. This is largely due to VINCI Park's recruitment and training programme and its approach to re-educating the public to ensure an

increase in overall compliance with the regulations. Parking enforcement across the City is being further developed."

As part of the communications strategy for informing the general public about the new system, VINCI Park spent the first two weeks of the contract handing out 'warning tickets'. New recruits dealt with these, leaving the existing parking attendants to concentrate on their re-training.

VINCI Park's favoured approach from the outset has been 'firm but fair', with the emphasis on quality of service, not quantity of Penalty Charge Notices (PCNs) issued and an ethos of 'if in

doubt, don't issue'. The objective has been to achieve an effective, not oppressive, enforcement regime. "An exceptionally high PCN payment rate (for a city centre location) of 78% is testimony to the success of this approach," says Hayes. "This is further supported by a PA error rate of just 0.49%. These impressive statistics are in no small part due to the emphasis on employee training, both at the outset of the new contract, and its consistent application over the course of the year."

VINCI Park anticipates rising retention levels of staff, with the advantages of a solid training basis behind them.

Finalists

Our future in their hands: the BTEC Team Leader Programme NCP Services (Commended)

After creating the Driving Leadership Development Programme, NCP Services is ensuring there is a pipeline of talent via the development of a BTEC Level 2 qualification. Over 150 staff are now qualified team leaders.

Frontline team programme Town & City Parking

Town & City has grown rapidly. To communicate its core values to new staff the company created a DVD covering induction, health & safety, customer service and how to use new technology. It has also created a conflict management workshop.

Imagine!

Vertex Data Science

Moving Westminster City Council's back office from London to Scotland posed the challenge of recruiting, inducting and training new starters — many with no knowledge of parking, or London. Vertex developed a "learner-centric" training supported by a methodology called Einstein.

“The purpose is to put smiles on faces and make the day enjoyable”
Peter Griffiths, car parking manager, Barbican

The art of looking after the customer

The partnership between the Barbican's facilities team and Legion Parking has worked wonders

SINCE WINNING THE BARBICAN car park management contract in June 2007, Legion Parking Services has established an excellent working relationship with the facilities team at the City of London arts centre.

Since Legion started on the contract, there has been a 34% increase in the car park's occupancy.

Legion has worked in partnership with the Barbican in order to establish the client's specific objectives in terms of marketing and managing the car parks. "Our first priority was to upgrade the car parks to make them more attractive to existing users and potential users," says Legion's head of business development, Helen Kent.

The kinds of people and vehicles using the car parks throughout the day are incredibly varied. During the daytime there are many corporate clients and ticket holders, along with the general public. There are also events such as exhibitions and graduation ceremonies. At weekends the venue is also used for weddings. "All have their own special needs," says Kent. "In the evenings, the emphasis shifts to event customers, with many people attending the theatres, cinemas, special event halls and restaurants."

New more visible signage was installed

to direct users to the car parks. "We also immediately set about improving the lighting to all four car parks and now they remain lit 24 hours a day. Our staff are also on-site 24-hours a day to assist visitors, providing an extra sense of security, particularly at night-time. We were delighted that within only a few months of taking over the contract all the Barbican car parks won the Park Mark Safer Parking Award."

Enjoyable environment

The operator has set about creating what it feels is a more "enjoyable" experience for visitors.

A customer care centre was created by redecorating and carpeting the manager's office. Film and arts posters were hung on the wall to create a connection with the Barbican's purpose. This is operated by car parking manager Peter Griffiths with an open-door policy, meaning visitors now have a place to ask for advice and assistance. The car park also has an answer-phone and will respond to queries by both phone or email.

Staff had their titles changed to "Parking Customer Assistants" as this was perceived as more helpful and less confrontational than "Parking Attendant".

Music is now played throughout the car park to provide a relaxing

atmosphere. The music chosen reflects the flavour of the main event at the time. "It has been known to inspire people to do a little dancing outside the customer service centre on the way to an event," reports Griffiths.

Legion has thus to balance the needs of different customers at all times. "The same level of service is provided for all customers, with special additional services provided depending on the nature of the event. For example, many graduation ceremonies take place at the Barbican. These attract customers from across the UK and many arrive late and nearly all arrive nervous and a little in awe of the venue and the ceremony taking place.

"We undertake to meet and greet drivers attending the ceremonies and all are shown where to park and where the ceremony takes place," says Griffiths. "Many are escorted and reassured. The purpose of this is to put smiles on faces and make the day enjoyable."

Expanding range of services

The range of services on offer is expanding. They include enabling blue badge holders to reserve accessible parking bays via the Barbican box office or calling the car park manager directly. Parking for blue badge holders is also free.



Legion Parking strike a pose with host Meera Syal



Parking manager Peter Griffiths

Exceptional Customer Service

"Whilst facilities for blue badge holders can be expected in car parks, few offer free facilities, making the car parks an attractive destination for visitors with disabilities," observes Helen Kent.

In addition, Legion have set aside additional accessible parking bays for those customers who have a need but no blue badge, such as people with broken or injured limbs or who appear to be less mobile. These are administered directly by the Legion team.

An escort service is offered on request. This offers peace of mind to lone females and anyone who would rather not be alone.

Legion also offers a jump start service to those who find that they have flat batteries when they return to their car.

Ease of payment

A variety of payment systems are offered, including online booking, telephone booking and payments. Telephone payment is helpful for customers with cards not accepted by the pay-on-foot system. At the Barbican there is a wide variety of tickets and vouchers — corporate tickets, annual passes and special-offer tickets. In addition, there are over a dozen different types of vouchers. These are requested through the Barbican facilities team, which collects payments and manages the system. Legion is responsible for the local management and printing of all tickets and vouchers, and have been known to deliver some locally

by hand.

"Every ticket-holder who applies for parking tickets or passes now receives a welcome letter including details of how to use the ticket or pass," says Helen Kent. "This reduces concerns for them and assists in a problem-free visit. Welcome packs are also produced for every new individual or corporate customer."

Dealing with problems

Two problems Legion encountered on taking over the contract were double parking and speeding. "We have dealt with both in a positive and customer-focused way," says Peter Griffiths. "In the case of unacceptable parking, we have produced a letter that is attached to the windscreen advising the driver. We keep full details of all these vehicles and, after three letters, details will be sent to the Barbican for action. To date we have not had to go beyond two letters.

"In the case of speeding vehicles, we have the same letter system but the second occurrence is referred to the Barbican. To date, no letters have actually needed to be issued due to our patrols and customer care approach. Our staff always talk to people in the car parks, preferring to educate and assist rather than punish, so maintaining the image of the Barbican as a pleasant parking facility for all."

