

# The Winners 2007

**PARKING** Review  
presents

## british parking awards 2007

Friday 9 March  
The Dorchester Hotel





# british parking awards 2007

## And the winner is...

NEARLY 500 PEOPLE working in the UK parking industry gathered at in London on 9 March to hear BBC presenter Adrian Chiles reveal who the winners of the British Parking Awards 2007 were. The Dorchester provided a truly glamorous backdrop for *Parking Review's* annual awards, now in their sixth year. This year's event, organised by Landor Conferences and endorsed by the British Parking Association, was the most competitive yet, both in terms of the number of entrants and the sheer quality of the entries.

Over 95 submissions were made to the competition, posing a real challenge to the panel of judges, chaired by *Parking Review* managing editor Mark Moran and former Winchester City Council chief engineer David Marklew. The other judges were parking consultants Alasdair Macmillian, Manny Rasores and Chris Whapples, BPA technical director Kelvin Reynolds, architectural writer Jeremy Stewardson and Cyril Sweett associate director Liam Collins.

Meetings of the judging panel underlined just how impressive the bulk of entries were this year, making shortlisting a truly challenging task. However, shortlists and winners were finally selected, and then revealed to an emotionally charged audience. The quality of the buildings competing for the infrastructure awards — Best New Car Park and Best Refurbishment — underlined just how far car park design has come. Clean, bright, well-lit and well-signed structures are now the norm. The winning entries — Q-Park's Cedars in Taunton and Makers' refurbishment of Bedford's Queen Street car park — really were projects with that something extra. Challenging expectations won developer Oakmoor Deeley a Special Award for its transformation of Coventry's Leigh Mills multi-storey into Belgrade Plaza.

Pushing the boundaries was a key feature of the

Partnerships in Parking (PiP) entry that won the Joined-up Thinking Award. PiP has seen a group of six London boroughs and Transport for London overcome territorial divides and administrative hurdles to specify and procure innovative payment systems. The other categories underlined how the awards have become a people focussed competition. The Meadowhall team (Effective Off-street Management Award) are absolutely committed to their customers, while BAA Retail Services' desire to engender excellent service amongst its contractors won it the Exceptional Customer Service Award.

National Car Parks' willingness to transform its management structure from the boardroom down won it the Training Award. A similar commitment to transformation that has driven Alastair Gilchrist's department at Westminster made it Parking Team of the Year, while boundless energy and a real belief in both her borough and her mission saw Sandwell's Anjna Patel named Parking Person of the Year.

An inspiring moment came when the London Borough of Islington became recipients of The Outstanding Achievement Award. This was collected by parking policy manager Keely Woods, the recently retired (and legendary) Jean Farrow and youthful but experienced engineer Sylvie Glossop.

Wandsworth's Parking Permit Fraud Team's triumph in both the Effective On-street Parking and its status as Overall Winner was a recognition of just how well Chris Green, Keith Parcel and Ashley Brandon function as parking professionals.

The 2007 awards have set the bar even higher for the 2008 event, which will be launched on 21 September with a major party at the Royal Opera House.

Visit [www.britishparkingawards.co.uk](http://www.britishparkingawards.co.uk)

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*Being a lefty liberal I am sympathetic with oppressed minorities, so I have found myself defending you!*



*An acceptance speech should be sincere, full of humility and brief. The audience has got to be attentive and offering generous applause. You have succeeded on all counts. You are a good bunch.*



## The London Borough of Wandsworth Parking Permit Fraud Team is combating blue badge fraud

# Blue watch

THE BLUE BADGE SCHEME is intended to allow parking concessions to people with difficulty in walking to allow them to park as close as possible to where they need to go. As competition for parking spaces has grown in urban areas, particularly inner London, local authorities responsible for parking enforcement have recognised that there is widespread abuse of these blue badges. In 2004 the London Borough of Wandsworth established a small Parking Permit Fraud Investigation Team. Initially there were just two members, Chris Green and Keith Parcel.

Like most local authorities, at the time Wandsworth had no experience of the processes necessary to prosecute those people who deliberately and persistently abused the system for their own benefit.

Keith Parcel said: After 20 years in banking, I joined the parking enforcement team at Wandsworth in 2003, initially working on special projects and helping draw up the terms of reference for the parking enforcement contract. In 2004, the opportunity arose to be part of a two-man team tasked with looking into, and tackling, the rising problem of blue badge abuse within the borough. My analytical background helped me to assist in drawing up policies and procedures for an area of activity that was extremely new for local authorities."

Chris Green, meanwhile, had a public sector background, and had worked as senior investigation officer for the DVLA. "I was experienced in approaching and interviewing offenders, preparing statements and acting as a professional witness at court. Although I had been an investigator before, preparing legal cases from start to finish was a completely new challenge and I was excited at the prospect of being part of a new team setting up systems from the start."

Green said that he and Parcel were given a great deal of autonomy and the council showed immense trust in them to come up with the goods on their own. While it was clear there was a problem, Wandsworth had very little idea of its extent.

"Initially we were looking at the wider area of parking permit fraud, but after our first couple of walks around the controlled streets of the borough it quickly became clear that by far the greatest potential for fraudulent parking

was the blue badge scheme," recalls Green. "Whilst resident and business parking fraud remained within our remit, it was agreed that we had to the bigger problem."

Initial surveys enabled Green and Parcel to come up with a crude but realistic "guesstimate" that a 1,000 blue badges were being misused in the borough every day. This consisted of people who were misusing badges on a daily basis (commuters) and the more prevalent but elusive casual abusers (shoppers, etc).

"But what could we, as a local authority, do about it?" Green asked. "Blue badge abuse is a criminal matter but, whilst the Metropolitan Police will look at stolen badges, this is very low on their list of priorities. As the parking authority, it was down to us to enforce the scheme in the borough."

The first things Green and Parcel did was look at what legislation was available to them and then at what other councils, such as Camden and Tower Hamlets, were doing to enforce the scheme.

A policy paper on how the team would approach the issue was agreed by the council in September 2004 and the pair went to see Ashfords, the external solicitors that the council used. "We then had to learn how, once we had the evidence, to put a file together for the prosecution to succeed," said Green. "We spoke to and visited colleagues in Legal Services and other departments, such as Trading Standards, to see how they dealt with their prosecutions. There

is no training course for prosecuting blue badge offences — at least not yet! To a great extent we are self-taught."

However, Green and Parcel did receive some formal training, such as:

- Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act (RIPA) 2004, a presentation by the Metropolitan Police
- Police and Criminal Evidence Act (PACE), provided by Wandsworth Parks Police
- Local authority prosecutions
- Introduction to advocacy
- Interviewing suspects

In May 2005 the pair were joined by a new investigation support officer, Ashley Brandon, who had worked in the council's community support and anti-social behaviour units. "I was interested in this role as it provided a number of opportunities to assist an already successful fledgling team in targeting a growing problem," said Brandon.

"With my administrative background, as well as brief experience within the anti-social behaviour unit, I am able to assist with the management of databases, gathering of background information and preparation of case files. This has contributed to the streamlining of the process of identifying blue badge fraud so that officers out on the street are able to contact me in the office to run checks on vehicles and badges, making the initial on-street investigation process highly efficient."

The team will investigate offences such as casual misuse of a friend or relative's blue badge, systematic misuse of a

### Finalists

#### Cambridge City Council & Legion Parking Services (Commended)

The 2006 winner, Cambridge has continued to improve its service. Its permit regimes are more customer-friendly. Staff training has been accredited and its website enhanced.

#### Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council & APCOA

Sandwell and APCOA seem to get on well. Their staff even share an office! The attendants patrol the borough on scooters, meaning no illegal parkers are safe.

#### London Borough of Southwark & APCOA (Commended)

APCOA and Southwark council have worked together for a decade. The contract covers camera enforcement of bus lanes, housing estate parking and the provision of over 50 lollipop people.

#### Transport for London

The Traffic Enforcement Camera Operations team works with the Metropolitan Police to manage parking on the Red Route network. It has 850 traffic wardens and operates hundreds of cameras. It is planning a city-wide removal service.



*The success of the Blue Badge Fraud Team is truly commendable. Their commitment and dedication towards investigating offences is reflected in the consistent achievement of successful prosecutions of offenders.*

Steve Tucker, parking enforcement manager, Wandsworth

badge, use of a stolen badge, purchase of a forged badge on the black market or production of laser-copied replica.

In most cases of one-off casual misuse, the team normally issues either a verbal or a written warning to the offender and, where practical, issue a penalty charge notice to the offending vehicle. For all other types of offending the team looks to prosecute, gathering evidence through investigation and surveillance. "We will take the case right through the whole prosecution process including offences of theft, receiving and forgery," said Green.

An ordinary misuse enforcement case sometimes starts with a report from a member of the public who has seen someone that they know, or believe to be able-bodied, using a blue badge. Reports are also received from parking attendants and other council departments. "Most of our cases, though, start from our own observations and this was particularly so in the early days. We target areas around shops, places of employment and stations where parking is limited and a blue badge is of maximum value to anyone who may be misusing it."

Badges issued outside the borough but regularly used in the same parking area will trigger an interest. If the team are suspicious they will check on the badge to see if it has been reported stolen or lost. If the age, sex or race of the person using the badge differs from the badge holder they will investigate.

To instigate an investigation the team must apply for permission to carry out covert surveillance under RIPA 2004. "We have to make a case for each surveillance and we must demonstrate that it is legitimate and proportionate and that it is to prevent or detect a crime," Green said. "We will then attempt to witness, video and photograph the alleged offender arriving, parking and departing, using the badge without the genuine badge holder being present."

Once sufficient evidence has been collected the offending vehicle will either be removed to the pound or an approach made to the alleged offender.

"In most cases we will impound the vehicle and the person using the car will have to provide identification to have the vehicle released and will be asked to hand over the badge," he said. "The badge, if genuine, will be returned to the

holder with a warning letter, or, if the holder is not a Wandsworth resident, sent back to the originating authority with a written explanation of how the badge was misused."

The team then puts together a prosecution file with witness statements, video footage, photographic evidence, interview tapes and other exhibits, plus an outline of the case, costs, claim, schedules and unused materials. At all times the team must abide by the rules of the: Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984 (PACE); Criminal Procedures in Investigation Act 1996 (CPIA); Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000 (RIPA); Data Protection Act 1998; and Freedom of Information Act.

John Smith, solicitor at Ashfords, said: "I have been prosecuting cases for Wandsworth for around 18 months and have presented many cases on behalf of the team. The presentation of these cases has been meticulous and thorough, resulting in most defendants pleading 'guilty' when presented with the evidence."

Since the team took its first case to court in February 2005 it has investigated over 680 alleged blue badge fraud cases. It has achieved over 405 successful prosecutions under the Road Traffic Act 1984, Road Traffic Act 1991 and Theft Act 1968. Of these, 343 were summary offences (those only heard by Magistrates Courts) for misuse of badges and 62 were "either way" cases that can be heard at either Magistrates or Crown Court as they involved deception, theft or receiving stolen goods. The team has achieved a 99.5% conviction rate. Over £160,000 has been paid out by offenders in combined costs, PCNs and new permit applications.

The team's activities have generated much local press interest, as well as a Radio 4 *You and Yours* documentary. The council names and shames offenders on its website. A particular highlight was Green tuning into a late-night radio debate about blue badge abuse sparked by one of the team's prosecutions.

Green concluded: "Disabled listeners spoke of their delight, as did those who were able-bodied but resented seeing people getting away with it unchallenged. A parking discussion where the council was not the villain but was actually getting it right. This is what we had always striven for."



Chris Green, Ashley Brandon and Keith Parcel proudly show Wandsworth's two trophies



*Patients are arriving for their clinic appointments on time and relieved of stress caused by the former parking difficulties. Patients have enough worries about hospital appointments, so to reduce their anxiety in any way is a big step forward in customer care.*

Chris Hoeller, matron general OPD



Nigel Williams said Q-Park was proud to receive the recognition of its peers

## Q-Park's Cedars car park at the Musgrove Park Hospital, Taunton, impressed the judges

TAUNTON'S NHS TRUST was facing a car parking dilemma. The existing surface facilities were in a state of disrepair with poor, degenerating markings and a growing number of potholes. Pressure was growing to free space for new clinical buildings and the Trust had to reduce staff permits by half to 1,600. The surrounding streets suffered from stifling traffic congestion.

Comments on the poor car parking in the local press were supported by a tide of negative public opinion, manifested by direct complaints and frequent "Letters to the Editor" in local papers.

