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parking **NEWS**

Global outlooks

The state of the industry,
from Amsterdam
to Australia

Parkex review

News, views and innovations
from the BPA's flagship
parking event

Spreading its wings



How AI is transforming
the sector

Appetite is high for a single parking app

83% of parking app users would prefer to use one app across the UK*



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*RingGo surveyed 2,000 UK adults aged 18+ through Opinium. Results were weighted to be nationally representative.

Andrew Pester on a busy Parkex, impacts of the election announcement, and the BPA's continued commitment to raising standards



Keep on keeping on

Thank you to everyone who attended Parkex last month, whether you were a delegate, a speaker, an exhibitor or a sponsor. Our flagship events would not happen without your support.

This year's Parkex made a welcome return to the CBS Arena in Coventry, for two days of networking and knowledge sharing. There was also an opportunity to view the very latest products and innovations from across our wonderful sector.

There was so much on offer to visitors, who arrived in record numbers. During the course of the two days, I was struck by the incredibly positive comments and feedback, all of which we will use to plan for next year's show, which will return to the same venue on 21-22 May 2025. (See pages 18-29 for all the news and views from this year's event, plus details of next year's Parkex.)

Our Approved Meet and Greet Operator scheme was featured on BBC News while we were at Parkex. In the coming months, we will raise standards in the sector – to make airport meet and greet parking safer,

easier and more accessible – through our new accreditation, which will certify meet and greet operators (see April's *Parking News*, bit.ly/PNJune24AMGO).

“I was struck by the incredibly positive comments and feedback, all of which we will use to plan for next year's show, which will return to the same venue on 21-22 May 2025”

News, bit.ly/PNJune24AMGO).

Following the announcement, during day one of Parkex, of a general election on 4 July, the implementation timeline for the Parking (Code of Practice)

Act remains uncertain.

However, in April, we introduced – with the International Parking Community – a single Code of Practice across the private parking sector (see pages 40-41 for more on the new Code). This is a crucial milestone as we work closely with government, consumer bodies and others to deliver fairer and more consistent parking standards for motorists. We will continue to push for a positive outcome.

Thank you for your tremendous support.

Andrew Pester
BPA chief executive
andrew.p@britishparking.co.uk

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Parkey to Perth

Louise Parfitt encourages you to read all about it

Wow, what an event that was! I am talking, of course, about last month's Parkey, which treated delegates to a combination of debates, presentations, power pitches and politics (with representatives from the Department for Transport in attendance), as well as a networking lunch and an evening social gathering – oh and the announcement of an upcoming general election in July!

I was so impressed by the calibre of the sessions and the products on show on the exhibition floor. Well done to all who support

the event – and especially the Innovation Trail entrants, session speakers, exhibitors and staff behind the scenes making sure it all ran smoothly. See our review on pages 18-29.

Artificial intelligence (AI) was a topic under discussion at Parkey. Sarah Juggins looks at some uses of AI in our sector, the benefits, and some things to bear in mind, including from a legal perspective (see pages 12-16).

We hear from the BPA Scotland and Wales spring seminars that took place earlier this year (page 42). EPA members also share news from

Intertraffic Amsterdam on pages 36-37.

We continue the global view with an interview with Parking Australia President Angelique Mentis, on pages 34-35. She gives us interesting insights into some of the issues facing the sector on the other side of the world.

We also report on recent Code of Practice news (pages 40-41) and hear about recruitment best practice (pages 38-39).

If there is anything you wish to see featured in the magazine, or have any stories to share, send them to: louise.parfitt@cplone.co.uk

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Feedback on 20mph limit

Cabinet Secretary for North Wales and Transport, Ken Skates, has been visiting local communities as part of a national 'listening programme' on the new 20mph speed limit in residential areas. The Welsh government is also working with all 22 local authorities to prepare the ground for changes, and revising the guidance on which local roads can be exempted from 20mph.

As part of this process, the Cabinet Secretary is encouraging people from across Wales to contact their council, to let it know which roads should be exempted so that 20mph is better targeted. See gov.wales/give-feedback-roads-20mph-speed-limit

Man loses case over English-only ticket

A man from Ceredigion who refused to pay a parking ticket because it was only issued in English has lost his case in court. Last month, a court in Aberystwyth ruled against Welsh language campaigner Toni Schiavone and allowed One Parking Solution to claim costs in an extended legal dispute over an English-only parking notice.

District Judge Lowri Williams said Schiavone had presented an honest and moral case, but there was no legal requirement for the company to issue the notice in Welsh, because the legislation on the Welsh language does not apply to private companies.

Cash is here to stay

The Bank of England has published updated versions of its free training materials on best practice for checking that banknotes are genuine, ahead of King Charles III designs entering circulation on 5 June 2024.

The new notes have the same visual security features, so all denominations should be checked in the same way as for the existing Queen Elizabeth II notes. More information is available at bit.ly/PNJune24BN



Automated Vehicles Act passes into law

Self-driving vehicles could be on British roads by 2026, after the Automated Vehicles (AV) Act became law last month.

The Act enables advanced technology to safely drive vehicles on British roads. The new law puts Great Britain at the forefront of self-driving technology regulation, unlocking the potential of an industry estimated to be worth up to £42bn and creating 38,000 more skilled jobs by 2035.

The law will require self-driving vehicles to achieve a level of safety at least as high as careful and competent human drivers, as well as meeting rigorous safety checks before being allowed onto roads. Therefore, in

the future, deaths and injuries from drink driving, speeding, tiredness and inattention could be drastically reduced.

AVs are expected to improve road safety by reducing human error, which contributes to 88 per cent of road collisions.

Transport Secretary, Mark Harper, said: 'This new law is a milestone moment for our self-driving industry, which has the potential to change the way we travel forever. While it doesn't take away people's ability to choose to drive themselves, our landmark legislation means self-driving vehicles can be rolled out on British roads as soon as 2026, in a boost to both safety and our economy.'

NI hospital parking charges update

New legislation deferring free hospital parking has been fast-tracked through the Northern Ireland Assembly and took effect on 17 May.

Free hospital parking provision was passed by the assembly in 2022, with car parking charges originally due to end on 12 May 2024. However, it was agreed by the Executive in April that the planned introduction of free parking should be deferred for two years, to allow for the necessary infrastructure to be implemented at hospital sites.

The process of securing the two-year deferral legislation required a series of stages, which meant it was not in place by 12 May, so there was a week last month when car parking charges were not in force. The Department of Health said patients and visitors at some hospital sites had experienced congestion and delays as a result, and it apologised for any inconvenience caused during this period.

It added that the new legislation would allow it and hospital trusts time to implement a traffic management system to control parking, preserve blue-light routes and protect designated routes to facilitate free car parking across Northern Ireland's hospital sites.

Car parking permits for eligible healthcare staff will be provided free of charge throughout the two-year deferral period.

Motorists urged to do their research on airport parking providers

Sussex Police and West Sussex Trading Standards are urging motorists to check the reputation of meet and greet parking companies at London Gatwick airport before booking.

The police and trading standards receive regular reports of motorists who are disappointed with the service offered by some meet and greet parking companies operating at the airport.

Oli Bedford, head of parking at London Gatwick, said: 'We have no relationship with these rogue meet and greet parking companies, even though many of them have "Gatwick" in their company name.'

'If passengers are considering using an off-airport meet and greet parking provider, they should check that they have a good reputation on

Trustpilot or Tripadvisor, or via any other reliable means. The BPA also has some good advice.'

■ **The new police-supported BPA Approved Meet and Greet Parking Operator (AM-GO) scheme aims to raise standards and drive out crime for motorists using meet and greet parking operators.**

Using an AM-GO member will mean motorists can be sure of leaving their vehicle in safe hands while they are away. The BPA has been contacting all UK airports to encourage meet and greet firms to join.

To find out more, see the May 2024 issue of *Parking News* at bit.ly/PNJune24AMGO or email meetandgreet@britishparking.co.uk

LGA call for evidence response

The Local Government Association has responded to the Department for Transport's (DfT's) call for evidence on restricting the generation of surplus funds from traffic contraventions, saying it has serious concerns.

It said: 'We believe the call is misplaced – it implies that councils deliberately raise revenue, which we do not agree with. Recent DfT social media postings appear to be aimed at people who have been issued fines as a result of contraventions that are designed to reduce congestion and enhance road safety. This suggests that the government only wants feedback from people who have received a fine – it does not appear to actively seek the views, with the same spirit, of the millions of law-abiding road users or residents who benefit from council enforcement action, which keeps roads safe and traffic moving.'

'We are also disappointed with the timings of the call for evidence and length of questions.'
Read the response at bit.ly/PNJune24LGA



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Project Spotlight update

More than 196,986 vehicle movement events were taken as part of Project Spotlight on 22 April. This is part of a three-day piece of research into the true state of our vehicle community, using data from within towns and cities and not the strategic road network. These vehicles were checked for non-compliance for one or more of insurance, MOT or vehicle excise duty.

The National Persistent Evader Database (NPED), working with the police-led National Tutelage Service, took the readings from exit cameras in 500 car parks of vehicles entering the strategic road network.

Alan Wood, NPED CEO and founder, said: 'We are going to carry out the same exercise on two more days in June before reporting on the overall results. This will allow us to build a bank of data to see the true state of vehicle compliance.'

New partner for Yunex

Electric vehicle charger manufacturer Kempower has appointed Yunex Traffic to provide warranty and maintenance support services for its clients' charger networks. Yunex Traffic will also supply Kempower's advanced portfolio of rapid chargers to chargepoint operators and local authorities, as well as to public and private fleet owners.

Meanwhile, Yunex Traffic's Helios signals will be replaced with Yutrafic Actis signals that are 50 per cent lighter and consume 50 per cent less energy. The signals will be made at Yunex's manufacturing facility in Poole from 100 per cent recycled material.

■ Yunex Traffic has entered into a public-private partnership agreement with Heijmans and the Municipality of Amsterdam. Together, they will implement the functional tunnel management systems for the new Amsterdam traffic control centre.



Modaxo unveils new brands, Trellint and Elovate, after acquisition

Modaxo, a global technology organisation focused on transportation, has completed its acquisition of the kerbside management and public safety businesses from Conduent Incorporated.

The acquisition expands Modaxo's offering in the traffic management sector and marks the launch of two new business brands: Elovate and Trellint.

Trellint, the former kerbside management business, provides comprehensive parking and kerbside management solutions that make the kerb easy to use and accessible to all. The brand name was inspired by the supportive structure of a trellis, reflecting Trellint's desire to empower the growth of the parking industry by becoming an interwoven part of the communities it serves.

Elovate, the former public safety business, focuses on automated traffic enforcement solutions, helping cities improve safety and compliance. Its name originates from the company's desire to elevate how communities manage their traffic enforcement programmes, helping them to create a legacy of safer roads for generations to come.

'With Elovate and Trellint, we are creating two powerful new brands to address critical needs in the parking and traffic enforcement landscape,' said Rod Jones, head of Americas and Australia/New Zealand at Modaxo. 'We invest in companies and people for the long term, and are thrilled to welcome new clients and team members to Modaxo.'

Elovate and Trellint can now leverage the collective expertise and resources available to them as part of Modaxo. This includes access to investment, support, coaching, best practices, and valuable peer-to-peer learning opportunities.

Elovate is led by Robert DeSanti, former general manager for TripSpark Technologies. He brings with him two decades of leadership experience, including four years within the Modaxo organisation. Jim Vaca, former COO and general manager with Conduent Transportation Solutions, joins Trellint as its general manager. Vaca is a seasoned executive, with extensive experience in operations, risk management and strategy across various industries.