Building appeal and custom

"With the objective of attracting more

customers into the car parks," says Helen Kent, "our customer care centre has sold numerous corporate and individual tickets and passes just by chatting to visitors, listening to their needs and letting them know what the options are. We carry a selection of application and payment forms to be sent to the Barbican's facilities management team."

Legion is currently liaising with nearby businesses and hotels to attract additional

customers. It successfully negotiated with the Ironmongers Hall, which has agreed that Legion will be its preferred parking partner.

Peter Griffiths adds: "We have also formed links with three local schools for children with autism or learning difficulties and are working with them to enable parents and teachers to have easy and trouble-free parking close to the Barbican."

Finalists

APCOA high flyers

APCOA Parking Services (UK) (Commended)

APCOA's parking teams at BAA airports have introduced "e-ticketing", bigger bays to reflect the growing size of cars, faster bus transfers and eco-friendly "waterless" car washes. APCOA staff were also praised by BAA for how they handled the aftermath of last summer's suicide attack at Glasgow airport.

Exceptional customer services

London Borough of Camden Parking Services

Camden has adopted the principle of "standing in our customers' shoes". It has improved processes and procedures, and had made its publicity and information easier to understand. It has also developed bespoke customer service training.

The common sense approach to parking

Islington Parking Services Policy Team

The new "common sense" approach to parking saw Islington Council set up a panel of business representatives and residents and appointed a residents' parking advocate. Customer satisfaction ratings for street parking management have risen to 72%.

Parksafe

Parksafe (Systems)

Parksafe operates car parks where each bay is individually monitored by sensors as well as CCTV to increase a sense of security and smartcard pedestrian entry.



- Award winning On and Off Street Enforcement
- CCTV Monitoring and Enforcement
- Car Park Management and Security
- City & Guilds Accredited centres for Parking Attendant 1885 and other training
- Skyguard Lone Worker Protection System
- Parking Solutions for Retail, Leisure, Hotel and Business units



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THANK YOU

Parking Review and Landor Conferences would like to congratulate all the winners and finalists of the **British Parking Awards 2008**.

We would also like to thank all our sponsors and the judges

THE JUDGES

Parking Review would like to thank the judges for their input this year:

- Robin Bennett, Big Black Cat
- Douglas Campbell, Douglas Campbell Consulting
- Jean Farrow, Independent Consultant
- Peter Guest, Peter Guest Consultancy
- Mike Macey, MF Macey Associates
- Mark Moran, Parking Review
- Menny Rasores, Mr. Parking
- Kelvin Reynolds, British Parking Association
- Paul Sharpe, Equita
- Penny Wisder, Alpha Parking
- Chris Whapples, Whapples Consulting

SEE YOU ALL NEXT YEAR!

Public interest, private ente

Glasgow City Council created a Limited Liability Partnership to finance the revitalisation of its car parks



The LLP management staff



Being awarded a Park Mark

GLASGOW CITY COUNCIL owned and operated four multi-storey and 12 surface car parks as part of a large on and off-street parking and enforcement operation.

These facilities were well used, however they badly lacked the level of investment required to bring them to the standard expected by the public. As with other local authorities, Glasgow relied on capital funding to upgrade and modernise these facilities. However, this was reducing each year due to other competing council priorities. This resulted in a lack of funding to enhance these facilities.

"Glasgow is a major shopping and tourist destination and its vibrant retail sector had been well served by the affordable, convenient parking provided by the council," says William Taggart of the Glasgow City Council Land & Environmental Services. "There was concern that the option of disposing facilities would be of only short-term benefit to the council and the longer-term prospect was that a shortage of affordable city-centre parking and competition from out of town retail outlets would see a migration of shoppers from the city centre."

After much debate, the council approved a scoping study to identify possible alternative operating models that would meet its objectives including consideration of the disposal of the car parks. After considering the results of this study the decision was taken to prepare a business case for the creation of a Limited Liability Company (LLP) to operate the car parks. This would be a wholly-owned separate and distinct legal body that would have the ability to operate on a commercial basis and give the council the benefit of limited liability.

"There were two key drivers for this alternative service delivery model," explains Taggart. "Firstly, the LLP would borrow from the marketplace to fund the long lease of the off-road parking infrastructure. This would provide a significant injection of financial resources to the council which would provide the

prise



Wayne Myrden and Willie Taggart after receiving the award from Mr. Parking himself, Manny Rasores

financial capacity for resource re-direction towards other council priorities. Secondly, the LLP would secure funding for capital investment in the off-road car parks infrastructure that would not otherwise be available, given the level of competition for the council's limited capital resources. This would allow the LLP to carry out the necessary investment required to develop and grow the off-road business."

Although the potential financial resource from the borrowing capacity of the LLP would be less than the council would achieve from disposing of the car parks, this option meant that the council would retain ownership and secure benefit from the future realisation potential. In the interim, the company would be free to operate on a more commercial and customer-focussed footing and would have the capacity to invest to protect and potentially enhance its income base. The council would have the added benefit of setting required standards of governance of the new company through a framework of legal agreements covering the transfer of the business.

Taggart recalls: "A corporate project team from parking, legal services and financial services, supported by external legal and financial consultants, was given a challenging six-month period to prepare a business case and supportive financial model for approval by the council.

"This would cover every aspect of the existing parking operation and deal with wide-ranging issues such as the transfer of employees, the preparation of legal title for each of the sites to be leased to the new company and the preparation of detailed financial assessments of the projected performance of the company during the whole period of the proposed lease."

Complex state aid legislation, preventing any commercial advantage being given to the new company, meant that true market value had to be paid not only for leasing the car parks from the

council, but for each of the individual support services that the new company would subsequently take from the council and significant effort was required to identify and quantify each of these. To assist in the preparation of the financial model, a "soft" market-testing operation was undertaken to establish the appetite of the private-sector banking firms for lending to the new company.

"The whole operation was complex and required a substantial level of collaboration across all council

banks were challenged to scrutinise the financial model prepared by the project team and to come up with a package that not only maximised the level of borrowing but provided the LLP with the most favourable repayment terms and interest rate structure."

To do this, the project team advertised for expressions of interest from the banking sector and tender documents were subsequently issued to six major banking firms. As well as supplying the tenderers with copies of the approved

challenges:

- A substantial level of investment was required to upgrade and improve its off-road car parks
- The limited available capital funding was identified for other council priorities
- The council wanted to maintain the city's role as a major shopping and visitor destination

Having considered various operating models, the council had approved the creation of City Parking (Glasgow) LLP to operate and develop the City Council's parking provision. This brought benefits and also presented some challenges:

- The LLP secured a significant level of borrowing on favourable terms to finance the 35-year lease of the council's off-road car parks and for the immediate investment of £4.6m in the infrastructure
- The council would not be liable for any further capital investment or operating costs for car parks during the term of the lease period
- A considerable level of investment was achieved for the council whilst it retained ownership of these facilities
- As Member of City Parking (Glasgow) LLP, the council had ensured appropriate levels of governance through the various legal agreements that set up the new company.