But financial constraints meant that the Trust could not afford to build a car park — either short or long term.

The Trust thus asked Q-Park to see if their hopes of a new multi-storey car park could be realised without incurring an enormous capital cost. Q-Park proposed a public-private partnership scheme that would supply a 736-space multi-storey and produce car parking revenues for the Trust.

### Considerate builder

The use of a modular building system was preferred as a way of providing a clean and safe build process. The car park's steel frame and concrete decks were pre-fabricated by Vollack Parkhaus and fitted together on site. This reduced insitu works and potential construction mistakes.

A mock-up of one full bay, including structure and façades, was created at an early stage so sub-contractors could see how the various elements — lighting, cladding impact protection, drainage pipes — actually integrated.

The parking decks are fully coated. Black pads are used to demarcate the parking bays. The colour of the pad also disguises marks such as oil stains, enabling the car park to maintain its clean feel.

Prior to and during construction, Q-Park and the Trust held a series of consultation meetings with local

residents and the wider community, as well as with hospital staff representatives and managers.

Minimising disruption was a key consideration during the 15 months it took to create the new car park. Q-Park minimised queuing and traffic congestion throughout the construction period by drastically reducing staff permits by implementing its 'Rainbow' healthcare permit management IT system, maximising spaces across the site and facilitating a number of park & ride and park & walk schemes in conjunction with the Trust.

### A Good neighbour

The potential problem of local housing neighbouring Musgrove Park being overlooked by the multi-storey car park has been assuaged by grading the elevation and using cedar louvres to clad the exterior, providing an aesthetic exterior that prevents headlight glare. The façade also ensures that noise from the car park is minimised.

### Design

The car park has a steel frame and concrete floors. It is clad in cedar wood louvres and features natural stone gabions. These materials were selected to soften the building's impact and allow it to blend into the area.

At the rear, where the car park faces residential houses, the elevation's graded louvres prevent them being overlooked and reduce headlamp glare.

### Well lit

Lighting in the parking areas is achieved using two lines of lamps located at the junction of the parking bays and driving aisles. This ensures that the brighter areas are on the edge of the driving aisles, encouraging pedestrians to walk along these areas.

The use of high quality lighting provides a safe environment and meets the requirements of the Park Mark Safer Parking Award. Lights are directed into





# A natural winner

the car park, further limiting light pollution. Security lighting is controlled in vacated areas, such as the top deck at night and unoccupied decks. This helps reduce energy use.

The car park elevations take advantage of natural light, as do glazed panels on the staircase façade. Lighting above the bays near the perimeter is sensor-controlled so, if daylight levels are high, the light fittings will turn off automatically. Vehicle entrances have transitional light — 200 lux instead of 100 lux — to allow drivers time to adjust to light levels, and ensure those leaving are not blinded by bright daylight. A uniformity factor of 0.55 ensures there are no dark or too bright areas.

## Art for life

The car park incorporates a light sculpture, designed and installed by West Country artist Peter Freeman. The 'Art for life' piece is incorporated into the façade and consists of fluorescent fittings with coloured filters installed between the angled slats. The coloured bands of light create a luminous woven texture. Additional lights in the stairwell create a 3D experience.

## Management system

Q-Park used the Parking Management System (PMS), developed in partnership with WPS Parking Management Systems.

All actions and movements around key areas of the car park are recorded, including those within the attendants' lodge or at ticket machines, pay stations and barriers. The PMS allows a variety of staff and visitor tickets and passes to be issued and tracked.

The PMS pay stations accept cash and credit/debit payment, while the barriers will accept tickets and passcards.

Q-Park has implemented its central control room operation where supervision of all payment, access control and CCTV systems can be switched from the hosts' lodge to the company's national remote control room.

This allows car park staff to leave the lodge at quiet times and carry out tasks such as cleaning and escorting drivers to their cars.

## Maintenance

Q-Park's 'Safe & Clean' plan is designed to ensure each part of the car park is allocated a place on the daily, weekly or monthly cleaning schedule.

Q-Park's dedicated facilities management team operates a planned maintenance software programme — Homerun — which provides an inventory of all elements within the car park. This enables maintenance costs to be accurately forecast.

Q-Park also operates a facilities management software system — Agility — which allows management of equipment and assets with calendar-based preventative maintenance. The system raises work orders and acts as a work planner.

Q-Park sought to install materials and systems that are durable, have low maintenance yet were aesthetically pleasing. For example, the T5 light fittings have been selected for the parking areas because they offered a 15% reduction in running costs due to lower wattages and a 25% longer lamp life — 15,000 hours compared to 12,000.

## Customer safety

The car park's clear-span structure means there are no hidden spaces. The main entrance has automated doors with large vision panels, while the lift doors are fully glazed, so users do not feel enclosed. The main staircases have glazed screens to take advantage of natural light to make them bright and instill a feeling of safety in users.

The car park has one-way circulation, so there is no crossing of vehicles.

Although dedicated disabled parking bays are located conveniently at the front of the hospital, some disabled users are now choosing to use the multi-storey as

the building is fully DDA-compliant.

Pedestrian routes are clearly marked out using zebra-crossing type flooring.

## Signage

Signage within the car park is in the Q-Park house style. Q-Park uses a colour code to differentiate between signage for pedestrians (green) and vehicles (red).

When it comes to road marking, Q-Park says its philosophy is 'less is more'. It believes when the perspective is right an arrow will lead traffic in the right direction — no other markings are necessary.

## Staff working conditions

The Q-Park lodge is a climate-controlled building that houses the PMS central computer, flat screen CCTV monitors, office and kitchen facilities.

Q-Park staff have full use of the Trust's welfare facilities and staff restaurant.

A dedicated Q-Park buggy is used by staff to move around the site, making their security presence more visible.

There are two parking attendants on site 24 hours a day, seven days a week, plus supervisors and managers who are on site from 7am to 10pm weekdays.

## Security

The NHS Trust is responsible for security on site, and Q-Park provides additional CCTV and 24-hour patrolling. The multi-storey and surface car park have been awarded Park Mark status and the European Parking Standard Award (ESPA).

## Green Car Park

The Rainbow permit management system has reduced administration by allowing online applications. The management system is contributing to the Trust's Green Travel Plan, which seeks to encourage car sharing and more use of public transport, cycling and walking. Rainbow enables the administration of a points-based system to issue permits. This takes account of factors such as home location, shift patterns and car requirements — child care, school run, dependents etc.

## Usage & income

The car park was ahead of forecasted budget at the end of 2006. There have been no queues into the car park, reducing stress and anxiety.

The Trust reports that patients are now increasingly on time for their appointments.

## Finalists

### Belgrade Plaza, Coventry

Submitted by Oakmoor Deeley Partnership  
Building Belgrade Plaza involved taking the Leigh Mills car park and doubling it in size. It now has over one thousand spaces.

### Shields Road Subway Station (Commended)

Submitted by Glasgow City Council  
Shields Road is a busy park & ride site. The car park's design echoes that of Charles Rennie Macintosh's Scotland Street School Museum.

### Broadgreen Hospital, Liverpool

Submitted by Vinci Park  
This car park has created order out of chaos at a busy hospital. It provides a safe and secure parking place for staff, patients and visitors.

### Shudehill Interchange (Commended)

Submitted by NCP & Manchester City Council  
Designed in the wake of an IRA bombing, this monumental car park and transport interchange makes dramatic use of glass and steel.



# Royally deserved

Makers Parking's revamp of Bedford's Queen Street multi-storey is a model project



Makers' Simon Lamb and Peter Cowlard with Bedford Borough Council's Diane Hale and awards host Adrian Chiles



*We thank Bedford council for the opportunity to show a lot of innovation. They have shown a lot of confidence in us.*

*Peter Cowlard, Makers*

**THE QUEEN STREET** multi-storey car park is one of three car parks operated by Bedford Borough Council. Situated on the edge of the town centre, the car park can accommodate 652 cars. It is used by employees of local businesses and is used by the council for staff parking, freeing up the town centre car parks for short-term shoppers' parking.

The refurbishment works were the third in a series of car parks to be undertaken by Bedford Design Group and Makers Parking.

The package of works was designed to give the council "Best Value". The scheme followed the completion of multi-storey refurbishments by Makers at Lurke Street (winner of the 2005 British Parking Award) and River Street. With these two sites completed on budget, funding was made available for the third car park.

Makers and Bedford agreed the scope of the works — to stabilise structural deterioration and enhance the parking experience.

Queen Street was built in 1978 as a lift-slab structure with ten levels. Some refurbishment works had been carried out in the past, but the council wanted to significantly extend its operational life. This would entail structural repairs, new deck coatings, re-lighting, new payment facilities, new staff offices and improved security. The car park also had to become Disability Discrimination Act-compliant.

#### Investigation

The first phase of works commissioned by Bedford Design Group was extensive testing of the concrete to determine the rate of deterioration and extent of the problem. This included assessment of the vehicle edge protection barriers and a full half-cell survey of the deck's most

adversely effected by chloride ingress.

This monitoring and analysis took place over several years, until it was recognised that the problems were steadily worsening and action was needed sooner than later.

Testing revealed areas of high chloride concentration within the concrete and the start of corrosion of the encased reinforcing steel over significant areas of deck slab. In line with the recommendation of the Institution of Civil Engineers' *Multi-Storey Car Park Inspection and Maintenance Guidelines*. This included structural and material assessments.

#### The works

The facility was not heavily used and consequently the phasing of works could be accomplished in a way that minimised disruption to users. Bearing in mind the car park's important role within

the community, it was important to carefully plan the works.

The contract period was 36 weeks. Repairs were carried out on the deck levels 5, 6 and 7, followed by 3 and 4, with 1 and 2 done last. A short, total closure of three weeks was necessary to complete the entry and exit ramp areas.

#### Concrete repairs

Concrete repairs were defined and carried out, together with significant use of electro-chemical techniques to control the effects of ongoing corrosion. Repairs were also carried out to the heads of the wall apertures, where bricks were coming loose.

Extensive use was made of non-invasive technology in the form of surface-applied corrosion inhibitors. This treatment is monitored via a "virtual private network" which collates information from probes embedded in

#### Findlists

##### Parrock Street, Gravesend (Commended)

Submitted by Brett Construction

This popular surface car park was suffering from subsidence. It now has an improved layout and even more spaces. There is even room to enable the building of much needed new homes in the town centre.

##### Drovers Way & Russell Avenue, St Albans (Commended)

Submitted by NCP

NCP St Albans took two run-down car parks in the historic city and turned them into popular shoppers' car parks. Crime is down by half and revenues up.

##### Quadrant Car Park

Submitted by Makers and City & County of Swansea Council.

This car park serves a busy shopping centre. The refurbishment has stopped structural decay and has created a secure parking experience.

##### Ankerside Shopping Centre, Tamworth

Submitted by USL StructureCare

Ankerside is the economic heart of Tamworth. Its car park has new payment systems, CCTV and lighting. It was made more colourful and watertight.



## Best Refurbishment

the concrete. This system has the ability to act as a "smart" building system, able to optimise energy use in lighting, lifts and so on.

### Decking

The new waterproofing was designed to prevent further chloride-laden water permeating the concrete decks. The decks also needed to be safe and slip-resistant for pedestrians and vehicles. The slip-resistant values conform to the current requirements for wet and dry conditions of the TRL testing-method.

The car park surfaces are colour-coded to demarcate parking bays, car driving aisles and disabled parking bays.

A number of bays close to the car park office have been dedicated to disabled users. A number have also been marked out as parent & child bays.

The car park has been re-signed throughout, with large colourful roundels signalling the level number.

### Lighting

The original fluorescent lighting system was still in place. These gave inadequate light and were high in energy consumption. A new lighting scheme was designed and installed by Holophane — it drew on the experience gained at the River Street car park. The system gives a uniform illumination of parking bays and pedestrian routes. Lighting levels are automatically adjusted depending on ambient light conditions, helping to save energy.

Trunking provides compartmentalised areas so that power and communications

cabling are segregated. Emergency light fittings have been positioned to illuminate routes to exits in the case of a power failure.

### Security

The car park is now staffed, which created the need for an office on the first parking level by the exit area.

Metal gates have been installed at the vehicle access and exit points and all pedestrian areas have been secured with roller shutters. This ensures that the facility can be fully shuttered during periods of closure — the car park is locked between 8pm and 8am.