■ Conduent will continue to drive innovation in its road-usage charging and transit solutions businesses to enable streamlined, high-volume mobility services. The sale to Modaxo has no impact on these businesses. Cliff Skelton, Conduent president and CEO, said: 'This divestiture marks another significant step in our efforts to concentrate on our core capabilities and foster growth that benefits our shareholders and clients.'

SWARCO Smart Charging rebrands to Evolt Charging

SWARCO Smart Charging (SSC), part of the international SWARCO group of companies, is formally rebranding its systems and service business to Evolt Charging, to reflect how its market proposition has evolved. It also recognises its heritage in a name that launched its electric vehicle (EV) charging business more than 14 years ago.

While retaining the same values of quality and reliability that have come to define the business and its people, the EV charging infrastructure and services brand will be accompanied by a new identity, website and collateral.

Anne Buckingham, managing director of Evolt Charging, believes now is a good time for the turnkey service business to reaffirm its position in the market and its commitment to its people. 'When the eVolt brand first appeared on EV charging stations in 2010, it was one of the true pioneers in the industry,' she said. 'It started with eVolt, grew and matured as SSC, and now the time is right to rebrand to reflect the success and expertise of our people.'

Evolt Charging remains part of SSC as a legal entity, and the team will continue to support local authorities across the UK, as well as a growing number of chargepoint operator customers, to launch, operate and grow their own charging networks. It will also continue to serve fleets in the transition, through fleet electrification, as well as businesses that want to add charging to their workplace.



From left: Stephen Trayner, Lara Navetta, Scott Johnstone, Anne Buckingham, and Nathan Fearnhead



Corrie is first MD of JustPark UK

Mary Corrie has been promoted to managing director of JustPark UK. She will be responsible for overseeing the day-to-day operations of the UK business, following the company's recent merger with ParkHub, a leading North American provider of parking management software and payment solutions.

Previously chief financial officer, Corrie was instrumental in orchestrating the merger, alongside JustPark founder and CEO Anthony Eskinazi. He will focus on launching JustPark in North America and assume a strategic global role as UK president at ParkHub.

Corrie joined JustPark in 2021, when it was grappling with pandemic-induced revenue losses. Her financial background, including roles at Centrica and Direct Energy, was vital in helping it navigate this challenging period and steer it to its current success.

Eskinazi said: 'Mary's expertise and leadership have been crucial in shaping JustPark's strategic vision. She keeps us organised and focused, which played a significant role in our recent achievements.'

Corrie said: 'It's a privilege to lead JustPark UK in this exciting new chapter. With our exceptional team, we'll keep delivering outstanding solutions that meet the needs of drivers and businesses alike.'

JustPark and ParkHub now form one of the largest parking organisations globally, serving more than 20 million drivers and more than 500 B2B customers, representing more than US\$1bn in booking volume.

Unity5 launches bay monitoring with scalable enforcement

Unity5, a leading provider of software as a service (SaaS) parking solutions, has launched Unity5 Bay Monitoring, a cutting-edge and fully scalable product designed to revolutionise parking enforcement and management.

Unity5 Bay Monitoring offers 24/7 real-time occupancy status and automated enforcement of parking bays, providing unparalleled accuracy and efficiency.

Mark Wilson, Unity5 CCO, said: 'Unity5 Bay Monitoring represents a pivotal advancement in parking enforcement technology. Our technology is agnostic by design, supporting all operators to take advantage of the solution, no matter how much or how little they want to invest in their camera technology.'

'By leveraging real-time data and smart monitoring capabilities, we are empowering organisations to enhance revenue protection, streamline operations, and deliver superior service to their communities.'

AppyWay heads to Bonnie Scotland

AppyWay has announced its first Scottish kerbside management partnership, with the City of Edinburgh Council's adoption of AppyWay's Traffic Suite.

AppyWay's Traffic Suite is helping the council to realise greater efficiency by streamlining traffic regulation order management; optimising resources and streamlining processes; providing citizens with information on proposed changes; and improving interoperability, integrating with existing infrastructure, services, and external partners, such as enforcement and EV chargepoint operators.



Parkopedia expands EV charging information coverage

Parkopedia has partnered with electric vehicle (EV) charging solutions provider Regeny to provide Middle East drivers with chargepoint data in their vehicle head units, to simplify the process of locating chargers.

Finding public chargepoints can be a stressful experience for EV drivers, with 91 per cent stating that this causes them anxiety, according to the latest Parkopedia Global Driver Survey.

Under this new partnership, United Arab Emirates (UAE) charging data will be made available in cars from one of the premium global automakers, giving drivers access to half of the EV chargers in the UAE.

■ Parkopedia has expanded its partnership with BMW Group to provide EV drivers with additional EV Point of Interest data, enabling them to make more informed decisions about when and where to charge their vehicles. This new functionality gives drivers photos and ratings for charging locations, alongside Parkopedia-provided essential information – such as the precise location of the charger, charging speed and connector type – and dynamic data, including charging availability and whether units are operational or out of order.



Tackling obstructive parking in Belfast

A pilot scheme is under way to address parking issues in Belfast that make it difficult to empty residents' bins on time.

Belfast City Council is collaborating with the Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI) and the Department for Infrastructure (DfI) on the 'Park with us in mind' initiative. This is targeting hot spots where council waste-collection vehicles are often unable to gain access to help residents dispose of their waste and recycling.

This can be because of poor, inconsiderate or illegal parking, including parking at street corners, on double yellow lines or on both sides of the road, making it hard or impossible for collection vehicles to pass through.

Six areas have been identified for the pilot, based on data collected by the council regarding frequently missed

collections. During the pilot, which will run for 18 months initially, there will be a phased approach to helping streets tackle problem parking issues.

Cars causing an obstruction or parked illegally will, in the first instance, have an advisory notice placed on their windscreen. This will outline the importance of proper parking to ensure bins can be collected on time and other essential-services vehicles, including ambulances and fire engines, can pass by in an emergency.

Patrols will be carried out by the PSNI and DfI officers, who are responsible for parking enforcement in the city. The three agencies involved in the pilot will also undertake educational outreach activities in the areas involved.

Potential enforcement action by the PSNI and DfI could follow in streets where problems persist.

New charges for Brighton and Hove

Changes to on-street and off-street parking charges have come into effect in Brighton and Hove, as agreed by the council's Transport and Sustainability Committee and Budget Council earlier this year.

The cost of parking in council car parks and parking permits has also changed. Prices will increase by an average of six per cent.

Following feedback from residents, however, the council has halved a planned increase to the cost of parking permits in all 'light touch' parking zones. These have a couple of hours each day when only residents can park there, in a bid to stop non-residents leaving their cars there all day.

The changes come as the council undertakes a comprehensive review of its parking services in the city, looking at ways to make parking simpler, fairer, inclusive and accessible for residents, businesses and visitors. More information will be published later this year.

East Suffolk joins NPP

East Suffolk Council has joined the pilot phase of the National Parking Platform (NPP), a multi-vendor cashless parking solution delivered by the Department for Transport (DfT).

Cllr Toby Hammond, East Suffolk's cabinet member for economic development and transport, said: 'By joining the platform during the pilot stage, we have a unique opportunity to help shape the future of the scheme. The council will be working closely with the DfT and other member authorities to assist in developing the full version of the platform, ensuring that residents and visitors in East Suffolk will benefit from reliable and secure cashless parking services for years to come.'

Parking changes in Kent

A raft of changes to parking arrangements and charges in Tonbridge and Malling, in Kent, has been approved to help meet running costs and avoid cuts to services.

The borough council has agreed to the introduction of payment at car parks in Aylesford and Larkfield, as well as charges for some on-street parking in West Malling and more permit-only parking in Tonbridge.

Kim Tanner, the council's cabinet lead on finance, said: 'The days of free parking have probably gone. It's a balancing act; nobody wants to charge for parking, but it is a necessity – and if we don't do that we'll have to decide somewhere down the line which services to cut. That's the reality.'


Northampton increases payment options

Motorists in Northampton are now able to use car parking payment app PayByPhone for on- and off-street spaces. West Northamptonshire Council has started a 12-month trial of the app across all of its parking spaces in Northampton. It hopes this will enhance the cash-only option currently available.

Talking 'bout an AI revolution

As the use of artificial intelligence spreads across all sectors of society, **Sarah Jiggins** takes a look at how the emerging and transformative technology is being used in the parking profession





Most cities and towns face similar problems when it comes to traffic management. Ever-increasing populations and a rise in private vehicle ownership during the past decades have made congestion, pollution and traffic movement hugely problematic for urban planners and developers, and those who manage traffic on the ground.

At the same time, the cost of resourcing departments to deal with these issues is under greater pressure. Cuts to local authority budgets are well documented and are having a significant impact on all aspects of social and economic life across the UK.

Despite some trepidation about its potential impact on how we live our lives, artificial intelligence (AI) could provide many solutions to the problems created by our transport system. Here, we ask not whether AI poses an existential threat to humans – as some would have us believe – but the far more prosaic question: to what extent can it be used within the parking sector?

Embracing opportunity

Barbour Logic, a company that provides systems to help local authorities deal with customer queries, including penalty charge notice (PCN) appeals, is embracing AI and implementing it across its business.

Winner of the Parking Technology category at both the British Parking Awards and the Parkex Innovation Trail Awards in 2023, there is little doubt that Barbour Logic is pushing the boundaries when it comes to exploring what intelligent solutions can achieve.

‘We predict what motorists want when they use our chatbot “Max” to query, online, a PCN that they think is unfair,’ explains Jason Barbour, the company’s managing director. ‘We do this by learning from dialogues with previous motorists, and it’s updated in real time.’

“It’ll be wonderful and terrifying. The possibilities are endless”

‘We have a natural language understanding (NLU) engine that we’ve trained. So if a motorist says: “I had a flat tyre” or “my car wouldn’t start,” we know they mean “vehicle breakdown”.’

The award-winning Voice Master is Barbour Logic’s AI PCN helpline. This system employs speech-to-text technology, which uses machine learning (ML) to convert spoken words into written words that can then be run through the Barbour Logic rules engine.

‘We’ve got some very well-tuned language models that can identify a driver’s challenge reason with a great deal of accuracy,’ says Barbour, explaining why AI is proving so successful in streamlining the interactions with motorists

Doing away with dropdowns

‘AI enables motorists to use their own words – instead of clicking a dropdown menu – when using chatbot Max. It’s more user-friendly, and our language models mean we can look at the motorist’s words and work out what they mean.’

This doesn’t mean AI is 100 per cent foolproof. We’ve all had a ‘predictive text’ fail – something that any business sending messages to customers wants to avoid.

‘We’re extremely careful about which tasks we get AI to do,’ says Barbour. ‘We’ve never used it for generating text or responses to motorists, because AI can get it terribly wrong. And we don’t use AI in our business-rules algorithms. We remain 100 per cent in control of our decision-making engine and of the text that our products generate. None of that is left to AI.’

While Barbour Logic is all about the interactions between customers and local authorities, AI is being rolled out in a plethora of parking management situations.

Live and continuous data collection from cameras will help analyse patterns of traffic movement; sensors and cameras provide live information about car park occupancy, helping drivers find spaces conveniently and quickly; camera-based AI systems can inform authorities about vehicles that have committed traffic regulation violations; and automatic number



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plate recognition can be used to recognise travel patterns.

Multichannel comms

DCBL is a debt-recovery firm that is embracing AI in its operations. The company, which has a sister company DCB Legal, is currently developing an app that will provide a range of channels of communication for its customers.

Lee Samuels Camozzi is the group strategy director and is conscious that not everyone who finds themselves dealing with a debt-recovery company wants to discuss it in person. 'Through our contact centre, we offer a wide range of contact channels, including self-service,' he says. 'We are developing an app that will allow the customer to see the debt and any evidence surrounding it, set up a payment plan, and adjust payments – just about everything they need without ever having to talk to a human being. For some people, that is really important.'