City Parking (Glasgow) LLP is now set to install a fully-integrated access and control system covering all four multi-storey car parks and a further three main pay-and-display car parks. Further investment projects over the next 18 months will see structural refurbishment works undertaken at a major city-centre car park, followed by new waterproofing, lighting installation and networked digital CCTV and voice communication systems. The further investment of up to an additional £2m of lighting and CCTV and voice communications systems will be introduced across other car parks within their control.

“The whole operation was complex and required a substantial level of collaboration across all council departments”

Willie Taggart, Glasgow City Council

departments to comply with the timescale," says Taggart. "However the target date was met and the Executive Committee of the council approved the business case and financial model on 2 February 2007 and instructed the chief executive of the Council to complete all necessary arrangements to establish a Limited Liability Partnership for off-street parking by 1 April 2007 and to put the appropriate management arrangements in place to secure operations by 31 May 2007."

City Parking (Glasgow) LLP was incorporated at Companies House on 26 March 2007.

Having achieved council approval to establish the LLP, the final part of the process was to tender for the borrowing requirements of the company. "This in itself was an innovative approach," says Taggart, "since the traditional solution would be to have used the council's current bankers or to have simply approached a selection of banks to determine the most favourable borrowing terms. By tendering for this facility, the

business plan and financial model for the LLP, the project team had to set up a "diligence room" for the banks to scrutinise the legal documents in relation to the creation of the LLP, the lease documents for the car parks and the supporting financial information on the operating income and expenditure for the car parks themselves. Finally, before the submission of tenders a series of interview sessions were arranged for the banks to individually question representatives of the council, management of the new LLP and members of the project team on the information provided and on the proposals for taking the new company forward.

Following completion of this process, Lloyds TSB was appointed as funders to the LLP. Its bid secured the optimum level of funding of £46million, of which £4.6m would be set aside for a programme of upgrading and refurbishment works within the car parks.

At the outset of the process the council was faced with a number of significant



Consistent Kent

Kent Parking Managers' Group has agreed a landmark set of policies that create a consistent enforcement culture

COUNCILS ACROSS KENT and Medway have implemented policies for the enforcement and cancellation of penalty charge notices. It is the first time that a group of councils have collaborated to produce such a policy and 13 authorities have signed up to it.

The policies were created by the Kent Parking Managers' Group with the aim to increase transparency and openness. This means the public will be treated the same in terms of enforcement and cancellation, regardless of which district in Kent they are — except Maidstone.

The policies cover observation times for enforcement staff, the statutory grounds upon which representations may be made, mitigating circumstances and the acceptance or rejection of representations.

The councils have created the policies to inform the public and provide guidance to council employees working in the enforcement of parking and traffic regulations.

Clive Metcalf, chair of the Kent PMG said: "The public at large has good reason to expect a consistent approach and what is important about these policies is that they provide the foundation upon which fairness and discretion can be consistently applied."

Kent Parking Group

The Kent Parking Group (KPG) was formed in 1996, primarily in anticipation of the introduction of decriminalised parking. Its aims were to provide a countywide focus for parking managers and others involved in parking, traffic management and planning, to identify and make recommendations on matters of common concern. KPG also sought to enable the exchange of information between members, and to provide a

forum where those with information from the public or private sector can participate.

All councils in Kent, each of the 12 districts, Medway unitary and the county council, actively support the group, dealing with a wide range of issues both operational and strategic at meetings held every two to three months.

In 2003, the KPG's terms of reference were amended to include:

- To provide a framework to undertake investigations, make recommendations and take joint action on matters of common concern;
- To coordinate action in areas benefiting from a joint approach such as support systems
- To promote best practice in parking management with group members supporting benchmarking surveys and best value reviews.

The group now collaborates across a range of issues including: policy development; operational development; training; staff development and welfare and benchmarking to develop and inform best practice.

Further change came in early 2005 when the group split into two separate units. One deals with operational, day-to-day matters. The other — The Kent Parking Managers' Group (Kent PMG) — deals with policy and strategic issues. Kent PMG was instrumental in the establishment of the BPA south-eastern regional group in early 2007.

Development of parking enforcement guideline policies

Business at Kent PMG meetings often relates to issues of enforcement. Clive Metcalf, who is Canterbury City Council's parking manager, says: "It was the diversity of views, opinions, policies and decisions in connection with straightforward day-to-day matters that

was surprising and this raised the issue of consistency between authorities and across the county.

The question was put: "Shouldn't the recipient of a penalty charge notice issued in one place reasonably expect that it would be dealt with in the same way elsewhere in the county?"

The innovative idea of common enforcement/cancellation protocols was discussed in detail and the managers debated bringing together the various policies that were in use across the county into a single, collectively acceptable document.

Metcalf admits: "This was an arduous enough process for managers, but it also had to involve the elected members of each of the participating councils. Obtaining political 'buy-in' by councillors was essential for the project to succeed. This was obtained in all authorities, except one, which was no mean achievement."

Consensus obtained, the policy document was completed and published. Metcalf believes this was the first time in the UK that so many councils across such a large area had combined their efforts with the single aim of improving service efficiency. The policies address the following areas of operation:

- Observation times of enforcement staff
- The statutory grounds for representations
- Mitigation
- The acceptance or rejection of appeals

It was agreed that the document should be made public. However, Metcalf points out: "There was something of a sticking point as some feared that publication would provide a 'cheat's charter'. Although this was a possibility, it was accepted that publication was in the wider public interest. The benefits the initiative would provide included consistency of

approach across the county and greater openness and transparency, and improved understanding of the enforcement process."

A press release was prepared and issued to the media. Copies of the policy are available for inspection at the participating council's offices or by visiting their websites.

"We believe this approach will contribute to a reduction in the number of challenges and appeals, as well as helping to reduce hostility directed towards parking attendants and office staff," says Metcalf.

The policy document is under continuous review and the latest version reflects the implications of Part 6 of the Traffic Management Act 2004.

Interest in the Kent approach is growing. "Authorities in adjoining counties are now looking to sign up to the policy document, or at least copy it," observes Metcalf. "Although the key objective was to establish a high level of consistent decision-making across Kent, it must always be borne in mind that the document is only a guide. To best serve the interests of justice, each case must be decided on its own merits with account being taken of all available evidence and, most particularly, the exceptionality of any circumstances in question. This is consistent with the aspirations not only of the public at large, but also of the National Parking Adjudication Service (now Traffic Penalty Tribunal) and the Local Government Ombudsman."