The car park is now patrolled when open. There are also help-points at every pedestrian access point. A new APT SkiData pay-on-foot system has been installed. It has four pay stations. The car park now has CCTV coverage of all pedestrian and vehicle entry and exit points. Like Lurke Street and River Street, the refurbished Queen Street car park has attained Safer Parking Park Mark status.

Stewart Briggs, Bedford's head of environment and street services, said: "The council has invested over £4.5m in refurbishing three of its multi-storey car parks. The environs of these car parks have been transformed and each has secured the Park Mark award. All this has been achieved through an innovative and pioneering partnership between the council and Makers Parking. Each of the refurbishments has been completed on time, within budget and to an impressive standard representing value-for-money for the council."



Queen Street exterior view, and receiving Safer Parking Park Mark status (below)





Lighting



Expansion joints



Refurbishment



Cleaning



New build



Decking



Partnering



Partnering



Partnering

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# A car park reborn

Coventry's Belgrade Plaza project saw a multi-storey double in size

**BELGRADE PLAZA** was a conundrum. Was it a refurbishment or a new build? Whatever it was, the end result is a feat of engineering skill. To take an award-winning car park and double it in size was an epic undertaking. The new decks and circulation pattern have been seamlessly grafted on to the original structure.

Coventry's Belgrade Plaza car park is the result of redeveloping and extending an original local authority facility known as Leigh Mills.

The car park was bought by local developer Oakmoor-Deeley Partnership and transformed during 2006 from a 660-space, seven-level structure into a 1,100 space 18-level facility. It is designed to be the cornerstone of a complete development that includes two hotels, a casino, 30,000 sq ft of offices, bars/restaurants and over 100 residential apartments.

## Improved parking environment

Although the former Leigh Mills was awarded Gold Secured Car Park status for its design when first built, by contemporary standards it was dimly lit, unstaffed, its stair and lift cores were intimidating and its vehicle access/egress points required improvement.

Attention was given to all of these issues and the current brightly lit, fully staffed car park with its new full height glazed service core incorporates scenic lifts, high specification public toilets with disabled/baby changing facilities.

"The car park is now directly linked to the inner ring road and is transforming the parking environment in this area of Coventry city centre," said Tony Golding of operator CV One.

## Main objectives

The main objectives of the car park are to cater for the future requirements of the mixed-use development it serves whilst also absorbing the existing requirement for city centre parking from the adjacent surface car parks which are to be built upon.

The car park is in line with Coventry City Council's strategy of having fewer surface level car parks and more multi-storey car parks with easy access to the inner ring road.

"Belgrade Plaza Car Park aims to be the best in Coventry in terms of



New look pedestrian and vehicular access points





*We're not quite sure what the special award was for. We are obviously very special!*

Tony Golding, Oakmoor-Deeley Partnership



The team receiving their special award from Liam Collins (left), awards judge

specification, security, access and parking environment," said Golding.

#### Improved usage

The former Leigh Mills car park's 660-spaces ran at an occupancy rate of around 30%. However, the increase in spaces was designed to absorb an existing 350-space surface car park that will be lost to redevelopment and also cater for the requirements of additional planned redevelopment.

"As the development will not complete until 2009 we do not expect to reach high utilisation figures soon," said Golding. "However, early indications show that the car park is trading in line with current forecasts and when occupancy has been high (pre-Christmas), access and egress to the ring road has worked very well."

#### Best value

Oakmoor-Deeley looked at several options with regard to the redevelopment of the site. Complete demolition and rebuild was ruled out as being unnecessary. Having chosen to refurbish and extend on top of the existing car park, options were looked at in terms of the existing structure.

Initial designs provided for a secondary frame to carry the new floors down to the ground, but through innovative thinking in conjunction with the original design team (Hill-Cannon Partnership), it was possible to strengthen the foundations and build directly on top of the original structure. This meant that the project could be completed at lower cost, which in turn meant that more competitive parking rates can be offered to patrons.

#### Structural issues

Following an extensive survey to assess the existing structure, very few structural problems were identified. These were solved by additional mini-piling through the ground floor slab and casting of extended pile caps to increase the load-bearing capacity of the existing foundations in order to carry the additional levels. Minor cracking and isolated defects were repaired as required.

"The creation of bridge decks connecting the car park to the city centre ring road structure required major civil engineering works," said Golding. "These

were undertaken in tandem with the car park extension and refurbishment so that they could be completed at the same time."

#### Efficiency of project management

The developer had an agreement with Coventry City Council that a minimum of 350 spaces would remain available to the public at all times during the refurbishment.

"Rather than work around some areas of the multi-storey car park whilst others remained open, we decided to close the multi-storey site completely and provide the required spaces adjacent to the site on a temporary surface car park," said Golding. "This entailed the early demolition of a derelict factory to afford the space for the temporary parking. The net effect of this was a faster and safer programme for the main works."

#### Car park equipment

Belgrade Plaza features equipment supplied by APT SkiData. There are four lanes allowing access and egress with the two centre lanes being bi-directional — allowing three entry or exit lanes as demand dictates. A series of removable bollards allows the lane widths to be altered accordingly on the vehicle access bridge.

Three APT SkiData Easi.cash pay-on-foot machines are located in the main entrance lobby. These machines accept all coin and note denominations and give change. They are compliant with the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act. Credit and debit cards are accepted at these machines in addition to the ticket columns at the vehicle exits.

#### Motorcycle and cycle provision

Free motorcycle parking is provided adjacent to the main vehicle entrance. The area is demarcated with bollards and fixings provided for locking vehicles to.

Cycle bays are provided at Level 1 (Ground) adjacent to the reception lobby area. These are available for use free of charge.

#### CCTV

Belgrade Plaza car park is fitted with a total of 36 CCTV cameras. Of these, 29 are fully functional pan-tilt-zoom units and seven have fixed lenses. Car park

managers CVOne — Coventry's city centre management company — worked very closely with Bosch on the design and supply of the system.

All areas of the car park have coverage with seven 'EnviroDome' cameras surveying the exterior of the building. Each parking level has at least one fully functional camera with all larger levels having two. A fixed camera is fitted in each of the three customer lifts with other fixed cameras covering the pay machines and entrance and emergency doors.

"Images are monitored from six flat screens and digitally recorded at the management suite which incorporates the reception office.

CCTV images are linked via optical fibre cable to CVOne (city centre management) main control room," said Golding. "These in turn can be viewed in real-time at the central police station via their own cable link."

#### Staff facilities

The car park management suite is situated on the ground floor of the main service core and consists of a customer reception office, manager's office and staff kitchen and rest room.

All staff are provided with full uniforms which includes outer wear and safety shoes. Staff are issued with radios in order to stay in touch with each other and also to communicate with CVOne's main city centre management control room.

#### Customer Pedestrian Access

Car park users are directed via red designated walkways and large blue signage towards the service core. This is a nine-storey glass tower which incorporates three (21 person) lifts and a wide stairwell with glass balustrades for full open vision. Two of the three lifts are scenic allowing customers to observe the rest of the development as it grows, along with skyline views of Coventry City Centre.

#### Parking Bays

Belgrade Plaza has 18 levels of parking which provides 1100 parking bays. Dimensions of all bays are 5m x 2.5m with disabled bays having a one-metre 'skirt' for wheelchair access. All car park decks are covered with an elastomeric textured and coloured surface, with a

total of 64 disabled bays on level 1 (ground) coloured blue for easy identification. Golding said: "Roadways are coloured in light grey and standard bays in dark grey — a colour chosen to help disguise the inevitable oil drips from leaky sumps!"

#### Maintenance

City centre managers CVOne have a five-year contract to manage and maintain the parking facility. "Through their current resources the car park has instant access to a team of maintenance people that include structural engineers, lift engineers, electricians, plumbers, cleaners, ground staff, and general handy persons," said Golding. "All maintenance is carried out according to a regular schedule and controlled by the site development manager who is based at the car park management suite."

#### Structural maintenance

A car park life plan is currently being devised in conjunction with local authority engineers Jacobs Babbie. Visual inspections by structural engineers will be carried out on an annual basis with a more detailed survey including core samples every three years. Future structural maintenance budgets will be finalised once the plan is received.

#### Park Mark

Initial assessment was made in the latter stages of construction with a follow up visit in December 2006 one month after opening

#### Regeneration and Integration

The redevelopment of this 3.5 acre site has rejuvenated an area of the city centre and will create an arts and entertainment quarter. Ring road access has resulted in less traffic on side roads and an under-utilised brownfield site is being brought back into use.

The quality of the car park, its user-friendliness, its convenient location, the fact that it fits in with the wider Belgrade Plaza development and is in keeping with the urban planner's traffic easing and calming ideals are the key to the car park's success.

All of these issues were considered and addressed to ensure that Belgrade Plaza Car Park would fully integrate into the immediate local area.

BAA's SPARKS Award programme encourages its parking contractors to excel in serving the public

# Bright sparks

**BAA HAS SEVEN AIRPORTS:** Heathrow, Gatwick, Stansted, Southampton, Glasgow, Edinburgh and Aberdeen. It has built an estate of over 95,000 spaces in 33 different car park locations. Five of the country's best known car park operators operate these car parks — APCOA Parking (UK), Central Parking System, Chauffered Parking, Meteor and National Car Parks.

"These car park facilities are amongst the most important customer services that we offer because the users are not just car park customers, they are our airport users," said BAA Retail Services' Marie Hart. "Millions of passengers and visitors need to find their space and park efficiently and safely, in full confidence that they'll check-in in good time and that on their return they'll be met or get back to their car equally swiftly and efficiently."

In recent years BAA has developed a range of parking services, ranging from short-stay to long-stay, fast-track to business parking. It has also introduced value-added options such as value parking and car care, as well as a website with pre-booking and pre-payment.

"In the world of airport car parking, where effectiveness and efficiency can mean the difference between catching or missing a flight, the single most assuring factor for our customers is the human element," said Hart.

In 2005 BAA decided to introduce the SPARK Awards, a customer service evaluation programme that would identify and applaud employees and companies whose efforts and dedication have enhanced the customer experience.

BAA also hoped the scheme would act as a catalyst to keep all car park staff on their toes regarding the single most demanding priority — customer service.

The objectives of the SPARK programme was to dramatically enhance customers' parking experience by encouraging all staff to meet higher standards. BAA also wanted to encourage its many car park operators

and their employees to behave as a single customer-focussed team. BAA hoped to create a sustainable initiative to motivate and encourage car park employees throughout the year. Recognising and rewarding excellent customer service by individuals and employees would be a major element of SPARK.

BAA wanted to use individual achievement to inspire all its parking operators' teams. This meant running an awards programme to motivate them throughout the year, culminating in an overall winner. BAA piloted the SPARK programme over three months in 2005 and decided to extend the feedback period to six months during 2006. Monthly winners were named between April and September and an overall winner named at an awards ceremony in London during November.

The annual awards cover five categories.

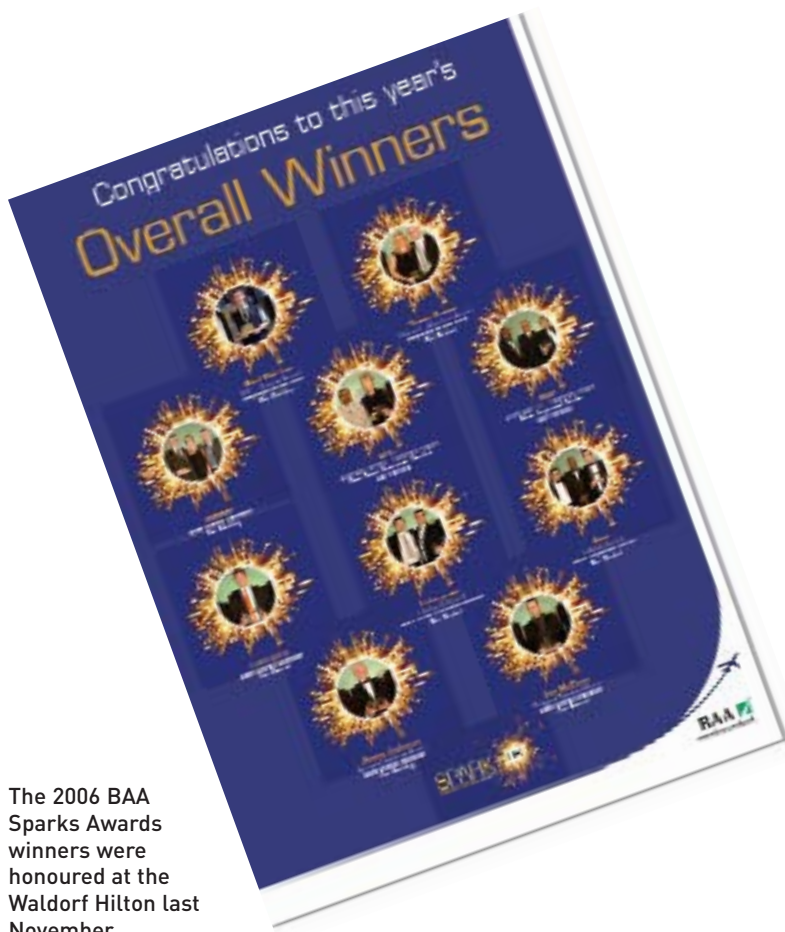
- Employee of the year
- Best overall car park operator
- Most improved car park
- Best team customer award
- Best overall car park manager

"In order to ensure a sustained effort throughout, there are employee of the month winners at each of our seven airports," said Hart. "Over the six months of the SPARK campaign there have been 42 employee of the month winners — one every month from each of our seven airports. From these 42 winners the judges select an employee of the year and winners of the other categories."