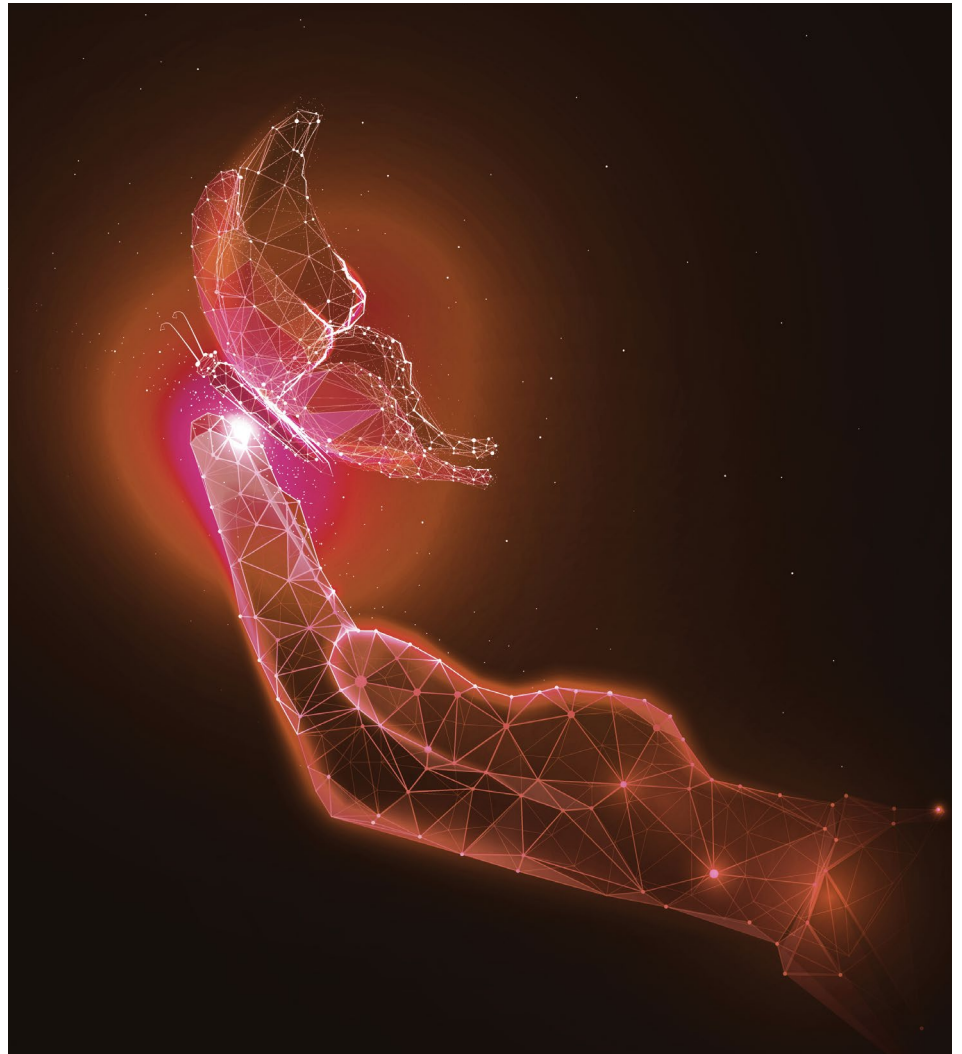
Samuels Camozzi explains that there is a development team at DCBL dedicated to driving forward technological innovation.

'Our phone system, in-house email system, SMS, WhatsApp and online chat are now being added to with a QR code system and the new app. At the same time, DCBL has a CRM [customer relationship management] system that has been developed in-house and is recognised as one of the best around. DCB Legal has a CRM that, despite being an "off the shelf" product, has been enhanced so much that it is bespoke.'

With seven million communications a year, the need to improve efficiency was pressing for the DCBL team, and the use of AI within a suite of technology enhancements is crucial for this. Samuels Camozzi is confident that the app, which is currently in testing stage, will mean the company will be able to cope with even greater volumes of business.

Increasing accessibility

While efficiency is the key concern for companies adopting AI technology, an added benefit is the increased level of inclusivity it can provide. Samuels Camozzi has already spoken of the DCBL app offering options for people nervous of speaking to officials about debt-recovery solutions, and Barbour offers



AI in the wider world of transport

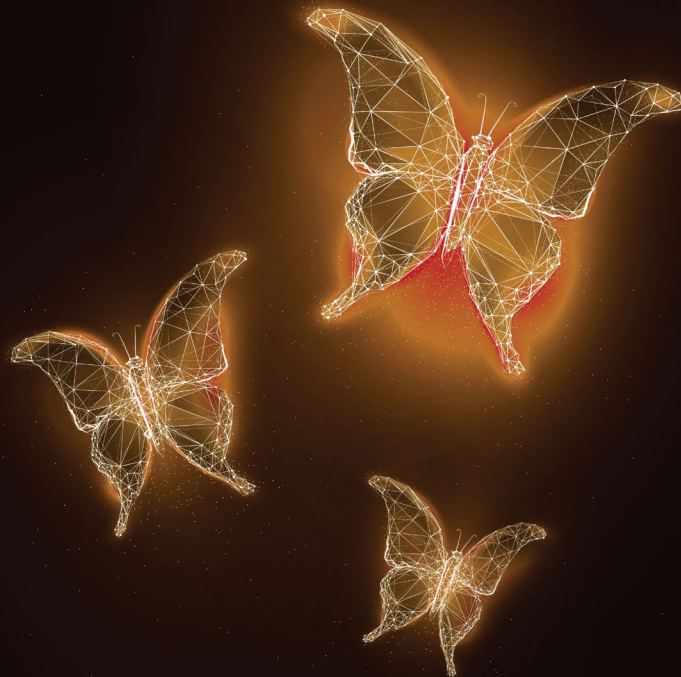
With the market for AI in the transport sector set to soar to £5bn in the next three years, the parking sector will be one of many players seeking to invest in the technology to solve operational challenges.

An example of companies coming together to maximise the potential of AI is being headed up by digital technology experts Digital Catapult. It will be working with seven companies from across the transport sector in a collaborative 'High Growth AI Accelerator' programme.

The move is part of Innovate UK's BridgeAI scheme and involves, among others, Transport for London on its improvement of accessibility for bus users. Other partners include infrastructure companies such as Bahut, Hackney AI and RailX.

Sara El-Hanfy, head of AI and ML at Innovate UK, says: 'This initiative shows how the cohort of companies joining could influence and accelerate the adoption of AI. There is huge potential for AI to have a transformative effect on efficiency and productivity for projects across different transport modes, promising wide-reaching benefits for the sector.'

“Despite some trepidation about its potential impact on how we live our lives, artificial intelligence could provide many solutions to the problems created by our transport system”



another instance of AI allowing greater access to services.

‘With Voice Master, our AI PCN helpline, motorists can use their own words and interact with the product just using their voice. This helps disadvantaged motorists who are in digital poverty.’*


While the story is largely a positive one, there is, of course, a tale of caution to be added. James Harvey is a solicitor with JMW Solicitors, which runs BPA Lawline. ‘If parking operators and debt-recovery agencies are looking at ways to introduce AI into their systems, there are a few legal points that need to be considered,’ he says.

‘First, your KADOE contract is a central consideration for the sector. For example, if businesses are looking to implement AI within their back-office systems, how do you ensure that reasonable cause is present to request keeper details? In addition, any contractual arrangements you enter into with an AI provider will probably require flow-down obligations contained within the KADOE contract, including within any agreed contract.

‘Second the scope and extent to which an AI system is implemented requires specific thought. A key right within data protection legislation is the right not to be subject to automated processing. If a decision is solely made by AI systems, then data subjects may be able to object to that processing, which can cause issues in terms of how effective a system may be.

‘These considerations need to be given thought in any initial project-development phase as does regulatory compliance while also maximising the opportunity new AI systems create.’

As the transition to AI unfolds, Barbour perhaps speaks for many when he says: ‘It’ll be wonderful and terrifying.

‘The possibilities are endless and virtual reality is a whole new world. But, for now, AI is great for automating repetitive and time-consuming tasks and leaving the more complex and interesting ones to humans.’ 

*** One in five UK adults is in ‘digital poverty’ and one in six is ‘functionally illiterate’: see bit.ly/PNJune24DP and bit.ly/PNJune24AR**

BPA Parking Technology Interest Group

Some local authorities’ highways departments are starting to use RoadAI, which uses a smartphone app to collect, categorise and report video data of pavement condition, road signs, road markings and other kerbside inventory.

BPA Parking Technology Interest Group members are starting to discuss how this AI technology could be applied to parking in terms of defects to signage and worn parking-bay lines. This would potentially save staff time, alert them to maintenance issues before they turn into costly repairs, and save emissions and extra cost from needing to do bespoke inspections.

The Parking Technology Interest Group’s next meeting is online on 11 July, at 1pm. See britishparking.co.uk/Events



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Pop, polls and pioneers

Louise Parfitt reports on a Parkex that had everything from Taylor Swift to a UK general election announcement, bringing the importance of the industry and its innovations into focus

Day one

One of the best things about Parkex is seeing the many technological leaps and bounds the sector has made. Every year, products are unveiled, processes revealed and supporting policies discussed.

This year was an absolute treat in terms of industry development, all of which came in the week when the Automated Vehicles Bill received Royal Assent (see pages 6-7) and Prime Minister Rishi Sunak called a general election. The latter happened during the first

day of Parkex and affects numerous initiatives concerning BPA members, including the private Parking (Code of Practice) Act (more on that on page 23). There was also much to be seen in the Evex, Traffex and Cold Comfort parts of the event.

After a warm welcome from BPA President Stuart Harrison and BPA CEO Andrew Pester, Anthony Browne, parliamentary under-secretary of state at the Department for Transport (DfT), spoke about the 'revolution' that the National Parking Platform (NPP) will bring for motorists when it comes to parking payments – and more. 'The revolution is under

BPA Live Hub was sponsored by Trellint



way... to make transport more inclusive and accessible,' he said (see box, right).

Tomorrow's parking world, today

This first session jumped straight in to explore what the future holds and how to prepare for the challenges that lie ahead – including a more detailed look at the NPP.

Michael Dnes, head of the NPP and Future Roads Technology at the DfT, elaborated on the vision for the parking platform to bring order and structure to the current patchwork provision of paying for parking using an app.

'We will have a full national platform by October 2024,' he said. 'It's going to be big: we have had 200 local authorities register their interest in joining.'

Dnes explained the system's future potential: 'The open market will set simple standards for suppliers and allow there to be tailored services for users. It will also be a gold standard for data visibility. We are starting out with local authorities, but this will go wider – to private operators, other service providers and data users, public authorities, equipment suppliers, and transport providers.'

Sunil Budhdeo, transport innovation manager at Coventry City Council, shared Coventry's experience as one of the first councils to join the NPP. 'The primary aim for us was to be prepared for the future. If we can get common data to be shared across the whole country, then we are future-proofing our infrastructure and preparing for the innovative transport systems that are coming through.'

Andy Graham, director at White Willow Consulting, made the point that it is not just the fully automated vehicles of the future that will be using data, but also the lorries, cars, bikes and scooters that we use today. 'Data exchange works both ways – it can come from a vehicle to help road and parking operations, and be sent to a vehicle to reduce



congestion and delays. NPP enables apps and, in time, will enable vehicles to take payments for everything from parking to tolls to clean air zones – who knows, maybe in time you will be able to pay for your breakfast through the NPP!’