In the Joint Report of the Parking Adjudicators for England and Wales 2006, chief adjudicator Caroline Sheppard stated: "I was delighted to receive a report from the Kent Parking Managers' Group. The document includes a wide range of policies for the purposes of informing the public and providing guidance to council employees. The adjudicators are encouraged by such cooperation



Some representatives of the group member councils with their trophy

between councils on projects which provide clarity, consistency and transparency in the parking enforcement process."

Clive Metcalf concludes: "Although guided by the policies, councils will ultimately and importantly always decide each case on its own merits, with emphasis being placed on objectivity, fairness and flexibility. The importance of flexibility in these matters has been recognised by the courts and, as a consequence, decisions must not be limited by being unnecessarily rigid and prescriptive."

“ This was the first time in the UK that so many councils across such a large area had combined their efforts with the single aim of improving service efficiency ”

Clive Metcalf, chair of the Kent PMG

Participating Kent Parking Managers' Group members

- Ashford Borough Council
- Canterbury City Council
- Dartford Borough Council
- Dover District Council
- Gravesham Borough Council
- Kent Highway Services
- Medway Council
- Sevenoaks District Council
- Shepway District Council
- Swale Borough Council
- Thanet District Council
- Tonbridge & Malling Borough Council
- Tunbridge Wells Borough Council

**F
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**Intercom at the NCP NOC
Complus Teltronic**

Intercoms at 150 NCP car parks across the country are linked to a National Operations Centre in Croydon. By networking over IP there are significant cabling cost savings.

**Exploding Parking Machines
East Sussex County Council & Stanley Alfa**

Pay & display machines in Lewes became the target of repeated fireworks attacks — the town boasts six bonfire societies. This led to the introduction of more robust machines and a public education campaign, including meetings in pubs.

**Lone worker protection
Legion Group, Skyguard & Nikaro**

Parking attendants can use Skyguard devices to alert Legion's control room when they feel threatened. The control room can then send in one of Nikaro's 1,000 patrol cars.

**Annual Report & Parking & Enforcement Plan
London Borough of Camden Parking Services (Commended)**

Camden's model Annual Report is more than a collection of statistics. It describes recent policy changes and is a record of new products and services. Well worth checking out.

**Older Persons Parking Initiative
London Borough of Hillingdon (Commended)**

Like parent & child bays, Hillingdon's "brown badge" scheme creates special

parking bays for elderly people who do not qualify for a blue badge.

**The common sense approach to parking
Islington Parking Services Policy Team (Commended)**

The new "common sense" ethos saw the council set up a panel of business representatives and residents. They recommended the council pay £25 every time it wrongly issued a ticket. Islington has also appointed a residents' parking advocate to resolve disputes.

**Londonwide differential parking penalties
TEP, London Councils (Commended)**

Differential penalties mean that offences that do not cause great inconvenience to others, such as overstaying on a P&D bay, attract a lower level of penalty. The idea is set to go nationwide.

**Peoplesafe
Rocksure**

After an employee collapsed on duty and could not use a phone, Pure Parking tested out an alarm and location device which looks like a name tag. Staff can now raise the alarm at the touch of a button.

**Operation Safer Streets
Westminster City Council**

The council works with the Metropolitan Police and JBW Enforcement to tackle problem vehicles such as illegal minicabs and to reduce anti-social behaviour and sexual assaults. Information officers advise cab passengers of the dangers they may be running.



On stage to collect their award: Cobalt Telephone Technologies' Luc Warner, Anne Snelson, Harry Clarke with Tim Duke from category sponsor NCP

Ring us today

Cobalt Telephone Technologies pitched its phone parking brand at both the public and parking managers

COBALT TELEPHONE TECHNOLOGIES is an established supplier of automated transaction solutions. It has been involved in supplying systems that allow motorists to pay for parking by telephone since 2001 when it sold a system to the London Borough of Wandsworth. It now supports over 40 other local authorities.

Phone parking

In response to demands from the larger London boroughs, in early 2004 the company decided to offer a phone parking product. In marketing terms this product would differ fundamentally from what Cobalt has done before. Previously the sales of Cobalt's penalty charge notice payment service had been business-to-business (B2B) sales. Such sales require relatively little marketing support.

In sharp contrast, this new offering would also have to be regarded as a business-to-consumer (B2C) offering. As such, Cobalt felt they needed to have a brand, a tone of voice and iconography all of its own.

Harry Clarke, Cobalt's commercial director, says: "RingGo has been Cobalt's first foray into consumer marketing. By applying principles of good marketing, employing a professional agency — Maxx Design of Newbury — and by taking a creative approach, a significant communication campaign has been executed on nothing more than a shoestring budget.

Deciding on a brand

When developing what was termed PP2 ("Parking Product 2"), the need for a memorable name came to the fore. "Whilst brainstorming the brand attributes and values the phrase 'ring and go' soon surfaced. This became foreshortened to 'ringo'," says Clarke.

A simple cartoon was created to accompany the draft name and presented to both London Borough of Hounslow and Nottingham City Council, as well as a Civica user group, in early 2004.

As the product was developed, serious work on brand development also began. "Above all else this would require the availability of a .co.uk and .com URL," says Clarke. "Despite attempts to generate alternatives, the sheer 'sayability' of ringo and the associations of familiarity, via the Beatles' drummer, was compelling. The short step of adding a further 'g' and the use of capitalisation occurred during a further brainstorming meeting, leading to RingGo being coined in May 2004."

The brand identity

Having coined the name, several colours were considered. Green was chosen for several reasons, including its environmentally-friendly connotations, being a good match for Cobalt's blue and the fact that it was not the red used by rival brand Parkmobile. As the logo developed the traffic light 'green for go' symbolism emerged.

By June 2004 the brand was finalised, with reversed out options being finalised in July. "A great deal of work, thought and effort went into laying this foundation of all the marketing that followed," says Clarke. "In a market where, to be frank, the use of brands is not strong, the result speaks for itself."

Having established the brand and

brand identity, the marketing plan was put together. This was built around two main strands, one marketing to the trade and one to consumers.

Most critically, it was felt that RingGo should have clear brand values. It was decided that these were: integrity, dependability, ease of use above all else, transparency (ie: no hidden call charges) and Britishness.