The credibility of the programme was based on impartiality, which sees winners nominated by their peers and by the car park users voting via BAA's customer research programme.

Five different sources are used to review entries:

1. BAA's Quality Service Monitor (QSM): A £1m annual customer monitoring service that carries out 225,000 interviews
2. Mystery traveller: Customer experience



The 2006 BAA Sparks Awards winners were honoured at the Waldorf Hilton last November





BAA's Julia Round with Geoff Sarangapani and Andy Garley from ARC Worldwide

reports compiled by an independent company visiting and evaluating the customer experience in every car park

3. Customer voting: Voting forms are displayed in every car park inviting users to rate their experience

4. Colleague, line manager and individual nominations

5. BAA local operations team nominations: BAA's own car park management teams can make nominations

"Building awareness amongst car park employees was critical to creating buy-in and active participation," said Hart. "We created a suite of marketing materials such as staff room posters, newsletters, calendars and promotional give-aways to ensure the highest possible profile."

The campaign is launched at every single car park location. Half way through the programme, BAA refreshed the campaign through the distribution of more posters and SPARK Awards branded mugs.

Customer feedback was encouraged by another advertising campaign which used posters in terminals and on the BAA website. Voting form dispenser boxes were distributed and voting forms offering an iPod as prize added further

incentive.

The awards event was held at the Waldorf Hilton in London and hosted by Quentin Willson. Besides a trophy, winners received a cheque of £1,000. The winners were:

- Employee of the year: Paul Fletcher, NCP Glasgow
- Best overall car park operator: Meteor Parking
- Most improved car park: Heathrow Short-stay 1A NCP Heathrow
- Best team customer award: CPS (Business Parking), Heathrow
- Best overall car park manager: Jimmy Jackman, APCOA Heathrow

Marie Hart concluded: "The SPARK Awards campaign is now a firmly established and vital element in our customer service strategy for the fundamental reason that it made, and continues to make, a hugely positive impact upon customer service initiatives. By involving both the operators and the customers, our extensive evaluation data and demanding criteria ensure that not only are deserving individuals recognised but that invaluable diagnostic findings are used to help identify customer service strength, weaknesses and opportunities."

*We are absolutely delighted to receive the award. It's the third BAA British Parking Award. We will be back for our fourth!*

Julia Round, product manager: parking, BAA

## Finalists

### Central Parking System Park & Fly

Park & Fly is a business car park at London Heathrow. It is used by business travellers and leisure travellers who are attracted by the convenience of pre-booking, credit card recognition at barriers and car cleaning services.

### Central Parking System at The Gate (Commended)

Last year Wilson Scorer collected the parking person of the year award for his work at the Gate. This year his team mates were commended. They can change tyres and re-charge your car. Obviously useful guys to know.

### Philips Collection Services debtor information

People who have not paid their fines are customers too. Bailiff company Philips has developed a customer pack for debtors. There is even a dedicated website so debtors can confidentially check their details.

### Swansea Park & Ride (Commended)

Besides express bus routes to and from town, Swansea Park & Ride offers multi-ride tickets, blue badge bays, parent & child bays and a car care club. Little wonder that passenger satisfaction is running at 99%

Westminster City Council's Kevin Goad and Sally Keiller accept the award from Manny Rasores (left)



*Six boroughs trying to do things differently. The future is very bright. Other boroughs who want to join, please sign up as soon as you can.*

Kevin Goad, Westminster City Council

### PARTNERSHIPS IN PARKING (PiP)

consists of six central London boroughs who have joined together to achieve cost savings by means of joint procurement.

Affordability will be a key benefit of the PiP procurement process. By tendering with the aim of developing a framework contract that any London parking authority should be able to use, bulk discount levels can be achieved that would not be possible had any one authority been purchasing alone.

PiP's members are the City of Westminster, Corporation of London, Royal Borough of Kensington & Chelsea, Islington, Camden and Lambeth councils, and Transport for London. It is backed by the London Centre of Excellence, which was established after the Gershon review of government efficiency.

The aim of the partnership, which is led by Westminster, is to change the face of the parking industry by setting new standards through pathfinding projects. Project 2 of PiP focuses on on-street pay & display equipment.

PiP's driving principle is that procuring larger volumes from suppliers will reduce the cost per unit through volume discounting and spreading the development costs of new technology. Another key driver was that single procurement will save the council time and even more money. It is also argued that improving and standardising parking technology will deliver operational efficiencies in maintenance and enforcement, reducing revenue loss through theft and vandalism. Parking customers will also benefit from harmonised policies and implementations.

The project commenced in late 2004 with the creation of the specification for pay & display equipment. A full Europe-wide tender process commenced in early 2005 with submission evaluation carried

### Finalists

#### RingGo Phone Parking (Commended)

Submitted by Cobalt Telephone Technologies, APCOA and Spur Information Solutions

A third of parking payments at some Great Western stations are made using a mobile phone. So Cobalt, APCOA and Spur have developed a way for attendants to check who has paid by using a hand held computer.

#### Park & Boat at Gunwharf Quays

Gunwharf Quays has its own 500-metre marina. This enabled it to run a 'park & sail' service last summer. Customers park at the Continental Freight Ferry Terminal car park and cruise to the shops.

#### Emirates Stadium Matchday Traffic Arrangements

Submitted by Parking Projects

Planning approval for Arsenal's move to its 60,000-seat stadium depended partly on the safe arrival and departure of fans. Parking Projects conducted massive consultations with residents. It then worked with the club, Metropolitan Police, British Transport Police and London Underground to create new parking zones.

#### Creation of Undercroft Parking at ExCeL (Commended)

Submitted by Makers

ExCeL hosts events such as the Boat Show and Motor Show. These attract lots of visitors. So a space the size of 11 football pitches beneath the centre was

converted into parking.

#### Deployment of Mobile ANPR

Submitted by NCP

NCP tracks down congestion charge and road tax evaders for Transport for London and the DVLA respectively. It uses vans which check the number plates of parked cars against a database. The vans then call up clamping and removal crews.

#### Poole Vehicle Crime Task Group (Commended)

The Poole task force includes council staff, Dorset Police and community crime reduction groups. They run publicity campaigns and have helped gain the town's Park Mark status for car parks. Decoy cars that spray 'smart water' snare car thieves.

#### St Helens Council & APCOA (Commended)

APCOA has networked payment systems at 13 car parks across the town. This has released staff for patrol duties.

#### Pay by Phone Pilot

Submitted by Westminster City Council & Verrus UK

Westminster has created the UK's first cashless street parking environment. It has removed costly on-street meters that were expensive to maintain. Now drivers pay by Chip & PIN or using mobile phones.



# Parking is showing just how effectively local authorities can work together

out over the summer. Political approvals were sought in late 2005, followed by contract negotiations. Signatures for commencement were received on 4 April 2006. During October prototype machines were installed on-street for live evaluation in three boroughs — Westminster, Lambeth and Camden.

Evaluation results have been finalised and the framework contracts made available for wider roll-out of equipment to commence.

Helen Timperley, Westminster's project officer, said: "Historically purchasing of parking equipment has been based on what was available from suppliers — hence development of new features in equipment has been slow. PiP Project 2 has turned this thinking around. By creating a joint partnership specification that was technologically advanced, suppliers providing tender bids could not meet all the partnership's requirements. This was an unusual situation to be in at the end of a tender evaluation process and required some innovative thinking and careful decision-making."

Rather than rejecting the remaining bids and starting the tender process again, it was recommended that contracts be awarded to the three suppliers who remained at the end of the evaluation process. A six-month break clause was inserted to allow for a development period, by the end of which all suppliers would be re-evaluated against the original criteria.

The shortlisted suppliers were Parkeon, Solari and Zeag. This process resulted in the first ever Chip & PIN pay & display machines used on-street in the UK, with their installation attracting local press and television coverage.

"This approach created an additional benefit for the partnership," Timperley said. "Provided all three suppliers developed their equipment to the

required specification, there would be three different machines, all with the same high level of functionality, that could be chosen from. In this way different councils could choose different machines, or indeed vary the machine type across their borough, but they would still benefit from the joint procurement savings built into the framework contracts."

While this six-month development stage added a level of complexity to the process, it meant that the contract did not have to be downgraded and gave all the partners time to be involved in the development of the machines. There was also time for further customer experience evaluations to help develop the machines' accessibility for the general public.

"Suppliers not involved in PiP have also had to 'raise their game' in order to keep up with the developments being identified as part of PiP, so the project has contributed to a noticeable step change in the development of on-street parking equipment across the country," she said.

To manage the division of actions and communication across the project team, a governance structure was set up for the project which was signed by all partners. This clearly set out what was expected of each group of people, helping to clarify responsibilities. "Such a governance structure had not previously been created between independently functioning councils, so it was a new process to create and document."

The tender evaluation process was the sole responsibility of Westminster, which carried it out on behalf of the other partner councils. "The group had jointly agreed the specification that tenderers were responding to, but as they would have no further involvement until the evaluation had been completed, it was very important to create a very structured

and transparent evaluation process that would stand up to scrutiny and reassure the partner councils that Westminster had acted both responsibly and fairly," Timperley said.

The responses were initially evaluated for financial soundness by Westminster's procurement group. A three-person team then carried out an initial evaluation of the responses by giving scores for each against every item in the specification. These scores were then collated onto a spreadsheet where they were weighted and amalgamated. The team also raised questions where they could not find the required information in the submissions.

Tenderers were then invited for a meeting to discuss the questions raised and asked to provide full written responses by a deadline. The submissions were then re-scored. The team met and went through each score to check if any moderation was required. Arrangements were made for the evaluation team to assess pay & display machines on site. An independent security consultant attended each site visit to carry out a series of tests to assess the machine's resistance to theft and vandalism.

After the tender process, Westminster and two other councils became involved in the six-month evaluation stage. This required the project team to cooperate with the partner councils to ensure all members were aware of issues and the progress being made. Two major requirements tested during the development period was the control of change and fault logging. Great care was taken to ensure that three councils did not communicate their requests for change individually. Instead, all requests were logged centrally and the process managed by Michelle Ross from the City of London. "In this way, the potential spaghetti of communications was channelled to ensure messages to and

from suppliers were consistent and were communicated to all partners," Timperley said.

A monthly meeting was organised for the project team members from each council. "At these meetings we discussed operational issues, agreed day-to-day problem solving and developments, and provided feedback across all the partners," she said. "A separate meeting was then held with each supplier to give them feedback and transfer information on the latest timescales."

Parallel development meetings were held with Transport for London over the inclusion of Oyster and Congestion Charge payment capabilities in the machines. A mix of management styles has been required to get the project to work. Timperley said that it became a collaborative approach is required when liaising with other councils; a directive and instructive approach is required with suppliers and service providers; and a consultative approach with other non-direct key players.

Timperley said that staff across the different councils were satisfied with the implementations, while the suppliers acknowledged that they had all been treated equally. "Creating a spirit of teamwork across sets of councils and suppliers that are not used to working together — nor necessarily wish to — is not easy to achieve," she said. "But this project shows that it can be done whilst still maintaining the individual priorities and requirements of each organisation."