Bringing another perspective on data use to the session, Sarah Randall, director at Agena Group and chair of TTF Smarter Parking Group, guided delegates through some deeper insights into data usage, including how to enrich it to provide a bigger picture to help manage parking and transport. She explained how data was used during the recent Taylor Swift concert in Stockholm and, when she worked for the London Borough of Newham, to manage parking during a series of concerts by singer Burna Boy. ‘We had not expected the levels of people who turned up and cars were being left everywhere on that first night. But we used the data we gathered to manage parking on subsequent evenings – for example, we extended some parking restrictions, closed some streets, and directed people to other car parks where there was availability. At the end of the day, data should be driving your strategy so you are better able to predict what may happen at similar events in the future.’

Delegates were then led through an automated parking experience by Aaron Mandalia, solution leader for connected and autonomous vehicles at Horiba Mira. ‘An automated parking system must go through rigorous testing prior to deployment to ensure it is safe, secure and functionally robust,’ he said. ‘Key benefits of such systems are that we can park more vehicles in car parks – and safety improves because the number of accidents in car parks reduces.’

APDS

The next session continued the data theme with an explanation of the data standards that lie behind platforms such as the NPP. Nigel Williams, from the Alliance for Parking Data Standards (APDS), explained what being APDS compliant means: ‘APDS structures data about parking. It was developed by industry for industry.’

Ugaitz Goñi, co-founder and CEO at Mitte, brought the APDS to life with case



Keynote address

Anthony Browne, parliamentary under-secretary of state, Department for Transport

‘Improving the driving experience is one of the government’s top priorities. Many people’s day-to-day lives revolve around vehicles and the car remains indispensable. The government stands squarely behind drivers, be that to tackle the scourge of potholes or cutting out over-zealous traffic-enforcement measures.

‘In our “Plan for Drivers”, we have 30 initiatives to make driving fairer. One pillar is the National Parking Platform (NPP) [because] paying to park should be a breeze.

‘The current system [of having to download numerous apps for different areas to pay for parking] is a source of frustration. The NPP will fix that for good.

‘We currently have seven local authorities using it and there will be full nationwide deployment from this autumn.* This advancement will make it easier for drivers now, with knock-on benefits for the future. It makes parking simple by connecting all payment apps in a single system.

‘The NPP currently has more than one million transactions a year – in fact, we’re heading towards two million. It will give motorists unparalleled access to parking through the app of their choice; it will be a unified open market that will foster healthy competition among the app providers; it means cost savings, as it will remove the need for the payment procurement process. British parking will become the envy of the world.

‘It will also deliver wider goals more swiftly – for example, Motability is using the NPP to build the first app for disabled drivers. [In time we’ll be able to] integrate EV charging and hassle-free toll payments.

‘The revolution is under way – the data is standardised and sharable in the hands of drivers like never before.

‘Thank you for all you do – ours is a work of partnership.’

**This speech was made before the election date announcement, but the commitment to get the NPP full platform by October 2024 remains at the time of writing at the end of May.*

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studies from the US and Colombia, where standardising data has given parking operators more information about when and how their facilities are being used. 'It was like night and day for the operators. Before, they didn't know anything about who their users were and now they know everything.'

Markus Schneider, from Plexx Digital, also shared a case study from Düsseldorf, in Germany, where APDS has allowed the city to bring information about different transport systems into one central access point for users. Sophie Mould, from Appyway, then spoke about how APDS is also being used for digitising traffic regulation orders (TROs) by enabling councils to share digital TROs with the DfT system.

Parking structure workshop

The afternoon kicked off with a workshop offering key takeaways for owners and operators of car park facilities on best practice and operational guidance. Delegates were divided into three groups and spent time discussing fire risk assessment, suicide prevention, and life-care planning.

Russell Simmons, CEO at Ballast Nedam and chair of the BPA Structures Group, led the session, supported by Arthur Kelly, senior fire engineer at Clarke Banks, Vaso Vaina, managing director from

Stripe Consulting, and Harry Smith, also from Stripe Consulting.

There were some informative discussions around each of the topics, from local authority, private operator and supplier perspectives. These included: the changing fire risk in car parks because of bigger vehicles and the combination of fuel and battery vehicles now present in an enclosed space; consideration of the wider community when putting in measures to mitigate suicide risk; and planning maintenance from day one of a new car park opening. What became clear was the importance of communication for all of these areas – be it between contractors installing equipment in car parks, and car park managers, to ensure new installations do not allow access to high areas of a car park, working with the fire service to ensure access to a car park, or making sure there is a thorough system of maintenance checks between all stakeholders.

Simmons also shared some of the information in the BPA's recently published *Fire risk assessment in car parks* (see page 26).

It's not just part of the job

Delegates arriving for this workshop were greeted by Stuart Hanley, a civil enforcement officer at Cornwall Council, covered in colourful tags (see right). On closer inspection,

these were comments that Cornwall CEOs receive on a regular basis. The odd few were compliments on doing a good job; the majority were abusive, with some actual threats.

'No-one should go to work to face this level of abuse,' said session moderator Zoe Hall, strategic parking manager, Cornwall Council.

The session then split into three groups, each taking a turn at discussing how staff report abuse in their organisation, what further BPA support they would like to see, and building relationships with the police. For this, Hall was supported by Melissa Holmes, Midlands and North regional manager at APCOA, and Jade Neville, head of user experience at Trellint and co-chair of the BPA Parking Technology Interest Group.

Most organisations are now asking staff to record all instances of abuse, trying to challenge the thinking of some officers that abuse is just part of the job. It was clear that awareness needs to be raised of the support resources available on the BPA Frontline Officer Welfare Hub, which includes a framework for employers and advice on how to report incidents to the police.

Sarah Greenslade, BPA content and research manager, also shared the results of the recent BPA survey gathering information on frontline officer abuse – see page 45 for more on this.





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Day two

Gary Osner, CEO at ZZPS, led the morning session on day two – a comprehensive update on the main issues concerning the private parking sector.

The previous day's announcement of the general election on 4 July means the next stage of the government's new single code of practice and associated framework has been delayed. The BPA had been expecting the government to announce the opening of a public consultation on the level of parking charge and the debt-recovery fee at the end of May, but this is now likely to be delayed until after the general election.

'The timeline we were expecting has now gone out of the window,' said Sara Roberts, head of Conformity Assessment Body Transition, BPA. 'We are still playing a waiting game. But the only certainty is that the BPA has always been about raising standards, and that is what we will continue to do.' Roberts then explained more about the BPA and International Parking Community's (IPC's) new single code of practice – which you can read more about on pages 40-41.

Sara Fisher, BPA head of operations and business development, discussed other BPA member support to help raise standards, including the Safer Parking Scheme, which celebrates its 20th anniversary this year.



'Facilities that hold Park Mark accreditation see an 80 per cent reduction in crime,' she said. 'We now have Park Mark Freight to raise standards in lorry parking (see page 43); we have 50 sites that hold Park Mark Plus, showing a further commitment to environmental credentials; last year, we launched Park Access, in conjunction with

Disabled Motoring UK and Helen Dolphin, from the Disabled Persons Transport Advisory Committee; and, this year, we have launched an accreditation for airport meet and greet operators, AMGO, which seeks to regulate meet and greet airport operators [see April's *Parking News*, bit.ly/PNJune24AMGO].'

A question and answer session followed,



Armed Forces Covenant

Dean Fennell-Connell, sales director at Trellint and BPA Veterans in Parking founder, introduced Major Steve Goodwin for the formal signing of the Armed Forces Covenant by the BPA on day one. This is a voluntary pledge of support for the armed forces community.

'Skills of veterans are highly transferable – and remember, they have been tested in highly challenging conditions,' Major Goodwin explained.

James Murphy, director of TechVets, which supports the armed forces community into technology-based careers, also spoke about his work in helping companies to understand the value that veterans bring to business.

'As well as their professional skills, veterans' soft skills are excellent,' he said. 'Agile thinking, time management, ability to learn quickly, humility, motivating different personalities and resolving conflicts are just some of the skills they hone during their time in service, which all have so much relevance for the business world.'

Fennell-Connell added: 'The BPA is committed to a policy of inclusion and representation in all areas. We seek to uphold the Armed Forces Covenant by actively employing veterans.' Join the Veterans in Parking group at linkedin.com/groups/12721133

Parkex review

with a panel including Conor Greely, director of Carflow and chair of the BPA's Technology, Innovation and Research Board, Grahame Rose, director of development at GroupNexus, and Derek Millard-Smith, from BPA Lawline.

There were questions from the audience on signage changes, government consultations, communications with the press and MPs, and the new BPA and IPC code.

'We have had changes in government and ministers, and names of departments, before,' concluded Roberts. 'What has never changed, and won't change, is our commitment to raising standards. We will continue to do this no matter what happens on 4 July.'

Parking technology forum

The afternoon workshop was led by members of the BPA Parking Technology Interest Group and explored two key themes: the use of artificial intelligence (AI) and automatic number plate recognition (ANPR) cameras in the sector; and protecting customers and operators from fraud.

Jade Neville, head of user experience at Trellint, and Hannah Fuller, director of commercial relationships at Unity5, led the session, which split the delegates into groups to discuss each issue. The groups were assisted by Sean Green, parking manager at Westmorland and Furness Council, Isaac Occhipinti, BPA head of external affairs, Paul Wright, UK commercial director at Flowbird Smart City UK, Conor Greely, and Richard Boulton, director at WPS.

One of the key points raised was how we can use technology for the greater good of the industry without losing the personal touch that people value. Delegates discussed how AI can be used to enhance user experience by providing data to the sector so it can make changes that benefit consumers – for example, identifying if a car park has a high number of EVs using it, so the operator can consider installing EV charging facilities. ANPR can also be used to recognise emergency vehicles – so they can be exempted from charges, for example – but there are limitations of AI, because machine-learning happens when the software has experienced something before. There was a general consensus that AI can be useful in



taking on some of the more manual, repetitive tasks, but humans are still key to any process.

The discussions on preventing fraud were illustrated with some case studies of where scammers have set up fake parking payment websites that mirror genuine ones, or putting different QR codes over those on parking machines to take motorists to a scam payment site. It was noted that preventing fraud is a complex process because scams

evolve all the time. Some organisations are even hiring cybersecurity experts to remain one step ahead.

A BPA working group has recently put together some fraud-prevention guidelines for members. This is a live document and will be updated as new scams and ways of preventing them are identified. It also contains some useful numbers, such as to the Fraud Action hotline (see page 26).



BPA Women in Parking lunch and learn

A huge crowd gathered for the Women in Parking lunch and learn. There was a chance to network over lunch, hear updates on some key initiatives with which the group is involved – including the charity Smart Works, which supports women back into work – and take part in a session on ‘improving the safety of teams, end users and everyone in between’, said moderator Jade Neville, head of user experience at Trellint and co-founder of BPA Women in Parking.

Hannah Fuller, director of commercial relationships at Unity5 and co-founder of BPA Women in Parking, introduced the speaker panel: Jennie Martin MBE, chair of Bus Users UK and trustee of the Parliamentary Advisory Council for Transport Safety, Emma Kay, CEO and founder of WalkSafe, and Eren Bessim, training and development manager from the Safer Business Network.

Martin spoke of the importance of accessible and inclusive transport for everyone, ‘Safe-system thinking and engineering binds the transport system together,’ she explained.

Kay recounted her motivation for setting up the WalkSafe app. ‘Sixty per cent of adults have experienced harassment on our city streets, and 63 per cent of women prefer to visit premises with safety initiatives in place,’ she said. ‘WalkSafe can signpost people to safe spaces and let them report safety concerns, such as poor lighting, and can even be used to report crime.’