"The last factor needs some explanation," says Clarke. "All the competitors in the market were franchising products from abroad. These might employ 'transatlantic' accents, represent dates in an odd format (month/day rather than day/month) or perhaps transfer unsuccessful callers to call centres in a distant sub-continent. Whilst fully reflecting the multi-cultural nature of today's society in posters, it was nonetheless felt necessary to maintain RingGo as a distinctly British product as a point of differentiation, particularly given the likely profile of 'early adopters'."

Marketing to the trade

The main aim of trade marketing was to develop awareness of the RingGo brand and to stamp out the message that phone parking was just a passing fad. Secondary messages would be that RingGo was a brand of substance, provided by Cobalt, which is a British company.

Four communication channels were used. A specialised video was

“ In a market where the use of brands is not strong, the results speak for themselves ”

Harry Clarke, RingGo

commissioned to demonstrate the system in use in its trial version at Bristol Parkway. The trade press was used to publish adverts featuring images such as a dinosaur attacking a pay & display machine that would shock without offending.

Show stands were created using a triangular format to emphasis RingGo's mould-breaking approach — the triangular theme was picked up by the use of specially sleeved Toblerones. The company also created branded piggy banks, golf balls and mugs. "Piggy banks prove useful as either office kitties or are taken home and given to children who place them proudly on display," says Clarke. "Mugs have a universal appeal and can prove to be remarkably long lived, surviving long after other gadgets have been thrown out."

At Parkex 2006 the dominant brand on the stand was Cobalt, but by the time of the 2007 BPA autumn seminar the RingGo brand was dominant and the Cobalt name eliminated altogether to avoid confusion.

Marketing to the public

When marketing to the public the goals were completely different. "The main aim was to convince members of the public that they should try phone parking," says Clarke. Secondary aims were to leave the public feeling that, having tried it, they should use it again. It was hoped that



The Cobalt team with Meera Syal

individual motorists would be so impressed that they would become evangelists for RingGo.

From the very start it was decided the RingGo brand should be very deliberately brought to the fore — Cobalt was concerned that problems with rival systems might have a damaging knock-on effect on RingGo.

The two main ways of communicating with the public were via signage, posters and magazine advertising. "With signage it was decided that a strong house style be developed for all 'point of use' media," explains Clarke. "Magazine and poster marketing was highly tactical, with limitations. In the case of magazines this

RingGo details were also designed to be added in a modular way to existing signage. The company also used solar-powered 'talking signs' attached to the poles above payment machines.

"Members of the public who approach the meter are addressed by a disembodied voice which suggests they contemplate using RingGo," he says. "Banners have also proved a very effective way of promoting the service."

The voice of RingGo

When people do try the service, the aim is to greet them with a "bright and cheery" human voice. First-time users also receive a text message of welcome, designed to reinforce the sense of achievement.

Results

Marketing is undertaken with one aim only: to get results. From the trade point of view, in the space of less than two years, RingGo has become one of the recognised leaders in the field of phone parking in the UK.

"In terms of public awareness," says Clarke, "RingGo has now secured hundreds of thousands of regular users. The degree of use varies, but in some of the car parks where RingGo has been longest established, the majority of people pay by phone to park. This is despite the introduction of Chip & PIN credit card machines in some of these car parks. Indeed, in one RingGo-enabled car park the new Chip & PIN machines have been broken out of their concrete bases and moved elsewhere due to lack of use."

Finalists

The People's Republic of Islington Referendum on green parking Islington Council

Islington was the first local authority to hold a referendum on car use and climate change. In partnership with the Electoral Reform Services, residents were balloted on whether the cost of parking permits should depend on how much the vehicle pollutes. Almost 38,000 residents voted — 56% backed the idea.

Northampton's DPE marketing campaign Northamptonshire County Council Parking Services (Commended)

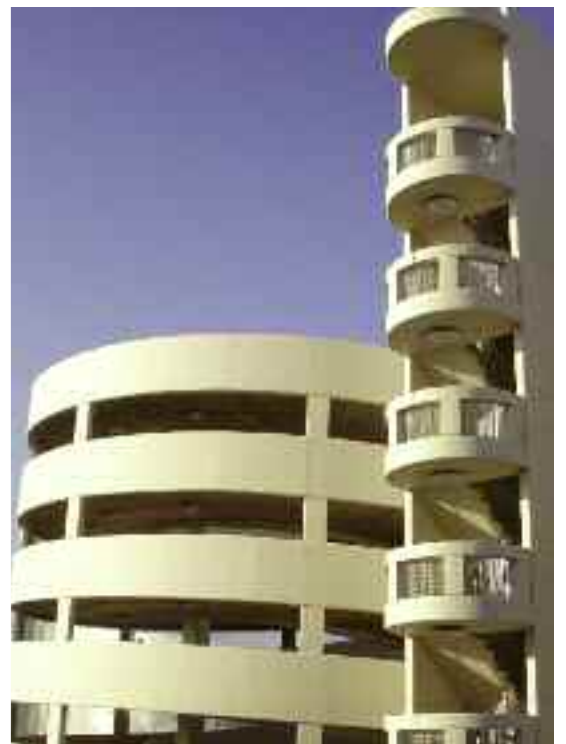
In summer 2007, Northamptonshire County Council accomplished what many consider impossible: it gained public support for more parking enforcement. The county ran a marketing and media campaign on the web, radio and in print. On the streets street, dummy tickets were issued to illegally parked cars.

PR and marketing campaign for Q-Park Wiltshire Associates

Tony Tingle ran in the UK launch of Q-Park. His task was to raise awareness of the company and its individual approach to car parking via a sustained PR and marketing campaign. Five years on we all know the Q-Park name.

1930s lines, 21st Century style

Ocean Car Park, Southampton: Art Deco lines form a white car park that is green throughout



THE NEW OCEAN CAR PARK at Ocean Village has been created for Marina Developments (MDL), which owns and manages the new Ocean Village Marina in Southampton. It was built on the site of an existing open car park to accommodate 776 cars, thus freeing up other open car park sites around the marina for future development including a hotel, events plaza, offices, flats and an innovation centre.

The car park was designed by a team comprising Tiger Stripe Architects, structural engineer Price & Myers, project managers and cost consultant EC Harris, planning consultants Savills and services engineer Slender Winter Partnership. It was constructed by Dean & Dyball, local contractors from Ringwood, under a design and build contract. Work commenced on site in December 2006 and the car park opened at the beginning of November 2007.

Design philosophy

During the early stages of the design, discussions were held with the Hampshire Police Force who were very happy with the design philosophy and

very supportive of the scheme. The car park was subsequently awarded the Park Mark Safer Parking Award on completion and this was presented at the official opening.