## PiP projects

**Project 1:** Stationery harmonisation

**Project 2:** Joint specification and procurement of pay & display equipment

**Project 3:** Payment processing and information economies

**Project 4:** Standardisation of parking controls and practices.

# Pioneering partners



Sheffield's Meadowhall shopping centre has massively reduced car crime while enhancing customer service

# Happy shoppers



SITUATED APPROXIMATELY THREE miles north-east of Sheffield city centre in the Lower Don Valley, the Meadowhall shopping centre is adjacent to junction 34 of the M1. It covers over 1.4 million square feet and first opened its doors in 1990. Since then it has welcomed more than 350m visitors and 135 million vehicles.

The centre is owned by the British Land Company and operated by Meadowhall Centre, which employs 400 in-house staff engaged in cleaning, security, food court, maintenance and customer service activities.

The 70-strong in-house Meadowhall security team is responsible for providing a safe and secure environment for the 26 million annual visitors and the 7,000 retail staff.

There are nine car parks, five of which have two decks. The 9,393 free spaces attract 10 million vehicles every year.

It is important that the car parks are bright, clean and provide a safe environment. "They are cleaned daily and there is a weekly deep cleaning programme of the parking spaces, stairwells, escalators, footpaths, entrance roads and bridges," said Meadowhall's Michael Osborne. "Routine maintenance checks of the car parks are carried out daily and defects are reported and recorded."

Uniformed security staff and plain clothes officers patrol the centre's malls and car parks to detect and deter crime. "Thanks to the highly trained security team and South Yorkshire Police a safe and controlled environment has dramatically reduced crime levels at Meadowhall," said Osborne.

South Yorkshire Police participate not

only in the operations of the centre and its car parks, but also the management strategy. "Operationally they train security and retail staff and share intelligence whilst strategically they are involved in helping to secure funding for large-scale projects as part of a partnership with centre management."

A central operations room is manned 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. The staff traffic problems and crime-related incidents via the centre's CCTV system. They also control building services, cleaning and maintenance requests and functions for the whole centre.

Customers needing assistance in the car parks can use help points, funded and installed in partnership with the council and police. Once a help point is activated the nearest camera automatically moves to monitor the area and the operations room staff provide immediate assistance.

Another project funded in partnership with the police is the centre's automatic number plate recognition (ANPR) system. Located at each car park entry and exit, cameras link to a database updated by the Police National Computer that contains vehicle details of known shoplifters and vehicle crime offenders who target the centre. "Vehicle 'hits' are investigated by the on-site police and have resulted in 194 arrests since 2003. The ANPR system can also be used to assist security officers when they are helping customers who have lost their vehicles in the car parks."

Meadowhall is also in a joint partnership with Urban Traffic Control (UTC) and South Yorkshire Police, helping to control the traffic flow in and out of the centre's ring road and car

parks. "At very busy times UTC liaises with the operations room staff, informing them of any problems with the surrounding roads and motorways and agreeing management measures," said Osborne.

Since 2003 the centre has invested £8m in upgrading its car parks, which had become rundown, suffered poor lighting, overgrown foliage and suffered from flooding from the local river. The refurbishment also sought to address issues such as a lack of disabled and parent & child spaces.

The upper deck car parks were painted in grey to demarcate the roads and light grey for the parking bays. Blue was used to identify disabled spaces (increased to 4% of the total) and pink was used for parent & child bays (which now account for 2% of all spaces).

"A great deal of thought went into the design of the spaces. As well as colour-coding the spaces themselves, a hatched area was created around each space to improve safety," said Osborne. "All the car park spaces, obstruction areas, speed restrictions and other road markings were re-marked."

New and improved areas were introduced for motorcycles and bikes to park.

The bushes and shrubs around the edges of the car parks were cultivated and the entrances were landscaped with new planters.

Extra pedestrian crossings were introduced to ensure that customers could walk through the car parks more safely. The paved areas of the car parks were improved with all the old and damaged pavement slabs having been replaced.

Faulty and damaged drainage was replaced. Lighting was replaced with newer and brighter units in the lower car parks. The pillars and ceilings were painted bright white to enhance the new lighting.

The centre's signage was replaced and re-designed to direct customers into and out of the centre and the car parks.

"The police recorded the sharpest drop in crime after the refurbishment," he said. "The brighter, more accessible car parks proved a deterrent and reported incidents to the police dropped from 126 to 46. Since the car park refurbishment the number of vehicles clamped has dropped by 50% from 320 in 2003 to 184 in 2005. We have received very positive customer comments praising the number and design of both the parent & child and disabled bays."

When the centre first opened, one in 32,000 vehicles were stolen. Car thieves thought the centre would be an easy target but the management team planned a long-term strategy to turn their car parks into the safest in the area. The crime rate is now one in 2.4 million.

The reduction has been achieved by working in partnership with the police. Meadowhall created a plain clothes team who are police trained and intelligence led. Their operations and the new CCTV surveillance network have resulted in 194 arrests.

Osborne said: "Between 1992 and 1995 we have seen stolen vehicles drop by 98% from 196 to four a year. Vehicles broken into have dropped by 96% from 397 in 1992 to 14 in 2005. The ANPR system results since 2003 have been impressive. There have been



*A lot of people are doing a lot of excellent work.  
If it was not for them we would not be doing this.*

Mick Osborne, Meadowhall

## Findlists

### Canalside Car Park, Brindleyplace, Birmingham

Brindleyplace

The Canalside Car Park offers a secure and modern parking location. It has 52 CCTV cameras, uniformed staff and boasts an almost zero crime level. The in-house operation carries out regular customer surveys to assess its services, which include valet parking and complimentary bike racks and motorbike areas.

### Gunwharf Quays, Portsmouth (Commended)

Gunwharf Quays Management

Since winning the 2006 British Parking Award, the team at Gunwharf Quays have created weekend overflow car parks via deals with the adjacent University of Portsmouth. The Continental Freight Ferry Terminal's car park was served by a Park & Sail service this summer, while a park & ride was run in partnership with IBM, the city council and First Buses.

### WestQuay, Southampton (Commended)

WestQuay

WestQuays' two multi-storeys offer 4,000 parking spaces – a third of those in the city centre. The car parks are linked into the ROMANSE urban traffic control system. Inside they feature parent & baby bays on every floor, disabled bays and shopping collection points. They are also used by retailers for marketing campaigns.

### NCP Worthing

National Car Parks

NCP manages an estate of 31 car parks for Worthing Borough Council. NCP is spending £4.2m on refurbishment works on the car parks. Specification, procurement and project management is carried out by the company's in-house team of building surveyors.



Mick Osborne

194 arrests and 41 stolen vehicles recovered with a value of £382,872. Goods recovered as a result of the ANPR arrests value £27,876." South Yorkshire Police figures reveal that car crime has dropped in Sheffield by 9% since 2000 — compared to a 75% drop at Meadowhall over the same period.

Sergeant Carl Maltravers said: "Meadowhall has become Sheffield's 'oasis' in terms of car crime in the area. It has a proactive approach to tackling crime issues inside and outside of the centre. We actively cooperate with the security and management team in all methods of combating crime."

Abuse of disabled and parent & child bays is a common problem at retail centres. There was also a large amount of informal and unauthorised park & ride at the centre. The first part of the solution was resurfacing the bays to make sure it was clear to drivers that their use was restricted. When vehicles park in disabled bays without showing the relevant badge, or cause an obstruction, they are clamped. So too are frequent "park & riders". The number of vehicles clamped since the refurbishment has fallen by 50% from 320 to 184. The number of "park & riders" being clamped has dropped from 70 a day to 40.

Meadowhall has placed a great deal of emphasis on customer service. Michael Osborne said: "As the first and last point of contact our customers is the team on the car parks, these must be of an exceptional standard. Consequently we constantly try to improve standards of customer service and exceed expectations."

Meadowhall security employees are

trained by internal trainers and the police. Security officers undergo training such as: customer service; health & safety; fire safety & evacuation; quality awareness; manual handling; First Aid at work; equality & diversity; Aids awareness; conflict management; terrorism awareness; and oxygen therapy and defibrillator training.

Each new security officer undergoes a two-stage induction course at the Source Training & Conference Centre, an in-house facility run in partnership with the council and local university. They are trained one-on-one by a tutor who covers the training progression "ladders". Areas that are covered for external duties are: vehicle clamping; jump starting vehicles; changing a wheel; dealing with vehicles causing obstructions; dogs in distress; overspill car parking; and vehicle-related incidents.

"As well as positive comments from staff and customers about the training and the subsequent good service experienced, the level of 'ownership' of responsibility has consistently improved. Staff dealing with vehicle crime incidents have contributed to the improvement of service by coming up with ideas themselves. For instance, a courtesy room was created to help staff deal with customers and a company vehicle was purchased to take customers home who are stranded," Osborne said.

Meadowhall's car parks and training of its security staff have achieved ISO 9001/2000 procedural accreditation for the management of the car parks, Park Mark status, Action Against Business Crime accreditation, and Investors in People status.

Westminster Parking Services has dramatically

# The biggest,

Danny Chalkley and Alastair Gilchrist accept the award



WESTMINSTER'S APPROACH TO parking has been historically poorly thought of by visitors, businesses and residents alike. They perceived it as having a heavy-handed approach to enforcement. This reached a peak in 2003-04 when Westminster issued over one million penalty charge notices (PCNs), had high challenge rates with poor protocols and no transparency of operation. During this period poor press stories appeared on a regular basis and customer correspondence could take up to 40 days to get a response. Westminster's Parking Service was in crisis.

Alastair Gilchrist, Westminster's director of parking services, said: "The Westminster parking service has undergone a massive change in the last two years and has transformed itself from the 'bad boy' of the industry into a service that is referred to by independent observers as the 'blueprint' for other local authorities to follow."

Westminster is issuing less, but higher quality PCNs, supported by photographic evidence of contraventions and it now answers customer correspondence routinely within five days. Although it has invested significantly in technology over this period, the changes have been brought about by its staff and their dedication to turning the council's performance around.

The parking service is responsible for all on-street enforcement, the end-to-end processing of all PCNs and correspondence, the management of kerbside resources including residents' and paid-for parking, suspensions and dispensations, as well as the management of 17 off-street car parks, branded as Masterpark. It has a turnover of around £72m on-street and £20m off-street, with a combined cost base of £56m. Parking Services employs 42 full-time staff.

"The parking team needed a strong, easy to communicate vision to support the transformation required," said Gilchrist. "They agreed that their approach would centre on the need to deliver parking in a firm manner, especially with the particular challenges of managing the centre of the UK's capital city. However, they believed that it was essential that this approach be

delivered with complete fairness such that consistency and transparency were evident in all that they did. To describe this method of delivery the team chose to focus on excellence, measured in absolute terms, not just against the performance of others." Thus "Firm, fair and excellent" became the driving vision behind the transformation.

The first step was to develop a charter to show the public how Westminster intended to deliver this vision. This Parking Charter was published on the council website. To indicate its commitment to fairness and transparency, Westminster also published its Enforcement Protocol in a user-friendly format.

In parallel to making its vision public, Westminster addressed problems with processes. It introduced a new £6m computer system to support the entire enforcement operation in April 2005. This required significant involvement of partners National Car Parks and Vertex. Westminster was able to equip its parking attendants with new hand held computers and digital cameras to allow effective recording and evidencing of the parking contraventions.

"The drive to implement and improve the quality of the photographic evidence has been outstanding and has brought our parking attendants closer to the rest of the operation," said Gilchrist. "This joined-up approach has produced a real step-change in customers' perception of the service end-to-end."

In parallel to the public charter, an internal staff charter was developed in consultation with everyone in the department. Gilchrist said: "The purpose was for all to agree to commit to having regular one-to-one meetings and team meetings, maintaining a clear and meaningful set of objectives but also allowing the creation of flexible working and the ability to spend some time at work in other council-related projects — similar to the concept adopted by Google and other leading commercial companies."

Flexible working means that all the staff work at least one day from home or at the offices of partner contractors. "This enables staff to prioritise their workloads more effectively and helps them achieve a better work-life balance, resulting in a

### Finalists

#### Central Parking System at The Gate

Central Parking's attendants are really concierges at this popular leisure venue. They provide drivers with directions and assist with shopping. They can also carry out tyre changes and jump-start batteries.

#### Makers Parking Team

Not everyone in the industry are parking attendants. Makers refurbishes car parks across the country. This 50-strong team is home-grown, building on the family approach of the company founder Jim Maker.

#### Manchester City Council Street Management & Parking Services

The blue badge enforcement team gathers evidence on drivers who use stolen badges. They work unsociable hours, often involving night time surveillance. This work has paid off in the form of a 100% conviction record and that rare thing — a positive BBC documentary!