Bessim explained more about safe spaces: ‘These are havens of temporary refuge for a person to facilitate their onward journey. We have a number of retailers that are now recognised as being a safe space.’ He also spoke about the Safer Business Network’s Women’s Night Safety Charter, which businesses can use and adapt to their own needs to help ensure the safety of their staff when travelling and at work.

There was an opportunity for further conversation in small groups about safety initiatives, and the chance to ask the speakers more about their areas of expertise. This led to some great discussions, including on the role of managers, the safety of men, and how we can all ensure a safer society.

‘We need open channels of communication in the workplace, including with managers and from managers, to get safety policies in place and ensure staff know about them,’ said Martin. ‘We also need to empower the public to take responsibility and step up to become active bystanders.’



BPA Women in Parking is sponsored by Unity5 and DCBL





Innovation Award shortlisted organisations gave a five-minute power pitch to the judges, who voted NPED (right) as the winner



Innovation Award

There was incredible interest in the Innovation Award this year, with almost 30 entries, 15 of which were shortlisted. There was a new format to the judging, with each shortlisted organisation invited to give a five-minute power pitch to the panel of judges, who rated them against three criteria, with a winner announced at the end.

The standard was high, with some brilliant products in the line-up. It was a close contest, but the winner was the National Persistent Evader Database (NPED).

NPED founder and CEO Alan Wood said: 'I am delighted to have won the Innovation Award this year. I have put more than 10 years of work into developing what has now become NPED, because I truly believe we need to start tackling the growing levels of non-compliant vehicles on our roads – and the parking sector is in a great position to play a key part in helping us to do this.'

'There were some really strong entries, so to win was a genuine surprise. Congratulations to all who were shortlisted. I am really pleased to receive this recognition so we can continue to drive the NPED aim of making our vehicle community safer for all.'

Jonathan Allan, BPA head of innovation, technology, and research, added: 'Thank you to all who entered – we were bowled over by the interest and standard of entries this year. Congratulations to all who made the shortlist, and especially to our winner, Alan Wood, from NPED. Thanks, too, to our judging panel for their time: Kelvin Reynolds, Richard Walker, Jade Neville, Conor Greely, Manny Rasores, Anjna Patel and Louise Parfitt.'

Congratulations to those shortlisted:

- Appyway** – Blue Badge visibility
- Bikehubs** – safe, secure bike storage
- CorroDec** – corrosion and moisture sensors
- Metric** with London Borough of Hounslow – accessible micro-payment machine
- Newlyn** – cross-system data AI to address unpaid PCNs
- NPED** – tackling nuisance vehicles that have unpaid PCNs, or no MOT, excise duty or insurance
- Octopass** – sustainable car park management solution
- Parking Eye** – ANPR bollard to monitor and enforce Blue Badge bays
- Parkwise** – designated parking-space

management for disabled drivers, to bring people back to the high street

Raedam – workplace parking, cloud-based management tool

Ratio – io7 EV chargepoint with integrated lighting

RTA – traffic regulation order (TRO) management system

Tap 2 Park – Data Prism: data analytic solution

Transfer 360 – vehicle lease company PCN management

Unity5 – bay-monitoring solution

Thank you to all those who entered:

- Bizie Commuter App
- EQ200
- Go2Sim
- JustPark Insights
- KERB
- Marston Holdings
- Metric with Bath and North Somerset
- Nayax Energy Park & Charge
- Newlyn
- Opcharge
- Parkstory
- PayByPhone
- Twin

Powerful Parking

Installing EV charging hubs in Britain's car parks

As the adoption of electric vehicles (EVs) gathers momentum, charging hubs are going to become a much more familiar sight. Elizabeth Warren, Interim Director at Mer Public Charging, looks at the four Ps involved in installing EV charging hubs.



Elizabeth Warren, Interim Director of Public Charging, Mer

At present there are about one million pure EVs in the UK and about 60,000 public charge points – that's approximately one for every 17 EVs. Projections from the SMMT show that there will be around nine million EVs on the UK's roads by 2030. Keeping that ratio of 1:17 will call for an additional 48,000 public charge points. This presents opportunities for the parking sector to generate additional revenue and help the environment at the same time.

While most public EV charge points are dotted around in small numbers across car parks, there is a move towards grouping more charge points into EV charging 'hubs'. There is no set number that defines a charging 'hub', but there should be enough charging bays to meet demand, without there being so many that space and resource is underutilised. Getting the balance right is one of the first challenges to overcome.

Mer has experienced and overcome the challenges of installing EV charge points and hubs,

which can be summed up as the four Ps: Potential, Power, Permission and Planning.

Potential

The first challenge is the potential of the site. It's important to pick the right site for your hub and install the optimum number of the right kind of chargers on it. This involves looking at the passing traffic count, turning rates into a car park, and driver behaviour once in the car park. Mer is constantly engaged on this kind of analysis. We look at utilisation data, especially in the context of car and battery technology. We perform deep analysis on how people are charging their vehicles at our current sites, to inform whether we turn a single charging bay location into a hub in line with driver demand.

Power

Powering the EV charging hub can present a barrier if it involves upgrading the grid at a specific location. Dealing with the Distribution Network Operator (DNO) and paying for a grid upgrade can present major challenges. A trusted charge point operator like Mer with experience of dealing with DNOs can ensure the appropriate connection. Increasing the amount of power available on a site adds value to the location and increases the amenity value of a site. Mer's financial options can cover the connection and hardware costs.

Permission

Whether the site of the car park is leased or owned can complicate things. Multiple stakeholders can prolong the process for

getting contracts agreed. Mer's legal team is well versed in helping all parties come to a satisfactory agreement. We understand the chains of communication needed to install charging infrastructure, especially when installation costs can be covered, strengthening the future development – and value – of the site.

Planning

Gaining planning consent from local authorities is seldom straightforward. That said, additional EV charge points could be beneficial to residents and attract visitors to local amenities like retail sites, sports centres, and public venues. Local authorities have net zero targets and EVs reduce the amount of carbon emitted into the air. All good pointers to securing consent.

A final P – the Planet

The EV transition is all about sustainability and future-proofing our planet. Using renewable energy sources for EV charging is central to making progress with green transportation. By installing a 100% renewable energy powered charging infrastructure, EV charging hub operators will help to decarbonise transport far more effectively than relying on power derived from fossil-fuelled power plants.

Find out more about installing an EV charging hub by downloading [Mer's free eguide](#), which includes best practice insights from landowners who have installed EV charging hubs and advice for what to look for in a charge point operator when thinking about installing your hub.

Learn more about Mer's EV charging hubs solutions for here



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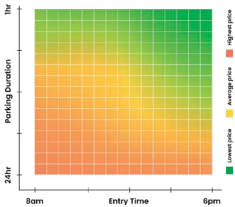


At JustPark we've been a trusted name in parking for almost two decades. With a user base of over 13 million drivers, we help businesses reach their full revenue potential through our innovative reservations marketplace, **JustPark Reserve** and our parking payment solution, **JustPark On-Demand**.



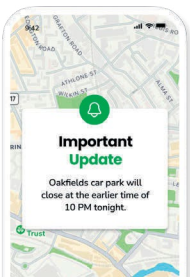
insights

Now, with our exciting merger with US parking giants Parkhub, we're bringing new products into the UK market, starting with our world-leading business intelligence software **JustPark Insights**. This tool combines all your data sources into one dependable source of truth and empowers you to make business decisions to drive your operation forward.



optimize

Complimenting Insights is our new dynamic pricing tool **JustPark Optimize**. Using historical and real-time data, Optimize will ensure that your spaces are priced correctly, maximising your revenue.



reach

We're also excited to launch **JustPark Reach**, our advanced CRM platform that enables you to engage your customers in new and exciting ways. Everything from welcome messages to bespoke product offerings to post-visit surveys. Reach will let you create a new level of customer satisfaction and loyalty.

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Your portfolio of spaces will benefit from our suite of products. We'll drive new customers to your sites with Reserve, ensure a seamless on-site experience with On-Demand, and grow customer loyalty through Reach. And with Insights and Optimise you'll make the correct strategic decisions on occupancy, pricing and more. Get in touch with our team today and we'll work with you to find the product mix to take your business to new heights.

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The new BPA guides on *Fire risk assessment in car parks* and *Preventing parking payment fraud* – both of which were discussed at Parkex – are available at [britishparking.co.uk/resource-library](https://www.britishparking.co.uk/resource-library)

Beyond Parkex 2024

- If you are interested in finding out more about the topics discussed, please check the BPA's website, because many have been – and will continue to be – explored through other events, webinars and community forum discussions, and supported with information through the BPA's resource library. See [britishparking.co.uk](https://www.britishparking.co.uk)
- *Parking News* also covers many of these topics: if you want any more information on where to look for these, email louise.parfitt@cplone.co.uk
- If you would like further support with any of the issues raised here, contact membership@britishparking.co.uk
- Next year's Parkex will take place on 21-22 May 2025 at CBS Arena Coventry. For more information and to book a stand, see [parkex.net](https://www.parkex.net)



Clockwise from top left: Evex Theatre networking; BPA Live Theatre speakers Nigel Williams and Sara Fisher; fun at the evening social, thanks to sponsor Compleo; Evex Theatre session

Solar-powered parking

Rachel Airriess is the newest member of BPA Lawline, and its environmental, social and governance expert. Here, she and **Derek Millard-Smith** discuss how innovation can be applied to our business operations to make them more sustainable, as well as compliant with probable future regulation

Environmental, social and governance (ESG) is far from being the latest trendy buzzword. It has fast become a key strand in business thinking. ESG represents a framework by which businesses can assess their legal and regulatory compliance, while embedding cultural sustainability and responsibility in their ethos, operations and reputation.

Regulation surrounding the environmental pillar of ESG is already extremely relevant in the UK. It is mandatory for larger public companies to disclose their operational climate-related risks and opportunities in line with the Taskforce on Climate-related Financial Disclosures recommendations.* The government introduced this to ensure businesses take steps to reduce their carbon emissions, which will ultimately assist the UK government in reaching its net-zero target by 2050.

While these requirements are currently limited to public companies, it is anticipated that other businesses, including parking operators, will have to adhere to these regulations in the near future – particularly as we anticipate a new government will be in place in the coming months, with a greater focus on improving and increasing sustainability across the business landscape.

Solar innovation

Around the world, some surface car parks are installing canopies to harness solar power, with a view to saving on energy costs, which, in turn, will reduce the car park's carbon footprint. Canopy or rooftop solar, in particular, offers a range of benefits that make it an attractive option for car parks.

Rooftop solar can generate 'free' renewable energy – and companies are popping up that will install the hardware in exchange for a revenue split of the energy cost savings. Solar panels harness solar power to produce electricity that can be used for running car parks' lighting, ticket machines, and so on, without relying on fossil fuels. This helps reduce environmental impact and offers potential for the landowner or agent to save on energy bills and/or provide certainty over future energy costs.

Rooftop solar can also create a revenue stream by allowing any surplus electricity to be sold back to the National Grid. Excess electricity over and above that which the car park consumes can contribute to the grid in return for compensation for the excess power produced. This is becoming increasingly possible as solar technology is improving, even in our less sun-kissed regions.

As sustainability becomes more of a focus for responsible businesses, and increasingly important to individuals, having a significant solar-power presence within car parks can and will attract environmentally minded businesses and customers, and potentially generate footfall.

The benefits of rooftop solar can be maximised by pairing it with battery storage. Batteries allow excess solar energy generated during the day to be stored for use overnight or on gloomy days. This ensures the best use of the solar energy and a more reliable supply of electricity, without having to depend solely on the grid.

Planning permissions

When considering rooftop solar, you must be aware of the installation and consent process. Planning permission may be necessary if the solar area is higher than 0.2m above a sloping roof or one metre above the highest point on a flat roof.