Jerry Bailey of Tiger Stripe says: "We perceived one of the biggest problems with the design of multi-storey car parks to be the high level of anxiety they create for the user. This anxiety has three root causes: a fear for physical security; a fear of disorientation or getting lost; and a fear of being unable to find or being beaten to a parking space.

MDL and Tiger Stripe's aim was to design a building which overcame these fears through the use of simple, clear design. Bailey says: "A very clear simple model to reduce disorientation, where there are only two aisles of parking, and one simple one-way loop at each level with no intermediate or split-levels, was therefore adopted. There is only one way up and one way down each located at the ends of these aisles and clearly visible. In this way, the circulation patterns are straightforward and easy to comprehend, whilst avoiding the possibility of short cuts and taking

someone else's parking space."

The team chose a form of construction and structure with large span capability which enabled us to avoid any columns within the parking bays or aisles, with flat slabs spanning across the length of two parking bays and the aisle in between. "As a result there are very few columns and very good visibility to aid orientation, and very few areas of shadow where people might lurk, in order that fears for personal safety are reduced," says Bailey. "The interior is well-lit and spacious, with generous headroom and flat non-shadowy ceilings, to create a safe friendly environment and reduce anxiety. We also sought to design a building where the distinctive features of the architecture inform how the building is to be used, aiding the subconscious understanding of the building for the first-time user."

All the horizontal and vertical circulation for pedestrians is brought to the front edge of the building and used to articulate the front façade, as are the two distinctive spiral vehicular circulation ramps. Bailey says: "These are bold, iconic, easily recognised and understood, and to the first-time visitor will clearly

highlight the way the car park works."

The design of the front façade has been made as transparent as possible in contrast to the rear (western) façade. "This creates an imbalance within each parking level so that users instinctively know which is the front and pedestrians are naturally drawn this way to find the lifts, stairs and exits, as well as the amenities of Ocean Village beyond," Bailey explains. The car park structure has been designed to be as elegant, efficient and economic as possible. Tiger Stripe wanted the structure to articulate and become the architecture of the building, giving it "real integrity" rather than over-cladding it with an applied style and gratuitous materials. Bailey says: "We believe this approach reinforces the legibility of the building and aids the subconscious understanding of how it is organised."

Site and context

The car park is sited on a previously undeveloped plot to the west (or rear) of the Ocean Village Estate. The building respects and reinforces the existing street patterns and acts as a backdrop to the rest of the development by containing the



Michael Glanville, Ocean Village Marina, and Jerry Bailey, Tiger Stripe Architects, receive their award from Chris Whapples

public space along the western boundary and giving a sense of enclosure to the “village”. The main pedestrian entrance to the car park is located at the end of the pedestrian walk through the development from the proposed hotel and marina front and terminates this vista, reinforcing this important route. A pedestrian crossing directly on this axis enables pedestrians to move easily to the rest of Ocean Village from the car park.

The building is set back from the street to create a public paved area with tree planting and landscaping. Bailey says: “To most people using the car park, their first experience of it will not be through walking from the marina to it, but upon driving into Ocean Village either along Ocean Way or from Neptune Way. Its legibility within the larger urban context has therefore been an important consideration. Sculptural spiral ramps at either end act as beacons for the building from afar, providing clear landmarks for orientation upon arrival. To further articulate the built form from inside and out, clear horizontal and vertical circulation for pedestrians is provided.

“These circulation elements dramatically punctuate the skyline when viewed from street level and help to relieve the horizontality of the walkways and parking decks, and reduce the apparent bulk of the building.”

Along the front of the building at street level marine stores are provided for boat owners in the marina. These are accessed directly from the paved public space. Whilst not in constant use, these stores provide a certain amount of enlivenment along the street frontage at either end of, and during, the day as people come and go from their boats in the marina.

Detailed design

The car park is arranged on ground and four floors with a solid roof over. Each floor possesses two traffic aisles with parking down each side and circulation ramps at either end. All vertical and horizontal circulation for pedestrians is arranged along the front edge of the

building to aid orientation. The front façade is kept as open as possible to draw people towards it from within.

The whole building is kept far enough away from the rear boundary to enable the walls to have sufficient openings in them for the car park to be naturally ventilated, avoiding the need for mechanical ventilation and keeping the

inevitable linearity of the parking decks.

The building is constructed using precast concrete columns, beams and walls with a ‘limestone’ stain finish. Apart from around the marine stores at street level, there is no applied external cladding on top of the concrete.

“The stores are clad in an untreated hardwood open vertical grillage which

are painted to match the outside, although the soffits are left unpainted,” says Bailey. “Large coloured graphics are then painted onto the walls and floors to aid navigation. The floors are painted with good quality traffic paint, with the actual parking area within each bay painted a bold colour — a different colour being used for each floor to aid navigation — rather than the bays being delineated with lines.”

Bailey continues: “Internally the effect is of a light and airy interior, and the reflected light from the painted roadways reducing the energy consumption by nearly 40%. The low energy light fittings are on daylight sensors means that they only come on when the natural daylight is insufficient. The use of bold colours and clear simple signage all adds to the philosophy of trying to avoid confusion and reduce anxiety, whilst making the building a pleasure to use. The lift lobbies are of a high standard of finish to

“Dead end spaces, litter traps and dark corners have been avoided”

Jerry Bailey, Tiger Stripe Architects

floor-to-floor dimension to a minimum.

The capacity of the car park is 776 spaces including 20 disabled spaces, which are located adjacent to the lift cores on each floor. There are two entrance lanes with automatic barriers and three exit lanes to help alleviate queuing on departure. “Because the car park serves a number of buildings on the marina site, most of the required disabled parking is provided adjacent to each building,” says Bailey. “Similarly all cycle parking provision is adjacent to each building, as cyclists are unlikely to park their bikes any further from their destination than is possible.”

The building has three 16-person lifts and an ambulant disabled staircase in the entrance lobby, with pay machines at ground level in the lift lobby and also in the general parking area. There are three further fire escape stairs leading from all floors including the roof directly to street level. All of these are accessed via pedestrian walkways along the front of the building at each level. The capacity of the lifts and stairs has been based on an occupancy level of 1.5 people per car. The escape stairs have semi-circular half landings, which are cantilevered out from the stair walls and thus project beyond the rest of the building offering panoramic views over the village and marina. Their curved forms together with the spiral ramps contrast with the

adds a more humane material at street level and discourages graffiti,” says Bailey. “Metalwork, where used, for balustrading panels, gates and screens is galvanised rigid mesh. All materials are chosen to be high quality and self finished to minimise maintenance.”