#### Q-Park Glasgow City Centre Team (Commended)

The Glasgow team has pioneered innovations that are now standard throughout Q-Park's estate. These include the Clean & Safe approach to maintaining attractive car parks. It sounds simple, but cleaning a car park every day does make a difference.

#### Spur Information Solutions

Spur designs systems that make enforcement easier for back office and front line staff. In the past year it has been awarded several contracts, including one covering all of Northern Ireland.

#### Transport for London Traffic Enforcement Engineering Services

The traffic enforcement engineering services team installs and maintains the Red Route network. It set up what is the most sophisticated CCTV urban traffic enforcement system in the world.



changed how it is perceived by visitors, businesses and residents

# the best

happier working environment and ultimately better service delivery," he said.

Driven by the introduction of the Freedom of Information Act at the beginning of 2005, the parking team have been proactive in publishing information on ticket volumes, income and policy as well as being responsive to individual parking enquiries. They now interact with organisations such as the London Motorist's Action Group, residents at local area forums and commercial companies. The Parking Service has also established a Customer Experience Team, dedicated to representing the customer voice. Analysing data and listening to customer feedback have meant the parking team has been willing to implement dramatic changes. These include:

- Abolishing the offence of meter feeding, which motorists widely misunderstood.
- Extending the maximum stay from two to four hours in all its 8,500 on-street bays.
- Reducing clamping activity, which was discovered not to be delivering behavioural changes on-street — a 70% reduction in clamping improved customer reception and led to the service breaking even rather than costing £2m.
- Targeting persistent evaders and thereby forcing fraudulent permit users, untaxed cars and uninsured drivers off the road.
- Making photographic evidence available online, a service which presents motorists with compelling evidence of the offence — 150 people a day log on.

The parking team has also set out to improve and simplify customer 'touch points', those parts of the service which directly interact with customers.

Training has been a priority. All new team members complete a programme of learning and experience which helps them gain a good appreciation of the service. Established Parking Services staff are also required to spend time with different parts of the team as well as other council departments. For example, Gilchrist donned a uniform and spent time issuing PCNs on-street.

The parking team has also striven to make its partner staff, particularly those wearing uniforms, understand the council's values. Gilchrist said: "We invest more in training our parking attendants than others do and are particularly careful to educate them about the consequences of bad practice, including the inconvenience caused by a poorly issued PCN. As they also provide a valuable service to visitors and tourists, we provide them with a supply of parking guides and tourists maps which can be handed out free."

There has been a focus on building partnerships with its contractors. National Car Parks provides the council's 260 attendants, as well as clamping and removals crews, and manage the car pound. Westminster, NCP and the Metropolitan Police have established Partnership Plus, a three-way enterprise which aims to reduce attacks on attendants.

Vertex manages all administrative functions — processing PCNs, suspensions, permits, correspondence and permissions. Vertex employs 200 people to deliver this service. Last year, the entire front and back office operation was moved from London to Dingwall in Scotland. "This involved considerable effort between the council and Vertex to ensure a smooth transfer with minimal disruption to customers — not easy with an average of 7,500 calls and 6,200 pieces of correspondence per week," he explained.

Westminster has been working closely with its bailiffs to drive better rates of return by improving the quality of data provided to each bailiff. It has also helped them test technology such as ANPR to capture persistent evaders.

Westminster has set up an "extranet" which has become the bible for all internal and partner staff and ensures consistency in customer communications, whether an enquiry is being dealt with in London or Scotland. It also enables parking staff to chat and gossip on informal discussion pages.

Westminster has played a lead role in Partnerships in Parking (PCN), an alliance of London local authorities which aims to reduce costs through standardisation and joint procurement (see Joined-Up Thinking: The Innovation Award). It is



also involved in a Freight Quality Partnership with a number of trade associations to look at ways of ensuring better compliance with parking regulations whilst facilitating access for loading and unloading. Some restrictions have already been removed in East Soho.

The team also held a Parking Summit on 6 November which was attended by senior representatives of London's transport, resident and business communities. The event was chaired by Gwyneth Dunwoody MP, chair of the House of Commons' Transport Select Committee.

Alex Henney, general secretary of the London Motorists Action Group, said of the summit: "Westminster open attitude is in marked contrast to some other councils which draw up the wagons around the kraal and attempt to defend unpleasant enforcement practices."

In the past year the team has also found time to innovate in the realms of customer service and technology. It launched the UK's first Chip & PIN pay-on-foot parking system simultaneously in all 17 of its Masterpark car parks.

Westminster also launched the first on-street Chip & PIN pay & display system in the UK in parallel with "Pay by Phone" parking to create a cashless street parking environment in central London.

Besides allowing drivers to view contraventions and CCTV video images online, some 36,000 residents a year now apply for their parking permits online, gaining a discount in the process. Still online, the council is using eBay to maximise the revenues by selling cars left unclaimed from its pound.

During Christmas, the council used pricing offers to attract shoppers at under-utilised times. It has distributed 50,000 copies the Park Right booklet which provides a simple guide to parking in central London, complete with an A-Z map. This has won several government information awards and was described by *The Evening Standard* as "essential reading for Londoners".

Gilchrist concludes: "Parking Services has a strong and consistent vision, a determined attention to detail and a passion for the customer I have not seen matched in any other of the commercial companies I have worked for."

*Thanks to every member of the parking team for delivering the service from demonic status to its position as an industry leader.*

Danny Chalkley,  
Westminster City Council

*I am 50 this year. We are going to raise the profile of parking.*

Anjna Patel

Anjna Patel receives a congratulatory hug from fellow 'Baggies' fan and awards host Adrian Chiles



# Like a hurricane

Sandwell's Anjna Patel is a "one woman dynamo" who has re-energised the parking world





**OVER THE PAST YEAR**, Anjna Patel has as well as “the face of parking”, becoming a familiar voice at parking seminars and training events across the country. One thing that comes across in her talks and conversation is a belief in parking and a love of her local authority, Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council in the Midlands.

Having started her parking career in 2004 as traffic warden and then moving on to the position community safety officer, Patel has risen through the ranks to become deputy parking manager at Sandwell in 2004.

Described by her seniors as a “one woman dynamo”, her innovation and unlimited energy is admired by all. Her unconventional methods breathe fresh air into the world of traffic enforcement. Whilst her colleagues hold her in high esteem, they also speak affectionately of her on a personal level.

Keith Sansom, Sandwell’s traffic and road safety manager, said: “I confess that I cannot find a single word that could describe Anjna — several different words do come to mind, such as dynamic, unique, enthusiastic, committed. But each on their own still fail to encapsulate the person that she is. In short she is a one woman dynamo and anyone that comes into contact with her is recharged by her energy.”

In a male-dominated environment, she has made a very serious breakthrough. Her management style differs greatly from the usual rigid and hierarchical style found in many parking teams. Her colleagues and staff report that she sets high standards and can be very tough if people are falling short. But her colleagues respect this and consequently morale is high. Her staff know that they can contact her at any time of the day and night, even when she is on holiday.

Kerry Brelsforth, Sandwell’s senior engineering assistant, said: “Anjna rushes through the office like a hurricane and roars louder than a lion but has the sort of grit that John Wayne would have been proud of and a heart as big as the ocean.”

Patel is passionate about changing the image of parking, which she insists should be transparent and fair. Her aim is to see the self-respect of the whole industry improve. Improved customer relations improve morale amongst staff, including attendants and bailiffs.

“She is a fair and responsible lady who will look at situations from all angles before making a judgement,” said Sarah Waite, notice processing team manager at Sandwell. “Whenever problems arise or morale is low within the parking control office she is the first to come over

and lighten the mood. She will attack any problems with full force and find a solution to suit all whenever possible.

“As a colleague I find her inspiring as she has made her way through the ranks in what is mostly a male-dominated environment while always taking care of and looking after her staff. She is a wise and good natured woman.”

#### **Education, education, education**

Parking on the zig-zags outside schools is a national problem. Patel firmly wants to create a safer community by educating parents and drivers to take collective action. Hence, talks to parents in Sandwell are a regular occurrence. During December she organised and delivered a series of talks to the parents at Abbey Junior School, which took place before Christmas plays in order to maximise audiences.

She also attends various focus groups, including target groups such as disabled, ethnic minorities, businesses, parents, children and the elected members.

#### **Building a partnership**

Patel has been involved in partnership working, ensuring “Best Value” for the local authority. Sandwell has adopted an innovative model — specifying an IT and enforcement contract that allows adjacent local authorities to adopt it without going through the tendering process. This results in a significant cost-saving for both Sandwell as the principal authority and any others who choose to adopt its systems.

Sandwell’s contractor is APCOA Parking (UK). The new contract has seen an increase in penalty charge issue rates from 0.9 per attendant per hour to 1.5 PCNs per hour. The new contract has seen the introduction of mobile scooter patrols, which enable attendants to react quickly to requests from the council to tackle illegally parked vehicles outside schools and those that cause major obstructions.

The emphasis on teamwork is reflected in the training package for parking attendants, which includes full road safety training. In addition all parking staff are expected to take the same training. In this way they can appreciate in practical terms what the job entails at street level.

#### **Noticing the detail**

Patel has developed a consistent approach in notice processing, ensuring that all staff are fully trained within both contractor APCOA and the local authority.

Steven Boffy, technical clerk, Sandwell MBC Parking Services, said: “Anjna’s

enthusiasm for the profession of civil parking enforcement is amazingly infectious. Her extensive knowledge combined with her down-to-earth hands-on approach make her a guiding light, not only for Sandwell council officers but also for anyone either connected to our requiring help within the realm of parking enforcement. Anjna has a true interest in seeing the civil parking enforcement industry become a well-regulated profession with a proper career structure, enabling well-trained staff to make it a well-respected profession within which anyone would be proud to work.”

#### **Crime fighter**

The parking team works closely with the police to detect vehicular and other crimes. Patel has developed and introduced a joint crime reduction initiative with West Midlands Police. She has also held automatic number plate reading (ANPR) workshops developed in conjunction with the police and bailiffs.

#### **Spreading the word**

Patel has recently been elected to the executive committee of the British Parking Association (BPA), and is also chair of the BPA Midlands Group. Through these associations she has helped raise the profile of Sandwell and parking countrywide.

She is keen to promote best practice in

the parking industry on a national scale. She has actively encouraged, developed and participated in informal workshops on decriminalisation attended by over 100 officers from all over the country. She also addressed the UK Parking Managers Convention, held in Birmingham last November. And while doing all this she found time to complete an Institute of Leadership Management (ILM) Diploma in Management Level 5.

Patel has been responsible for developing positive relations with a number of agencies. She has developed enforcement against misuse of the blue badge scheme in conjunction with the police and is keen to promote teamwork at all levels.

Press relations are important, leading her to appear in a number of local and national publication, as well as *Parking Review*. Anjna has proven herself to be a passionate leader within the parking industry. Her drive and determination are an inspiration to all, and her initiatives and developments have improved the service and raised the profile of Sandwell’s parking service nationally. She is a unique character who tackles tasks with a fiery determination.

It is clear that Anjna Patel’s peers see her as a standard bearer for parking management. As her team say: “She always strives to do what is right rather than what is easy.”

### **Findlists**

#### **Jean Farrow, London Borough of Islington**

Jean Farrow has just retired after a 37-year career in parking management. She worked for Westminster, where she took on the council’s notorious leader Shirley Porter, and for Camden. At Islington she has overseen the development of CCTV used to control parking and anti-social behaviour.

#### **Sylvie Glossop, London Borough of Islington**

Sylvie Glossop joined Parking Projects in 2003 straight from school. She is now studying part-time for a degree in civil engineering. As Environmental Management Systems Coordinator she helped the council achieve an environmental quality assurance standard at the first attempt.

#### **Andrew MacKinnon, PropInvest.**

“The Sid Vicious of Parking” is also known as “The Car Park Guru”. Andrew MacKinnon runs eight shopping centre car park operations, including the award-winning Paisley Centre. He wants to make sure drivers know their most treasured purchase is safe while they go shopping.

#### **Steven Nicholl, Q-Park Glasgow**

Steve Nicholl is a “whirlwind of activity and passion”. He has forged three separate sites into a cohesive unit. He is keen to test out new ideas, including devising the Clean & Safe initiative.

#### **Keely Woods, London Borough of Islington**

Keely started her career as a parking attendant in Tower Hamlets in 1987. Now policy manager at Islington, she produces policy documents, manages a large GIS workload, has revamped the suspension service and ran a disabled parking bay pilot. All this work won her the Islington Manager of the Year award.