You are not currently able to install solar panels on a listed building and you will still need to apply for planning permission if the building is in a conservation area. Once the planning application has been made, it can take up to 56 days to receive a decision. Canopies within a car park lower than four metres may not need planning permission because they can fall under the new rules for permitted development.

Order 2023

On 21 December 2023, the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development etc.) (England) (Amendment) (No. 2) Order 2023 (the '2023 Order')** came into force. Among numerous updates



to permitted development rights, one amendment specifically covered solar canopies used in off-street car parks.

Within the new Class (Class OA), a solar canopy is allowed to be installed within an area lawfully used as an off-street car park, other than for a dwelling or block of flats.

While the word 'lawfully' has not been given a definition, further limitations have been given to this permitted development right, meaning the solar canopy is allowed provided that any part of the development is not:

- In excess of four metres in height above ground level
- Within 10 metres of the curtilage of a dwelling house or a block of flats
- Within a listed building's title
- Used to display advertisements
- A temporary off-street car park.

(Please note, this is not an exhaustive list of the requirements.)

While the permitted development does, in effect, allow a rooftop solar canopy that fits the above criteria, the council still needs to sign off a developer installing such a canopy. This is because the amendment to legislation includes a requirement for local authority 'sign off' prior to works beginning – however, this is far less onerous than a full planning application.

Regulatory future

While there are considerations to bear in mind, such as planning permission where required, the long-term advantages make rooftop

solar a compelling option for parking operators looking to go green and reduce landowners' energy costs.

As outlined above, only larger public companies are currently subject to disclosing their climate-related risks. However, it is anticipated that this will soon apply to all companies. Offering a more sustainable solution is likely to future-proof opportunity, but also pre-empt the inevitable regulatory requirements once they are extended to all public-facing businesses. [P](#)

The information included here is for reference only. If you require advice on this issue or have any other legal queries, please contact BPA Lawline at bpa@jmw.co.uk or call 0345 241 3024. Remember, BPA members can get 30 minutes of free legal advice from BPA Lawline.

* bit.ly/PNJune24IFRS

** bit.ly/PNJune2024DA



Derek Millard-Smith

BPA Lawline

Dream team



APN Group was established last year as a new player in the enforcement sector.

Louise Parfitt chats to two of the leadership team about doing things differently



When Mike MARRS was announced as CEO of APN Group last November, it felt like the pieces of a puzzle were falling into place.

Some well-known names from the public and private parking debt-resolution sectors had joined the new entity in the weeks beforehand, so it was clear that this venture was aiming to make an impact.

‘I’ve assembled the dream team – we joked that The Avengers had assembled,’ says MARRS. ‘These people are leaders in their field, and they took a big risk to join this project with me.’

The ‘risk’ was a new company, APN Group, that acquired Trace Enforcement Group late last year. MARRS, former business development director at Marston Holdings and a former BPA President, says he needed a vehicle to plug in his newly assembled team. He had a few companies in mind, but Trace stood out.

‘The team has really solid, long-term relationships with its client base, both in the public and private sectors. You only retain

that, particularly in the private parking world, if you are doing a good job,’ says MARRS. ‘We are elevating what was already a strong business. We’re upgrading the tech and the hardware, giving additional training, and increasing productivity, to make it more of a slick operation.’

This includes establishing a law firm, Moorside Legal, to complete the company’s private parking offering, from pre-litigation through to enforcement, including management of contentious cases and claims.

‘We needed a back-end law firm because we want to offer an end-to-end service to our clients,’ says MARRS. ‘We want to retain full control of the work, which makes our clients feel confident in the service they receive from us. Commercially, it makes a lot of sense, too.’

Building a business

Enter Eddie Harrison, APN Group’s COO. Harrison was at Lowell Solicitors for 10 years and Capquest for eight, building two law firms within highly regulated industries. He has

their money without taking up as much time at court, and without all the stress that can entail for all parties.'

Moorside has a team of 12 staff, including paralegals, who have been in place since January, honing processes in the background before Moorside's official opening in April.

'We have had supportive investors and clients, who have been absolutely fantastic on coming on board with us before we are even operational. That's really testament to the way we have built this proposition,' says Harrison.

'We've involved them throughout and they can see that what they have said to us has materialised.'

Doing things differently

To say it has been a busy few months is an understatement. Alongside establishing a law firm, the company commissioned a professor of human behaviour and data science to build a software tool called Debt Prospector, to help identify vulnerable debtors.

'This has not been done in this space before – it is targeted ethical enforcement collection,' says Marrs. 'Most people litigate on an industrial scale. We don't think it needs to be like that. We highlight the vulnerability and we signpost that person. We don't just let the automated machine take it to the stage where it becomes a CCJ [county court judgment]. That's wrong. We've got the data, the capability and the ability to change that process – so that is what we are going to do.'

The company has also expanded its offerings beyond the parking sector and into other areas, including veterinary debt collection, using the same techniques.

'We are operating from a much more data-driven knowledge base,' says Marrs. 'I am not sure the parking industry has ever seen the sorts of reports that we are able to produce, but they will soon be talking about them – and the fact that our collection rates are so high.'

Up for an adventure

The company is aiming for a high bar – so what makes Marrs and Harrison confident that they can achieve these targets, and with a different approach?

'We are very transparent about what we do and what things cost, and we are consistent,'



Mike Marrs



Eddie Harrison


says Harrison. 'Our clients know where their cases are at all times because we engage with them routinely and regularly. They have a clear mandate that says what we do and don't do.'

Marrs explains that they have spent a lot of time working on the company's core values and how they will use these to get to where they want to be in 12 months' time.

'The first one is be fair – to each other, to our clients, and to our customers. The second is be real, so we're authentic. We do what we say. If we say we are going to do targeted ethical debt collection, that's what we'll do.'

'The third one is, we're transparent – as Eddie said – and the fourth is, we're bold. Some of the things we are going to do will make people sit up and take notice.'

I press Marrs on what he means. 'There are more acquisitions in the pipeline, so we're continuing to grow. We're going to win business from the collective black books of all the people I have assembled. So, watch this space.'

He smiles: 'With me as CEO, it is certainly going to be an adventure.' 

"We needed a back-end law firm because we want to offer an end-to-end service to clients"

been the driving force behind Moorside. 'The Moorside proposition was around what private parking clients want and need,' he says,

'We looked at what firms already existed, what they do well and what they don't do so well. We also had a lot of conversations with our clients and then brought to that the experiences from industries where I worked before.'

Harrison says the law firm was built in two parts: data gathering, and treatment of clients and customers.

'We make sure vulnerabilities are considered upfront. We ensure we know who those debtors are before we litigate, so we already have a treatment path for them,' he says. 'It's a better journey all round, because the treatment paths allow us to get our clients

Integration Down Under

Louise Parfitt talks to Angelique Mentis, President of Parking Australia, about the changes in the Australian parking industry, sustainability, and urban versus rural challenges

1 fell into parking because I was looking to solve my own frustrations with it.’
Angelique Mentis came to parking after 20 years as an international corporate finance attorney, with a sideline in property development. It was the latter that led her into parking.

‘When developing residential apartment buildings, I came across so many challenges with people parking in the wrong bays. I decided to solve the problem and started my own parking bollard company, thatmyspot.’

Fifteen years later, the company’s clients range from individuals to shopping centres, and Mentis is now President of Parking Australia.

‘Parking Australia is my way of giving back to the sector,’ she says. ‘When I first joined, in 2019, the industry was progressing well, but Covid hit the Australian parking scene particularly hard. From that, we saw customers demanding things such as contactless ticketing

to minimise spread of disease. The industry had to get creative – and it did. We’ve seen a lot more technology-based solutions focusing on software to supplement hardware solutions.’

Wider engagement

Parking Australia has also been actively engaging with a broader stakeholder community.

‘If you think about it, any property asset where there is a parking spot has an interest in parking – airports, shopping centres, residential buildings, hospitals, universities, local councils,’ says Mentis. ‘Then there are aligned associations in property and internationally, such as your wonderful BPA. And, of course, drivers. Over the past few years, Parking Australia has been very proactive in expanding our membership, as well as diversifying our community demographic across gender and culture.’

As a result, the membership of the Association is much more diverse now, and that is something of which Mentis is proud.

‘Parking Australia’s role is to share knowledge, keep members informed, and engage in policy formation. Also, importantly, to foster and grow relationships among our membership community and adjacent associations. We ask our members what they need and then deliver it. It takes time and effort, but it’s vital that we give value to the whole community. From the feedback we’ve had, coupled with significant growth in our membership base, it seems to be working.’

The vastness of Australia and geographical differences are among the challenges the Association faces in being able to represent its members. Expanding its membership base allows Parking Australia to have representatives across local communities – for example, the National Roads and Motorists’ Association (NRMA) has recently joined. It is actively engaged in providing a national electric vehicle (EV) charging infrastructure backbone, particularly in outlying rural areas. ‘NRMA operates across Australia. It’s really important with the size and scale of Australia that we have visibility in and support those regional communities.’

Paradigm shift

The parking industry is moving towards satisfying customer demand – and that is a paradigm shift, according to Mentis. Drivers and the parking asset owners want the parking and charging experience to be seamless, and are looking at solutions that can integrate easily into an entire system. ‘This is where user experience is driving how the





Rachel Yoka, (left) from the International Parking and Mobility Institute, Mentis, and Anjna Patel, chair of the BPA Board, at the Parking Australia conference in November



Parking Australia Board members (from left): Jeremy Irvine, CEO; Daniel Hitchcock; Mosstyn Howell; Emily Carson; Gary Byrne; Mentis; James English; Joe LaRosa; Bart Staines; Pete Tarrant

“We need to make our urban assets work a lot better. Autonomous vehicles... will still need somewhere to park and to charge. Having a vision with those integrated platforms is inevitable”

technology is used and applied – how capable it is,’ says Mentis. ‘We have the solutions and resources to deliver a seamless outcome: it’s about pulling them together like Lego bricks and ensuring the different providers can come together collaboratively in a friendly playground!’

Mentis is also aware, however, that there is not a one-size-fits-all solution. For example, she says a strategy for EV charging – one of her specialist subjects – for a high-population urban centre will be very different from one for a regional area. At a recent Parking Australia event in Sydney, three city councils presented very different EV charging strategies.

‘When looking at a more remote regional town, there are very different considerations. For example, in some small towns, if you wanted to install two DC chargers, you’d need to consider whether both being used at the same time would it cause a “brown out” [reduced power supply] to the rest of that town.’


Vision for the future

Mentis cites the Affordable and Sustainable Transport UN Sustainable Development Goal as a motivation for the sector to become more sustainable. She believes parking is one component in delivering an integrated holistic transport mobility platform: ‘It’s one cog in the wheel, but it is an important one.’

With urban populations set to grow (the UN predicts that, by 2050, 68 per cent of the world’s population will live in a city, an increase of 13 per cent from 2018*), Mentis says the sector is moving towards embracing its role in delivering smarter transport in more sustainable cities. ‘We need to make our urban assets work a lot better. Autonomous vehicles are already here; it’s just a matter of time till we have mass adoption levels. They will still need somewhere to park and to charge. Having a vision with those integrated platforms is inevitable.’

Mentis cites international examples of collaborative parking platforms, such as the Dutch Nationaal Parkeer Register and the UK’s National Parking Platform. ‘They recognise that parking is part of a bigger picture. Again, I think that parking is part of an integrated and holistic transport mobility policy, and it’s about smart cities, user experience and liveability.’

Supporting EV charging is another key focus in the move to more sustainable transport systems. Parking Australia is working with state and local government in Sydney to negotiate a concession on the New South Wales congestion levy for city parking spaces that are fitted with EV chargers.