The parking decks are formed using hollow core precast concrete planks spanning onto the precast beams. Bailey said this avoids the need for any internal columns within the parking bay and aisle areas, thereby creating a very open and uncluttered interior. “The headroom generally is 2.4m clear to the underside of the flat ceilings, which is considerably more than in most multi-storey car parks and adds to the feeling of spaciousness,” he explains. “This has been specifically designed to accommodate larger vehicles and the clear headroom is never less than 2.125m at the bottom of ramps or below perimeter beams. Dead end spaces, litter traps and dark corners have been avoided.”

The car park’s decks and spiral ramps have been coated with a waterproof and skid-resistant, high-build polyurethane coating supplied and applied by TextureBlast (formerly Webb Highways).

Lighting within the car park is of a simple nature, but to a higher than standard level of illumination to aid security and a feeling of safety. “Internally the precast concrete columns and walls

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Spinningfields, Manchester National Car Parks (Commended)
Spinningfields Multi-storey serves a new business district being developed by Allied London Properties and Manchester City Council. Architect Carey Jones and contractor Amec had to create a contemporary building that worked within the constraints of a very tight site.

Milton Keynes Hospital Multi-storey MSCP Construction Team (Commended)
Milton Keynes Hospital NHS Foundation Trust worked with architect Ingleton Wood and contractor Norwest Holst to create a modern, green and welcoming car park. The design mixes metal, wood and stone to create a car park that does not feel institutional.

Best New Car Park

encourage users to take care of and respect the building and to set the tone for the rest of the marina development which is to follow. As our client, MDL, says: 'The Ocean Village experience starts here.'

Landscaping

Soft landscaping and tree planting is proposed in front of the building. The selection of light leafed mature trees planted at regular intervals within the paved public space between the car park and the street will act as a visual filter rather than a screen, thereby preserving views from and light into the various levels of the car park without compromising security.

Sustainability

A number of sustainability features are incorporated in the design:

- The building is entirely naturally ventilated.
- Rainwater is collected from the roof and used to irrigate the new and existing landscaping within the site.
- Light fittings are low energy fittings.
- All materials selected are wherever possible left unfinished and are selected to be good durable quality and properly detailed, resulting in a building of low maintenance.
- Hardwood where used is from renewable sources and is left to weather naturally.
- The staircase towers have been left

with open half landings, which are unglazed in order to avoid any unnecessary use of materials (or energy in their manufacture).

- The design generally has been refined to maximise the benefit from the materials used and to avoid any gratuitous detailing or over-cladding.

Construction

As much of the building as possible was prefabricated off-site to minimise construction time and site area needed for construction. Bailey says: "This helped to reduce the noise impact from construction upon adjacent office occupiers and residents. During the entire construction process there were no complaints from local residents, which is testament to the very well managed construction site and the team involved."

Operation and security

The car park is owned and maintained by MDL Developments, which operates it using a pay-on-foot parking management system supplied by SkiData which is being introduced throughout all parking areas within Ocean Village, as well as within the adjacent parking on Admiral's Quay. This replaces a previous pay & display system, thereby reducing concern and anxiety for the user, and assisting with management. The site is under 24-hour on-site surveillance through CCTV operated and controlled by the marina control office.



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NCP Services' Jason McFadden was vital to turning around the complex Northern Ireland Road Service contract



Jason McFadden is presented with his trophy by last year's Parking Person, Anjna Patel

“It takes an exceptional personality to ensure that the focus is spread across all areas”

Tim Cowen, communications director, NCP Services

JASON MCFADDEN, NCP SERVICES' contract manager for Northern Ireland, is credited with overcoming early setbacks in the delivery of the region's massive Road Service contract.

“Jason has made a huge impression due to his dedication and commitment to the operation of the Northern Ireland contract. I should like to stress that he has been instrumental in turning this into a contract we can really start to be proud of,” said Simon Richardson, parking enforcement manager for the Northern Ireland Roads Service (NIRS).

(KPIs). “In the early days a number of issues existed which resulted in not meeting the required KPI targets,” says Cowen. “Although NCP Services was experiencing a number of setbacks in the delivery of a successful operation, a number of people rose to the top in taking actions to resolve the issues and improve performance — none more so than Jason.”

McFadden's personality and skills had a tangible impact on the contract. “Jason's continual commitment and enthusiasm for his role and staff under

NCP Services had with the client was strained,” the company admits.

“Two main areas of concern for NIRS at that time were in the areas of cash collection and parking equipment. It was Jason who was put in charge of these and he worked very closely with the client to instill confidence in the relationship and at the same time established a very good working relationship.”

From these beginnings, Cowen reports that the relationship has gone from strength-to-strength to the point where

— to which will soon be added a clamping and removals operation.

“This will obviously increase the number of KPIs on which NCP Services is going to be measured and we are absolutely certain that with Jason McFadden we have the right person in place to successfully deliver this highly complex contract.

“Jason is one of those special individuals who relishes challenges and goes about them with an extremely positive attitude, and demonstrates leadership qualities essential to achieving

An exceptional person

A highly regarded team member

McFadden joined NCP in January 2001 as an area supervisor in Northern Ireland for the Eastern Division's Road Services for off-street parking. In addition to the contract, NCP was also managing six of its own car parks.

McFadden became a highly regarded member of the Northern Ireland team and in December 2006 he was promoted to divisional manager for the Northern Ireland decriminalised parking enforcement contract which NCP Services operates on behalf of the NIRS.

McFadden was an influential member of the implementation team, having responsibilities for matters such as recruitment and coordinating operational bases in respect of IT, equipment and preparing enforcement beats.

Soon after the commencement of the contract, McFadden took on additional responsibilities for the whole of Northern Ireland, which included: parking enforcement equipment and its maintenance; cash collection and reconciliation.

A challenging contract

“The Northern Ireland Road Service contract was like no other when taking into account the scale of the operation, which covers the whole of the province,” says NCP Services communications director Tim Cowen. “Staff being required to be managed from 22 locations and cash collection were just two of the major challenges that NCP Services were facing in the delivery of this high profile contract.”

The contract has approximately 350 staff and, due to TUPE arrangements, they came from four different organisations — NIRS, the police, NCP and Central Parking System. This resulted in there being four different payroll structures.

The contract was based on the British Parking Association's “Model Contract”, with 31 key performance indicators

him was infectious. This was a major contributory factor in achieving the significant improvement in the contract's performance,” says Cowen. “Jason became responsible for establishing a detailed and effective reporting process for presenting to the NIRS client.”

In May 2007 NCP Services decided to promote McFadden to the position of contract manager. “He had continued to demonstrate considerable capabilities required to not only successfully take on challenges, but to show leadership and bring others along with him.

Improving performance

McFadden had a significant impact in turning what was a poor performing operation into one which has now reached the maximum six elements which demonstrate that NCP Services is now delivering an operation that successfully meets all 31 KPIs.