Gill Casely clutches NCP's award as she accepts it on behalf of her colleagues

*I would like to thank the Learning and Development Team for all the hard work putting in leadership, planning and development.*

Gill Casely, NCP

NATIONAL CAR PARKS directors and managers challenged themselves to transform the organisation's management style from one more suitable for a 1950s' organisation into one fit for a 21st century business.

The company, which celebrated its 75th anniversary last year, has evolved from simply managing car parks into a provider of parking enforcement, a London bus operator, debt recovery specialist, and provider of transport planning consultancy services. As a result of diversification, NCP had doubled its size since 2003, employing over 6,000 people prior to its recent split into NCP and NCP Services.

"NCP's culture had been dominated by an autocratic management style borne out of its previous property-focus," said Gill Casely, head of NCP's learning and development team. "This culture needed to change to enable the organisation to become more customer-focussed. NCP's previous management style and structure had shaped a workforce that rarely took the initiative and was unused to generating ideas."

Generally managers were lacking in effective leadership, management and people development skills and adopted a very narrow task focused approach. Their teams lacked the confidence and skills to take responsibility or develop their careers. "Members of our workforce, who were frustrated by this, either left the business, contributing to the high level of employee turnover, or simply failed to perform to the best of their abilities."

By 2004 NCP was aware of the need to support and develop its managers, enabling them to manage in a more open and positive way, listening to staff ideas and developing a service-focused culture. "We also felt that by developing managers' people development skills they would be able to provide staff with

the opportunity to develop their skills and careers."

The company also wanted to attract and retain skilled managers and supervisors from other customer-focused businesses. NCP thus decided to introduce a people development agenda led by managers using the Investors in People (IIP) best practice framework. This would demonstrate its people commitment and meet its business objectives. The new agenda would be the catalysts for changing the company culture to become more service-focused by having people passionately led, involved and motivated. NCP wanted to introduce a way of working and managing people that could be adopted consistently in every part of a diverse business.

NCP wanted to improve performance and productivity, increase customer satisfaction, reduce staff grievances and absences by improving people management across the company. These improvements would, it was hoped, increase NCP's position as an employer of choice. To determine the development initiative and approach required a full organisational audit and skills gap analysis was conducted by Casely's learning and development team. This involved talking to people across all business divisions at every level from front line staff to NCP's then chief executive, Bob Macnaughton (he is now chairman of NCP Services).

"This was benchmarked against Investors in People (IIP) indicators and enabled us to clearly identify the skills, knowledge and behaviour requirements of our directors, managers and team leader populations."

The learning and development team looked at how leadership could drive the business forward by achieving sustainable results through people. It also

looked at different leadership styles and the value of becoming an "insightful leader". The study highlighted the need for feedback, self-awareness, an understanding of the impact of team behaviour and what behaviours drive business forward. The introduction of "values" and importance of coaching and motivating others in creating high performance teams became apparent.

A project team of "Leadership Champions" from across the business assisted the learning and development team to create a "Leadership Behaviours Framework" that provided the foundation of a leadership development programme linked to NCP's goals and values. This would provide the structure and process to assist managers to adopt and embed the new behaviours, and help them direct, guide, involve and develop their teams to achieve high performance.

There was a need to clearly outline the measures to be used to identify success. Casely said: "We wanted to ensure that the training activities were met with enthusiastic and positive responses, that managers focused on actions following their development programme and that quality feedback was gained to ensure that the programme was fit for purpose. This led to the design of an action planning process and feedback evaluation sheets to follow up the programme."

A set of key goals was established including:

- gain IIP accreditation
- implement a performance management process
- launch an annual 360° feedback and year-on-year improvement measures
- reduce labour turnover
- improve employee engagement and staff satisfaction survey results
- increase manager promotions

- implement manager delivery against agreed action plans
- achieve growth through a successful tendering process

Getting the chief executive on board was essential. Gill Casely said: "Bob Macnaughton's was extremely receptive and understanding of the need to develop not only the management and leadership team, but additionally for the board to challenge their approach and take the opportunity to develop their own skills. He was instrumental in communicating this need and gaining buy-in from his top board team."

A board leadership event allowed the directors to be involved in the development of the management programme, cementing their commitment to it. The event set out the business context, looked at the focus of the board and explored what it takes to undertake transformational change. It discussed leadership styles, team working, tackling dilemmas and role of value systems. The event helped directors create their own personal improvement action plans and so set the context for rolling out the leadership programme to the NCP team.

"In order to develop the board and managers' leadership development the easy option would have been to select an off-the-shelf programme from the hundreds already available," Casely said.

"However, we considered how well this met our needs and identified that the nature of our business required a bespoke programme that enabled managers to understand and develop an 'Insightful Leadership' style clearly linked the culture, goals and values of NCP. We therefore decided to design our own programme where we could use a 360° personal awareness and development approach, and where we could bring our



When NCP looked at its training needs, it started by re-thinking how its directors led the company

# Insightful leaders

specific success factors competencies to life."

The learning and development team worked with an external consultant to translate the learning approach into the managers' programme. It created a two-and-a-half day Driving Leadership programme for an initial group of 160 key managers within NCP on leading self, leading others and leading teams. There was a maximum audience of 20 delegates per programme. A follow-up programme, "Managing Performance", was developed that managers would attend six weeks later. To ensure consistency of approach throughout the business, and to support the front line team leaders and supervisors, the learning and development team developed a "Team Leaders Development Programme" which led to

an internally credited BTEC Level 2 in Team Leading.

"The success of any training and development programme is down the individual's receptiveness and openness to training," said Casely. "We recognised that the process starts before attending a programme and considerable focus was given to the initial communication of the need for, and purpose of, the learning."

The training regime was promoted by Macnaughton and other directors, who shared their learning with their teams. There were pre-event updates at which *The Naked Leader* book was distributed and Insightful Leadership terminology introduced.

The first group of "leadership champions" was created from people who showed a real appetite and energy. Their enthusiasm created a desire to

attend — some 160 managers took part between autumn 2004 and spring 2005.

Afterwards the programme was reviewed and small improvement made. It then became mandatory for all new managers to attend within three to six months of taking up a role. Over 300 managers have completed the course.

Casely said that a commitment to insightful leadership had fostered true business leadership.

In November 2005 NCP achieved IIP accreditation and in November 2006 it was granted IIP Champion status — one of only 33 organisations to achieve this. A "success factors" competency-based performance management system now reviews all employees on a quarterly or annual basis. Staff feedback from a 2006 survey demonstrates that staff receiving performance reviews reported satisfaction rates 20% higher than those that do not. Since managers have changed their style from autocratic to insightful they are communicating with and developing their teams, Casely said. This has contributed to an 18% reduction in staff turnover, resulting in a saving of £700,000.

Casely said: "Managers have provided both formal and informal feedback that indicates that the programme provided a strong catalyst for change. Manny have described it as 'the best leadership programme' that they have ever been on and that they found the programme very helpful in developing skills. The staff survey results support this — over two years the survey has consistently shown a 75% satisfaction rate for managers."

The staff survey also shows that role clarity has improved from 69% to 72%. The score for training provision has improved to 77%. The ratings for managers have improved, with 73% trusted, 68% communicating better, 73% goal focussed and 75% being inspiring.

A considerable number of internally promoted managers make up the increased management population required to meet the business growth from 30 to 48 contracts, with new bus, car park and airport operations secured. Eight managers from across the business operations have been elected to form a high potential development group.

A "Managers Action Planning" process has been launched. Managers use this structured approach to gain feedback from their teams and to create improvement action plans. This has driven identification of best practice and challenged inconsistencies. The performance of 75% of managers has been improved. Overall staff performance has improved by 10% year-on-year, with the creation of recognition schemes demonstrating the company's corporate values.

The improved level of leadership has also helped NCP increase contract wins and attain a contract retention rate of 87% compared to an industry average of 40%. "Feedback shows that our people and our customers have all noticed a vast improvement and we intend to continue our drive for ongoing improvement," reported Casely. Managers are rolling out a diversity programme for all staff and there are plans to launch an NCP Academy which will provide a career development pathway for all employees.

A "Development Directory" of manager programmes has been developed and a PC-based performance and training management system will free both managers and the learning and development team from time-consuming manual tasks. Casely concluded: "The overall success of the programme has created a desire for a 'Stage 2' leadership programme to be developed and rolled out during 2007."

## Finalists

### **The APCOA Academy (Commended)**

APCOA has created a training programme for over 1,000 staff, be they attendants or directors. The APCOA Academy training modules were developed in association with the Institute of Leadership Management.

### **The Parking Game by Parking Projects**

The Parking Game was developed to bring together Islington council's policy teams, communications staff, designers, engineers, term contractors and enforcement staff. The game has now been adopted by councils like Southwark.

### **Leeds City Council Parking Services (Commended)**

Leeds decriminalised parking enforcement in March 2006. It appointed a dedicated training officer to oversee the training and development of all 100 parking staff.

### **The Meadowhall Centre (Commended)**

Meadowhall's 80 security officers undergo police-approved training. They are also trained in customer service, health & safety and traffic management. This helps contribute to a remarkable 80% staff retention.

### **Personal Digital Assistant Training by Transport for London**

The roll-out of personal digital assistants (PDAs) meant training 850 street and 20 back office staff. Class sizes were limited to 10 people. Staff were encouraged to share their knowledge on the job.

# Triple crown

THE London Borough of Islington and consultant Mouchel Parkman, who make up the Parking Projects team, have set exceptionally high standards in public consultation and project management. The creation of match day parking controls around Arsenal's new 60,000-seat Emirates stadium and the roll-out of controlled parking zones across the entire borough are two landmark achievements.

The judges would also wanted to salute Islington's commitment to developing careers and encouraging innovative thinking. This was witnessed in the shortlisting of three Islington team members: Sylvie Glossop, Keely Woods and Jean Farrow.

Mark Bland, divisional director for Parking Projects, said: "This is great recognition of all the hard work put in by the team since the partnership began in January 2003. Our track record on the roll-out of CPZs and match-day parking around the Emirates Stadium is unparalleled in the UK and Islington residents tell us that it has improved their environment."



## The parking professional

### Jean Farrow



**AFTER TRYING OUT** a number of different jobs Jean Farrow's parking career began when she spotted a vacancy for a parking clerk with Westminster City Council. The position paid an annual salary of £800. The year was 1969.

The parking service proved to be the career Farrow had been searching for. Before very long she had developed a keen interest in parking issues for disabled people and the publication of the Chronically Sick and Disabled Persons Act in January 1971 gave her some real legislation to get her teeth into.

Farrow was instrumental in the issue of Westminster's first disabled badges, processing applications and distributing 470 of the new badges to disabled people around the borough.

Farrow was soon promoted to office manager, a position she would hold for

21 years. It was through managing the day-to-day operations of the parking service that she really learned how parking management worked, why it needed to work, and what the public thought about it.

During this time Farrow had more than her fair share of run-ins with leader of the council Lady Shirley Porter. Lady Porter was much revered around Westminster council and a figure most officers would hide from rather than speak to. Farrow, however, relished her opportunities to spar with the "Leader" and won several victories for both herself and her staff, which stand as both a testament to Farrow's intellect and her courage. One of Farrow's first managers at Westminster once told her that she had real talent for local government if only she bridled her tongue. Instead she developed a reputation as a plain speaking person who never sugared the pill and never promised something she could not deliver.

By 1991 Farrow secured the role of contract manager: equipment with Camden Council, a position she went on to hold for 13 years. Farrow also oversaw a programme to replace all of the borough's antiquated coin-operated meters with modern pay & display machines. This proved to be a technically demanding programme to deliver at a time when members were concerned about the council's financial commitments. In this situation Jean showed herself to be a master of people skills, on the one hand hassling contractors to deliver on their commitments whilst the other gently reassured councillors all was well. This

approach proved to be an excellent combination as Camden became the first London borough with on-street pay & display machines.

She feels that the most significant moment in her career was when the Road Traffic Act 1991 came into effect during 1993. In Farrow's own words: "This was a very exciting time, we were entering a new dimension. There was a massive recruitment drive. It really felt like we were at the forefront of something new."

Farrow's move to Islington in 2004 may have seemed an unlikely one for someone already past retirement age, but at 63 she still felt she had more to offer and when the opportunity arose she grasped it with both hands. In barely three years Farrow has overseen the development of crime and social disorder and parking enforcement CCTV, chaired numerous forums on parking management, negotiated several new contracts, and acted as a personal contact for many of Islington's most vociferous and persistent complainants.