‘We’ve got an exciting and forward-thinking opportunity to be quite transformational in this rapidly evolving transport technology landscape,’ she says. ‘That is what drives me in our vision for Parking Australia. That, and working with a fabulous Board, CEO and parking community.’ 

■ Find out more about Parking Australia at parking.asn.au
Mentis is on LinkedIn: [linkedin.com/in/angeliquementis](https://www.linkedin.com/in/angeliquementis)

* bit.ly/PNJune24UN

Parking in the spotlight

Melina Keinemann, EPA communications and event manager, reports on the EPA's Parking Day at Intertraffic Amsterdam

As its first major event since moving the organisation to Brussels last year, the EPA's Parking Day at Intertraffic Amsterdam, on 17 April, was a huge success. More than 200 people attended the open sessions in the morning, which were part of the Intertraffic Summit programme, and more than 100 EPA members and guests joined the lunch afterwards.

The excitement began the previous day with the EPA's open session 'Battle for urban space: how to organise the kerb in inner cities', moderated by Theo Thuis, chair of the EPA Scientific Committee. The session showcased the EU-funded DISCO project, in which the EPA is an active partner, led by EPA President Emeritus Laurence Bannerman. DISCO stands for 'data-driven, integrated, synchromodal, collaborative and optimised' and it is a freight meta model to help with urban freight logistics and optimal use of space in the city. The open

data-sharing space will provide city planners with tools that can help them optimally manage, monitor and dynamically predict city freight flows.

AI, IoT and aisbl

The Parking Day kicked off with presentations from EPA Board members EasyPark and Skidata, highlighting how technological developments – including data-driven decision management, artificial intelligence (AI) and the internet of things (IoT) – are being implemented to support sustainable urban mobility and smart parking.

EPA executive director Tom Antonissen introduced the new EPA aisbl (see panel), and EPA President Nigel Williams discussed key trends in smart mobility and smart parking.


Antonissen opened the Presidents' Session with an overview of the 'new' EPA organisation and activities, notably through its member-driven committees and working groups.

Williams and Vexpan (the Dutch parking association) Vice-President and EPA Board member Peter Dingemans then took to the stage with presentations on the evolution of the EPA and the wider sector. They addressed how mobility, energy and urban space concerns are coming together to define the current trends, with a particular focus on digitalisation, data sharing and electromobility.

The morning ended with a dynamic panel discussion between the CEOs of APCOA, Indigo, Interparking and Q-Park, and representatives from the cities of Lille and Amsterdam. There was an interesting debate on the important relationship between on- and off-street parking management when aiming for more sustainable urban mobility, with the emergence of mobility hubs being one example where the public and private sectors can work together for the common good.

Building on success

After the working lunch, there was an open Board meeting to which all national parking associations and corporate members were invited. There were updates on the development of EU legislative files with which EPA is involved, notably on the Energy Performance of Buildings Directive, the European parking card for people with disabilities, and the Cross-Border Enforcement Directive. Updates were also given by the chairs of EPA's EV and Fire Safety and Digitalisation and Data Working Groups.

Williams said: 'Intertraffic is the world's leading business and stakeholder gathering on smart mobility, infrastructure, traffic management, road safety and parking. EPA's Parking Day helped raise the profile of the sector within the sphere of sustainable urban mobility. It was great! We plan to build on the success of this event, to develop synergy with Intertraffic and make this a regular event in the EPA calendar. Look out for an even better EPA Parking Day at Intertraffic 2026!' 

■ EPA's next major events are the EPA General Assembly on 26-27 September 2024 and the 21st European Parking Congress and Exhibition on 17-19 September 2025, both in Brussels. Visit europeanparking.eu





A new team

The event was a great occasion to introduce the new EPA Secretariat. Since the EPA aisbl obtained legal status as an international non-profit organisation in Belgium last December, followed by the formal nomination of its new executive director, Tom Antonissen, in January, the team has been strengthened accordingly:

- **Melina Keinemann**, who worked for two years as communications coordinator for the former EPA association, was promoted to communications and events manager. She remains based in Cologne to ensure continuity with the previous secretariat (managed by EPA German member Bundesverband Parken).
- **Vasiliki (Vicky) Orfanaki** has joined as part-time finance and office manager, based in Brussels, to support the association's internal set-up and ensure overall efficiency.
- **Pauline Delannoy** joined as part-time research and projects manager. Based in Barcelona, her role is to support the Digitalisation and Data Working Group, as well as new projects such as research into the consequences of larger and heavier vehicles on existing car parks.
- **Yasmin Jefferies** joined the EPA Secretariat on a part-time secondment from the BPA, as the EPA's membership development and social media manager. This role will increase the EPA footprint within the parking and wider urban mobility ecosystem, off- and online.

Antonissen said: 'It has been impressive to see how much the EPA has achieved in little over a year. Just a few months after obtaining our legal status, we managed to attract four talented and motivated team members, which will allow us to grow further and continue putting on world-class events, such as at Intertraffic Amsterdam and, of course, the 2025 European Parking Congress.'

Jefferies said: 'It's been fantastic to begin sharing some of the important work that the EPA is doing with the wider community on LinkedIn, along with the EPA Parking Day activities. We've had excellent engagement levels already. A number of organisations I spoke with at Intertraffic have expressed an interest in joining our association.'



Top: EPA executive director Tom Antonissen introduced the new EPA aisbl
 Bottom: Panel discussion on public and private sector collaboration, both on- and off-street

■ To find out more about joining the EPA, contact yasmin.jefferies@europeanparking.eu

A fresh approach

Faced with a recruitment challenge, North Essex Parking Partnership decided it would change things up to get the people it needed. **Laura Hardisty**, strategic communications and marketing manager at Colchester City Council, explains more

The role of a civil enforcement officer (CEO) has never been an easy one to fill. It requires specialist skills, a resilient attitude to be outdoors in all weathers, lots of walking, and, occasionally, dealing with difficult and angry members of the public.

In 2022, however, we started to find recruitment to these posts even harder. Our traditional forms of advertising were not working. At full capacity, we employ 42 CEOs across north Essex; at our fewest, we were down to less than 30.

Doing things differently

It got us thinking about what we could do. We started by looking at what we were currently doing, what worked, and the analytics.

We were already:

- Listing vacancies on our job webpage
- Running adverts through an employment agency
- Adding 'we're hiring' vinyl stickers to some of our vehicles
- Adding intervention points to the recruitment process, with a manager calling interested candidates to provide them with more information.

In 2022, we attracted 54 applicants, of which 12 secured roles – a conversion rate of 22 per cent. We needed to think about things in a new way and give our recruitment some much-needed focus. It worked, but not quite how we predicted!

Step one

We asked our current CEOs what attracted them to the job, where they found out about the vacancy, and what they enjoy most about the role. It started to bust some internal myths and made us focus on what was important.

We'd always assumed that the salary was not attractive enough, but that wasn't the focus of our current staff. They liked the shift patterns, working outdoors, the sense of accomplishment in helping a member of the public, and the freedom to use their initiative. Pay is



“One of our managers started spending one day a month at a local job centre. This has been so successful that we have just started to spend a day at a second job centre”

important, but not what our staff value the most. We rewrote the job advert and specification, with a focus on the outcomes of what our CEOs told us was important to them.

We also revamped our jobs webpage and worked with our partner district councils to ensure they were posting the job on their vacancy webpages.

Step two

We wanted to go out to people, not wait for them to come to us.

- One of our managers started spending one day a month at a local job centre to talk to potential candidates, answer questions and support people through the application process. This has been so successful that we have just started to spend a day at a second job centre.
- We worked in partnership with Reed to hold information sessions for people interested in the role, which had a great turnout.
- We've attended several local job fairs. The last one resulted in two applicants, so fingers crossed!
- We worked with our local authority partner teams that were already holding outreach job events and supplied them with information to promote our vacancies.




The outcome was that, in 2023, we had 143 applicants (which is great), of which eight were successful in securing roles – a conversion rate of only five per cent (not so great).

Where does this leave us?

Applications have almost tripled, so there has evidently been success, but we now need to look in more detail at what actions contributed most significantly to recruiting the successful candidates. We have much more work to do here.

We are also continuing to work with our existing teams to unpick the barriers to filling vacancies in certain areas. We discovered that one of the issues faced by our west-based team is the rural location of their base, which is not easily accessible by public transport. We're now looking at alternative options.

The recruitment challenges we face are multifaceted, so our reaction to them must be the same. We need to do more analysis work, but what we have learned is that the answers to our questions usually lie with our existing staff. We must become more effective at breaking down physical barriers, such as the location of our bases, but also embracing an open culture, where information flows and new ideas flourish. 

■ The BPA's parking recruitment website – parkingjobs.co.uk – can help you find the right staff. To find out more, contact James Martin on james.martin@cplone.co.uk or call 01727 739185.



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Raising standards

At the end of April, the BPA and International Parking Community announced the launch of a new single Code of Practice for private parking operators. **Louise Parfitt** chats to Sara Roberts, head of Conformity Assessment Body Transition, about why this came about, the impact, and what's next



Why have the BPA and International Parking Community (IPC) launched a single Code?

I have to say it's really exciting to be delivering a single Code, because that's one of the aims of the Private (Code of Practice) Parking Act 2019.

Over the past few years, the BPA and IPC have been working with the government on developing the requirements of the Act. This has meant the associations have been involved in the same discussions on numerous occasions and, therefore, our working relationship has developed. We have a growing appreciation of each other's desire to raise standards, and having a single sector-led Code is an opportunity to start that transition towards the alignment required by the Act.

Why now?

During the past few years, our Codes have been getting closer. Both associations launched new versions of their Codes of Practice last year; we did a few things in our Code (version nine) that aligned us with the IPC's Code and government requirements, and the IPC did the same.

We'd seen uncertainty ahead on the political agenda and we've been waiting for the new government Code for a while now. We decided to get on with a sector-led single Code so we can continue to raise standards, which is what the BPA and IPC have been doing for years anyway: the BPA's first Code of Practice came out in 2012!

How does it fit with what the government is calling for?

Our Code is based largely on the government's Code, but we've tried to bring in elements that, from our experience of

“Our Code is based largely on the government's Code, but we've tried to bring in elements that, from our experience of delivering parking, make more operational sense”

delivering parking on the ground, make more operational sense. There are some contradictions in the government Code, for example, that mean it doesn't quite work. There are also elements where the BPA and IPC's previous Codes had higher standards than those within the government's Code. We wanted to make sure that our Code kept the high standards already established.

To be clear, this Code is not about conformity assessment bodies and certification. We are talking about the current framework for our members that gain access to DVLA data.

We've shared our Code with the government and it has acknowledged our desire to raise standards and the transition to the alignment that will be required by its single Code.

What is the biggest change of which operators should be aware?

One of the key things for operators to take note of is the appeals charter. Many of our members will already be doing most of the things it stipulates.

The appeals charter aims to create clear and unvarying parameters for motorists to appeal against a parking charge. For example, it has always been a requirement of the BPA's Code that our members respond to any appeal received from a member of the public within 35 days. The government code was asking for 28 days – so, in version nine of our Code, launched last year, we moved to 28 days too. The same with the IPC: it had given motorists 21 days to appeal to the operator, but the government requirement is 28.

Alignment was happening already, so it made sense to bring it together fully.

And for the motorist?

Motorists are often not aware whether a car park is run by a member of the BPA or IPC, and there had been differences in how certain things were managed. Now, no matter if it is a BPA or IPC member car park, the terms and conditions will be the same, which should make it easier for motorists to be compliant and have the same timelines if they do need to appeal.

“We appreciate each other's desire to raise standards, and a single Code is an opportunity to start that transition towards the alignment required by the Act”

Any feedback so far?