“Without Jason's commitment and attention to detail it is strongly believed that this contract would not have reached this level of performance across the wide range of operational areas that are being measured,” reports Cowen. “With so many different KPIs it takes an exceptional personality to ensure that the focus is spread across all areas to avoid performance dropping on some of the more difficult or obscure KPIs. Jason was not at all fazed by this daunting task and set about it in a logical and structured manner.”

His first task was to identify all the KPIs and their targets, analyse existing data and talk to the relevant staff in order to identify what actions needed to be taken. He set up a monitoring mechanism which focuses daily on every KPI so that immediate action can be taken if required. “His attention to detail has rubbed off on all his staff,” says Cowen.

Managing a client relationship

“At the commencement of this contract it would be safe to say that the relationship

NCP Services is working well with all the NIRS departments.

The contract currently comprises three disciplines — on-street enforcement, off-street management and cash collection

objectives. We at NCP Services are delighted to have such an individual working for the company and who will undoubtedly go much further in his career.”

Finalists

Duncan Fraser

Head of traffic orders, Project Centre

Project Centre's Samantha Stewart said: “Duncan Fraser has helped shape the London we know today. Not only has Duncan led teams whose work has enhanced the lives of every Londoner, but he is held in the highest esteem by his colleagues and peers.”

Colin Hamilton

Parking attendant, Legion Parking Services (Commended)

Colin has 14 years experience running a car park on behalf of Stockport Council. He recently prevented a distressed woman committing suicide at the site.

Martin Ware, Legion Parking Services regional manager, said: “Colin is a special individual to whom customer service, commitment and responsibility come naturally.”

Luke Harding

Senior trainer, Alpha Parking

A former parking attendant, Luke is now a widely respected trainer.

Graham Greenwood of Warwickshire County Council said: “Quality training leads to an improved front line work force, the ‘public face’ of the parking industry, where in the past our image has suffered. Luke's work and commitment in raising training quality standards, is above and beyond the duties of his job.”

Bob Little

Senior car park attendant, The Gate Car Park, Propinvest

After a varied career, including 25 years in the Public House trade, Bob entered the parking sector as a parking attendant. His electronics and mechanical skills are put to good use.

Propinvest's Amanda Betteridge said: “Bob Little is an honest, hardworking parking attendant. His customer service is second to none and is a key part of the training and development programme for staff at The Gate.”

Steve Tucker

Contract & operations manager, Wandsworth Council

Steve Tucker leads a team of 195 council and contracted staff involved in enforcement, vehicle removals, blue badge fraud investigations and CCTV enforcement.

RJ Langridge, Wandsworth's head of engineering & design services, said: “Steve is a big man in more than stature and one who has made a major contribution to making the parking service at Wandsworth the successful operation that it is today.”

“ We believe we should take care of those who put themselves in danger to protect us. It is about the parking industry giving something back ”

Anjna Patel

A shining beacon for



It's a long road to...

LAST YEAR A GROUP OF parking professionals succeeded not just in raising almost £20,000 for a good cause but in pushing themselves to the limit as a close-knit team.

During her acceptance speech when named Parking Person of the Year 2007, Sandwell council's deputy parking manager Anjna Patel announced her plan to go on a 106-mile trek to mark her 50th birthday. Her chosen cause was British troops wounded in Iraq and Afghanistan, but when she revealed her intention to lead a parking industry group, parking managers knew there was no hiding place.

It was Anjna's tireless enthusiasm for parking that won her last year's trophy and the same dogged determination secured promises of funding and participation from organisations throughout the industry.

In April, Anjna scoured the exhibition stands of Traffex/Parkex for volunteers. In the end, 18 parking managers and army friends took part.

Besides Anjna, full-time members of the team were:

- Simon Cheung (Chipside)
- Jack Creeber (APCOA Parking)
- Luke Harding (Alpha Parking)
- Adele Harrow (Drakes Group)
- Azra Jennings (JBW Enforcement)
- Matt Kay (Alpha Parking)
- Sarah Lindsey-Smith (Langdale-Complex)
- Paul Moorby (Chipside)
- Cheryl Vickers (Newlyn)

Andy Cummins of Phoenix drove the minibus transporting luggage on the route. Parking people Andrew Marshall and Russell Peacock of APCOA, Richard Lewis of CCS, 'Pogie' Powell of the Grenadier Guards, Lesa McInnes of the Army Welfare Service, Laird Webster of the Royal Marines and Rob Procter of 4 Rifles joined the walk for a day or two each.

"There was great camaraderie in the group," says Paul Moorby, managing director of Chipside. "You had people from right across the parking industry, including contractors, local authorities, IT and debt recovery. We were all there, a group that would not normally spend time together,

shining a beacon for the parking industry."

The chosen route from Kendal in the Lake District to Whitley Bay on the Tyne & Wear coast is stunning and varied, but anyone who has completed a charity walk will know that 106 miles in four days is not for the faint-hearted. Even those team members who once pounded the beat, such as Alpha's Luke Harding, found themselves with agonising aches and pains from the relentless schedule.

"When you are walking 26 miles a day it is not an easy task," explains Jack Creeber, then the business development manager of APCOA and now with NCP Services. "Some members of the team found it seriously hard — I have no idea how they managed to get out of bed and carry on."

"I have run the London Marathon, but this is the hardest challenge I've ever faced," says Adele Harrow, marketing manager of Drakes. "But on the last day, when we walked along the beach to Whitley Bay, it all seemed worthwhile."

Due to the success of the walk, Anjna has set up a charity called Parasol to help fund the non-clinical needs of injured British troops, such as immediate provision of clothing, toiletries and phone-cards, as well as loans for themselves and their families.

Last word goes to Anjna, who has now reached her 50th birthday unscathed. "This was never about supporting the war in Iraq, but we believe we should take care of those who put themselves in danger to protect us. It is about the parking industry giving something back," she explains. "As with all good teams, there was no competition between its members. It was just a wonderful experience you would never be able to replicate. Wouldn't it be great if this was reflected back into the industry so that people could work together in this way on a day-to-day basis?"

To find out more about Parasol visit: www.parasolcharity.org

Alastair Turk is managing director of Alpha Parking, a sponsor of the British Parking Awards



Journey's end

Alistair Turk celebrates Anjna Patel's orchestration of the 106-mile Parasol charity walk

the parking industry



Clockwise from top left: Some of the walking team reunited on-stage; Anjna and APCOA's Andrew Marshall, who joined in for part of the 106-miles; Anjna and Jean Farrow, who presented the Special Award; two Brummie girls strike a pose