Farrow remembers joining the parking world when female managers were rather thin on the ground (at one meeting of the BPA in 1991 she recalls being the only woman present). It pleases her to see

women gaining more of a foothold in higher positions in the industry. She says, however, that never at any point in her long career did she ever feel discriminated against.

During her career Farrow has recruited hundreds of parking staff many of whom have gone on to become stalwarts of the industry, such as Jerry Warner and Malcolm Simms, as well as a huge number of parking attendants. Farrow has always felt that high quality staff are essential in order to deliver effective parking management and she is proud to see so many of her recruits having long and successful careers in the industry.

Farrow has seen many changes in the parking field during the last 37 years — most notable of which is the fact that nowadays the demands for value for money and for the service to be run like a business are higher than ever. She is also happy to see a much more defined set of standards such as Investors in People, ISO and Charter Mark becoming the bedrocks of many operations.

When asked what has been her biggest asset during her 37 years Farrow, with typical self-deprecation, says: "I have always been lucky to have had good managers, which has been a great help."

#### Testimonies

"I have always been impressed by Jean's dedication and professionalism", Gary Griffiths, assistant director parking and CCTV Services, London Borough of Islington.

"Jean taught me everything I know", John Chilton, head of parking services, London Borough of Tower Hamlets.

"She was a joy to work with, and she never missed a deadline", Alex Williams, assistant director street management, London Borough of Camden.



# Three generations of women working at the London Borough of Islington collected the Parking Review Outstanding Achievement Award

## Manager par excellence Keely Woods

### KEELY WOODS' PARKING CAREER

began in 1987 when she joined Tower Hamlets as a parking control officer (PCO). By 1989 Keely had moved to Camden as a PCO supervisor. At this time Camden employed 12 PCOs with a back office manned by two people. Woods' role included day-to-day management of the PCOs and working on street as part of the enforcement team. It was during her early days with Camden that Woods became one of the first PCOs to enforce decriminalised parking following the change in legislation. The Ham & High local newspaper recorded the event in 1992.

At Camden Keely began to see a pattern emerging from her conversations with the public. Drivers complained of a lack of consistency with enforcement practices and that some PCOs were interpreting the rules differently. In 1994 when the Parking Committee for London introduced its accredited training course, Woods set up the training process that was needed. The course was subsequently sold to other boroughs.

Apart from devising the original course content, all of the training was delivered by Woods herself. In order to gain the skills to conduct the training Woods took a City & Guilds adult teaching and learning course. This proved to be a discipline Woods excelled in and she

completed the course ahead of schedule. Her tutor at the time described Woods as an exceptional student and predicted she would have a long career, in training. During her time running Camden's PCO training programme, Woods trained more than 250 staff. As well as training staff on the Road Traffic Act, Woods also offered courses on health and safety and customer focus.

Woods' course generated international recognition when the Warsaw City Guards approached Camden and asked Woods to brief them on the scheme. A delegation from Poland came to Camden and Woods gave presentations on parking enforcement and the way on-street staff were trained.

In 1994 Woods was promoted to training and operations manager with the council's new Direct Services Organisation (DSO). By this point the contract had grown to over 60 attendants. During this time she continued to deliver her training courses both for Camden and externally. To further develop her training



skills Keely also became a National Vocational Qualification Assessor. During 1999 Woods moved across to the client-side of the business as a senior contract manager. This allowed her to see the process from both sides giving her a deeper appreciation of the political and financial aspects of the operation. Woods then became responsible for the management of the APCOA contract and developed a new contract management style to work with her private sector partners.

During her time with Camden, Woods became somewhat of a local celebrity, speeding around the streets on her pushbike. The residents of Covent Garden particularly appreciated her hands-on attitude — to this day if you Google 'Keely Woods' you'll find a plaudit for her work on their residents' association website.

The year 2003 brought a change of scenery when she moved to the London borough of Islington to take charge of the enforcement team. All of Woods' experience of dealing with change, external contractors and difficult residents was called into play as Islington quickly evolved. For the second time in her career Woods oversaw the change from a DSO to an external contract when

National Car Parks was selected to enforce across the borough.

By August 2004 Woods felt that she could better apply the knowledge she had gained over the years by moving into the policy side of the business and took up a new post in the management team as policy and personal development manager. This position allowed Woods to apply her parking experience in a way that more pro-actively governed how enforcement is carried out. In addition the role allowed Woods to expand on her training know-how as she became responsible for learning and development.

In the last year Woods has accelerated the pace of policy change in Islington and has been responsible for a number of new initiatives, such as the dedicated disabled bay pilot. This required a great deal of effort and dedication in order to make a reality. Policy documents were drafted and approved by the committee before disabled users were informed of the scheme. After individually contacting every person on the disabled people database and attending a number of user groups, a shortlist of 13 bays was drawn up with a further 30 planned for 2007.

In addition to the dedicated disabled bay project Woods has been managing a major geographic information system (GIS) project. During the past year her team has completed the mapping of the borough for the council's website including every bay, enforcement camera and parking restriction in Islington. The GIS team also completed an inventory of all parking and moving traffic regulations using ParkMap. The results of Woods' work can be seen on Islington council's website by clicking on "Interactive Maps" on the homepage.

In the last year Woods has contributed to two major pieces of work regarding parking policy. The first is the "Parking Policy Statement" and the second is the "Enforcement Protocol", which explains every contravention the borough enforces in simple terms and advises drivers how to avoid getting a ticket.

In response to concerns expressed by residents, Woods has recently overseen what Islington calls a "revolution" in the way the borough operates parking suspensions. Woods convened a workshop with council and NCP staff. The result was a raft of service improvement including: new signage, improved communication between parties, new ways to book and pay for suspensions and a more structured monitoring regime. As a result of the changes made to the service complaints have fallen by 70%.

However, Woods' proudest achievement of 2006 was being named Islington Council's Manager of the Year. She was nominated by her team, whose submission convinced the judges due to its heartfelt testament to Woods as a manager, a parking professional and as a colleague they loved.

During 19 years in the industry Woods has grown from a parking control officer to holding a position on the management team of one of London's leading parking organisations. She has learned an enormous amount about parking management, much of which she has shared with parking staff across London through her training courses. Her recent successes are varied and numerous and her plaudits from both the public and colleagues speak of a dedicated and caring professional who will go the extra mile to satisfy their needs.

### Testimonies

"Much of what I know about enforcement I learned from Keely whilst working as her contractor. She has a pragmatic approach to enforcement, balancing the requirements of the legislation with the need to meet the demands of residents and businesses — always with an eye to what the PAs could actually achieve on the street. Her experience as a PA was invaluable in this respect."  
John McArdle of Transport for London, formerly of NCP.

"Keely would never ask anyone to do something she would not be prepared to do herself. She always takes time out to assist others, is very approachable and respected by colleagues for her help, knowledge, and professionalism. The fact that she herself gained a large amount of parking experience on-street shows that she knows what it can be like out there, and she always considers her experience when dealing with customers."  
Gillian Lyons, Islington Parking Projects



*We work for a great organisation*

Keely Woods

## Way2Go!

### Sylvie Glossop

IT IS UNUSUAL for someone as young as Sylvie Glossop to be nominated for a major national award. Glossop joined Islington Parking Projects straight from school as part of the 'Way2Work' scheme, a scheme that mentors young people through apprenticeships in industry while they gain nationally recognised qualifications. Since joining the Parking Projects team, Glossop has combined solving parking problems with completing her NVQ Level 2 and 3 in Business and Administration.

Starting as an administration assistant in September 2003, Glossop now has sole responsibility for the review of a controlled parking zone and is redesigning parking in a sensitive shopping area while studying for a degree in civil engineering.

As the Parking Projects environmental management systems (EMS) coordinator, Glossop played a major role in introducing environmental quality assurance systems that achieved the British Standards Institute BSI 14001 accreditation at the first attempt.

After joining Parking Projects, Glossop was soon promoted to assistant engineer in the traffic management order team where she started undertaking site inventories of the existing road layout of the borough prior to the introduction of new controlled parking zones (CPZs). She then assisted in the drafting of traffic management orders (TMO), the legal basis for all enforcement activities and a task where accuracy, attention to detail and dedication are essential.

Glossop worked on a number of important traffic management orders including the match day parking TMO for Arsenal's new 60,000 seat Emirates Stadium. After completing drafting the TMOs for Islington most important shopping area around Upper Street, Glossop then moved to an engineering team that implemented the changes that she had been making on the TMO.

It was in the engineering team that Glossop found her feet and has taken on real responsibility in delivering parking schemes. Starting by assisting an experienced team leader in the redesign

of a CPZ that was introduced by the Greater London Council in the 1970s, Glossop became involved in the complete life cycle of the programme from consultation, through design and to implementation of a CPZ.

During consultations, Glossop played an important role in the drop-in sessions that the team ran to discuss the proposed parking improvements with residents and local businesses. It quickly became clear what a valuable asset Glossop was to the team when she dealt with residents and businesses in a professional and diplomatic manner, earning many compliments about her diligence and helpfulness.

Showing a great aptitude for computer-aided design (CAD) programs, Glossop updated the CPZ drawings in line with the consultation results, using her previous knowledge of TMO drafting. She produced first class designs for new parking layouts.

When it was time to deliver the parking improvements on the street, Glossop supervised the term contractors who painted road markings on the street and changed the signage in accordance with the drawings that she had drafted.

Having had a grounding in all aspects of the consultation, design and implementation of controlled parking zones, under the supervision of an experienced team leader, Glossop was entrusted with the overall responsibility for reviewing a recently introduced CPZ.

Her team leader was surprised at how little support Glossop needed despite the political sensitivity of the review. The CPZ review was challenging and excited a high level of political interest within the borough as it was one of the first CPZ reviews after the local elections. Sylvie again passed with flying colours and senior politicians commented on how well Glossop ran the review.

Subsequently, Glossop has been given the task of redesigning the parking layout around Mildmay Park to accommodate local traders who complained about the knock-on effects on parking of a bus priority route. Local businesses had submitted a petition signed by over 500

customers saying that the new traffic arrangements for buses had affected their ability to load and unload as well as making it harder for customers to park.

This project is still on-going, but representatives of the traders association and local councillors have commented on Glossop's ability to listen and put forward creative solutions to the parking difficulties that they are experiencing.

In addition to the engineering work that she is responsible for, as well as studying one day per week for her engineering degree, Glossop volunteered to be the Parking Projects' environmental management systems (EMS) co-ordinator. This was a demanding task as Parking Projects was one of the first offices in both Islington Council and Mouchel Parkman to attempt to gain BSI 14001 accreditation and there was little guidance from either organisation.

Not only did the BSI approve the Parking Projects application at the first attempt but the auditors specifically commented on Glossop's enthusiasm for the job. Islington Council's sustainability officer reported that: "The assessors were

very impressed by your commitment and enthusiasm for environmental issues when they spoke to you."

Senior managers at Mouchel Parkman were equally impressed by her achievement and sent personal congratulations.

Glossop is now working towards a degree in Civil Engineering at South Bank University. It is a part-time course that will take two years. This means she can continue to work for Parking Projects too.

Glossop was interviewed by the Council for Administration (CfA) for their website feature on real people who have studied for their NVQs while on an apprenticeship.

She told the CfA: "The best thing about my role is the sense of achievement I get when things go according to plan and people are happy. We often get thanks and compliments from happy residents and businesses, who we have helped. It sends tingles down my spine when people stop me in the street to say 'Thank you' for the work we are doing — it makes it all worthwhile."

### Testimonies

"The plaudits from residents, politicians and her colleagues testify to how well Sylvie has done at Parking Projects."

Mehmet Mazhar, head of traffic and engineering, London Borough of Islington

"When I visit other offices, I see too few chances being given to people like Sylvie to develop their career. With such a shortage of young people entering the parking industry, the Way to Work scheme offers as much to employers as it does to talented, enthusiastic young people like Sylvie."

Mark Bland, divisional director, Mouchel Parkman

"When Sylvie Glossop came into the Way2Work office it was evident that she was one of the best candidates I had ever interviewed."

Mary Castledine  
Operations manager, Way2Work

"I am writing to complement the professional approach with which your surveyor, Sylvie Glossop has dealt with our concerns over some recent road markings. Sylvie has a great attitude and shows signs of experience well beyond her years. She is a credit to Islington as well as your department. I wish her very well for the future and only wish there were more young enthusiastic teenagers like Sylvie."

Gary Halkyard, local businessman.