Member feedback has been really positive. There is a lot of sector buy-in. People have been waiting long enough for it, they have known it's coming, so let's just crack on and do it.

Will the BPA and IPC continue to work more closely together?

Our work with the IPC won't stop here. Over time, version one of our sector-led single Code will need to develop, so we are going to work together on maintaining and reviewing it, and looking at what else we can do to bring this alignment across the sector, for the benefit of motorists.

We can see what the government wants to achieve, we can see what the consumer groups want to achieve, and we can see what's coming. The BPA and IPC are ready to do it – we want to do it – but it all has to be done with a sufficient deterrent to make it work. We absolutely support and applaud the raising standards elements of the government's Code, but we believe the only successful way will be to have a sufficient deterrent too.

What's next?

Following the recent announcement of the general election that will take place on 4 July, the next government consultation on the level of parking charge and debt resolution fee that was expected to be live at the end of May has been delayed. The BPA will keep members informed of any developments as it hears about them. 

The BPA webinar on the new Code is at britishparking.co.uk/Past-Webinars if you have any queries, email aos-member-enquiries@britishparking.co.uk

Springing into action

Dave Smith, BPA head of marketing and events, reports on the recent Parking Scotland and Parking and Transport Wales spring seminars

In April, the BPA held two spring seminars for members in Wales and Scotland.

The first was a trip to the home of Welsh rugby, with Cardiff's Principality Stadium the location for a well-attended meeting.

Tackling the big issues in Wales

The day began with a warm welcome from long-standing chair Peter Lowe, former BPA President and managing director of RTA Associates.

The first session covered parking policy, with representatives from the Welsh government, the Welsh Local Government Association, and the Department for Transport. Topics included: unnecessary obstruction of the highway; the 20mph limit; the level of local

authority penalty charges; private land parking charges; and information on the rollout of the National Parking Platform. Lowe provided an update on the current situation regarding digital traffic regulation orders, which everyone agreed was an issue requiring joined-up working across parking and traffic teams.

The next session featured an expert panel looking at: challenges in debt management and resolution; reasons for recovery failure; the role of intelligent and effective enforcement; persistent evaders; and links to wider non-compliance and the impacts for local councils.

After lunch, Alan Wood, CEO and founder of the National Persistent Evader Database (NPED), spoke about tackling nuisance vehicles, while Jon Waters and Susan Blunt, of the Welsh Government's Blue Badge team, gave an update on work to tackle badge misuse.



A session on electric vehicle chargepoint deployment concluded the day. Delegates were then treated to a tour of the magnificent stadium, where Wales' men's rugby union team will take on Fiji, Australia and South Africa in the Autumn Internationals.

On to Scotland

The following week, the BPA landed in Ayrshire, on the east coast of Scotland – specifically Kilmarnock Football Club – for another packed day of content, knowledge sharing and networking. The meeting was chaired by BPA President Stuart Harrison, supported by Kelvin Reynolds and Isaac Occhipinti, of the BPA.

The first session looked at parking and traffic policy. Edinburgh City Council gave an update on managing and enforcing pavement parking, as the first authority to implement the ban in Scotland. Penalty charges and contravention codes were also on the agenda, particularly the need for a consistent set of codes, as were low-emission zones and Blue Badge misuse.

The afternoon sessions included: presentations on tackling nuisance motorists and the NPED; temporary traffic regulation order applications and management; and the 3G switch-off.



The Parking Scotland Spring Seminar delivered a packed agenda



Parking and Transport Wales' Spring Seminar was well attended

Autumn meetings

The Parking Scotland Conference and Expo will be on 18 September, at the Radisson Blu Hotel, Perth.

Parking and Transport Wales' Conference and Expo is planned for 9 October, at Brangwyn Hall, Swansea, sponsored by Andrew James Enforcement.

Delegate bookings are now open for both events and exhibition bookings will open soon. For more details, please visit britishparking.co.uk/Events or email communications@britishparking.co.uk

Keep on trucking

Dave Smith, BPA head of marketing and events, takes a closer look at the Park Mark Freight award

After a busy day on the UK's roads, lorry drivers need somewhere they can park, rest, refuel and recharge, before setting off again to get their deliveries to where they need to be and on time.

So, it's vital that lorry parks and truck stops tick some important boxes – namely, they are accessible, clean, appointed with good facilities, and safe.

The Park Mark Freight award is issued to lorry-parking facilities that pass a rigorous risk assessment conducted by the police and the BPA. Assessments include: management and maintenance of the facility; ensuring there are appropriate levels of surveillance, lighting, signage, and cleanliness, and measures to enhance the safety of people and vehicles; good management and operations; and exemplary customer service.


Crime prevention and reduction

The freight industry experiences a high volume of cargo theft and the main Safer Parking Scheme Assessment Guidelines do not cover this type of business explicitly.

Park Mark Freight builds upon the Safer Parking Scheme's Park Mark Award by introducing essential criteria. Park Mark is primarily aimed at the prevention of criminal behaviour within the parking environment, and requires owners and operators to adopt an active management strategy to ensure there is minimal occurrence of crime.

'There is an increased expectation for efficient, well-managed and high-quality lorry parks and truck-stop facilities to combat vehicle and cargo crime,' says Sara Fisher, BPA head of operations and business development. 'We are delighted to work with Police Crime Prevention Initiatives and award Park Mark to facilities that can demonstrate the highest standards across their operations.'

Lorry parks with the Park Mark Freight award can use signage featuring the distinctive Park Mark tick, so drivers and hauliers know exactly where to go for safer parking.

Early adopters of the scheme saw a dramatic drop in vehicle-related crime of more than 80 per cent, showing that the initiative really does make a difference. 

For more information, visit britishparking.co.uk/park-mark-freight

To find Park Mark car parks, visit parkmark.co.uk



From left: Red Lion Truckstop owner Ali Sadrudin, Sharon Henley, police assessor at Northamptonshire Police, and Colin Sproats, BPA area manager



Best in Europe

The Red Lion Truckstop, near Kislingbury, Northampton, has recently retained its Park Mark Freight award, recognising that its parking and driver facilities actively help deter crime and reduce the fear of crime at all times. It has also been named the best lorry park in Europe after 40 per cent of truckers polled said it was their favourite.

'Park Mark Freight is not only important, but a necessity for the Red Lion Truckstop,' says owner Ali Sadrudin.

'It proves to our customers that we are striving for the highest standards of security and driver welfare, and it is justification for drivers to make the Red Lion Truckstop their only stop when looking for a safe and secure place to park.'

Veterans in Parking

Following the signing of the Armed Forces Covenant at Parkex last month (see pages 18-29), the Veterans in Parking group is looking ahead to marking Armed Forces Week and the D-Day celebrations at the end of June. Look out for further details via the dedicated LinkedIn group, or email dave.s@britishparking.co.uk

BPA President's reception

Following the announcement that a general election will be held on 4 July, the annual reception for the BPA's new President at the House of Commons will not be going ahead on this date. The BPA will be in touch with members when it has details about a welcome event for the new President, Richard Walker. He officially takes over as President at the next BPA Council meeting on 25 July.

Staff news

Marco Mexquitic has joined the BPA on a six-month basis to help promote and grow the BPA's schemes and accreditations. He has a software as a service sales and customer relationship background, and is a successful business development specialist. Fluent in Spanish, Marco is from the US, so is learning to call car parks 'car parks' instead of 'parking lots'!

National Blue Badge Day of Action

The third National Blue Badge Day of Action took place on Friday 24 May. Well done to all local authorities that took part to take action against Blue Badge misuse and fraud. A full report on the day will follow in the July issue of *Parking News*.



PARKING FRAUD PREVENTION

pdf. resource



BPA launches fraud prevention guidelines

The BPA has published guidance to help local authority parking managers, private parking operators, technology and payment firms, and motorists prevent parking scams.

Over the past year or so, anecdotal evidence reported to the BPA suggests digital parking scams have been on the increase. These include: scam websites and apps mimicking the appearance of legitimate parking payment platforms; fake telephone numbers and QR codes overlaid on top of genuine numbers and codes that direct motorists to fraudulent sites; fake penalty or parking charge notices being placed on vehicles; and even people pretending to be parking attendants patrolling car parks and taking payments from motorists.

The BPA's Parking Technology, Innovation and Research Service Board formed a working group to look into drawing up best-practice guidance

for members, to help prevent scams happening and to educate motorists on how to protect themselves against the fraudsters.

Sarah Greenslade, BPA content and research manager, said: 'The guide we've created is a live document that will be updated as the fraud types change. We encourage all members to brief their parking staff, stay vigilant and, importantly, educate motorists.'

The guidelines will be updated regularly as new information comes to light. They also contain details of where to report suspected fraudulent activity and of the further support and information available. See the guidelines at bit.ly/PNJune24FPG

Preventing parking fraud was also discussed at Parkex (see pages 18-29) and during a recent BPA webinar. See britishparking.co.uk/Past-Webinars

Dates for your diary

- The final **BPA Live event** of 2024 takes place on **20 June**, at the Holiday Inn West in Peterborough. Sessions will follow up on some discussions held in the BPA Live Theatre at Parkex last month, including on electric vehicle charging infrastructure, frontline officer abuse, digital traffic regulation orders, the National Parking Platform, and parking structures. There will also be a POPLA workshop for Approved Operator members and a forum for local authority members.
 - The **Northern Ireland Country Group** meeting will be held on **25 June** at the Glenavon House Hotel, Cookstown. The agenda will be published soon.
 - The next **TTF Smarter Parking Group** meeting takes place on **28 June** (virtual).
 - The next **Parking Technology Interest Group** meeting is on **11 July** (virtual).
- For more information and to book your place, go to britishparking.co.uk/Events

Top marks for car parks!

Congratulations to the following car parks for achieving the high standard of the Safer Parking Scheme.

- **Care Park UK** has again achieved Park Mark for two of its central London car parks – the **Park Tower Hotel**, located in Knightsbridge, and **Marble Arch**, located in Westminster. This is a fantastic achievement and recognises that Care Park parking facilities have measures in place that actively deter crime and the fear of crime in car parks.
- **Northern Lincolnshire and Goole Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust** has achieved the prestigious Park Mark and Park Access awards for all of its managed car parks in Scunthorpe Hospital. The Park Access accreditation brings together the very best of two accreditations – the Disabled Parking Accreditation and the People's Parking Award – to automatically become the UK's industry benchmark for accessible and inclusive parking and electric vehicle charging facilities. Park Access EV includes requirements and recommendations for accessible EV charging informed by the new British Standard Institution accessibility standard, PAS 1899.
- **Green Parking's** recently opened and newly refurbished **Ludlow Road car park**, located in the town centre district of Maidenhead, in Berkshire, has achieved the prestigious Park Mark award. Green Parking has put measures in place that actively deter crime and the fear of crime in car parks.

To find out more about the Safer Parking Scheme, visit parkmark.co.uk

For more on Park Mark Freight, turn to page 43.



From left: Phil Whale and Keith Fowler, from Northern Lincolnshire and Goole Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust, and Colin Sproats, BPA area manager



Care Park UK's Park Tower Hotel car park in Knightsbridge



Ben Gill, Green Parking (left) and David Lancaster, Thames Valley Police



Abuse towards frontline staff survey results

The results are in from the BPA's benchmarking survey on frontline parking officer abuse. An initial analysis reveals 13 local authorities and 22 companies responded on behalf of 477 and 5,327 officers respectively.

Nearly all respondents were very concerned at the levels of abuse. Collectively, 211 reports of assault were made to the police during the past 12 months, 18 of which had resulted in physical injury. Local authorities were more likely to report assaults than companies.

Only one organisation reported a reduction in abuse (by at least 80 per cent during a three to four-year period) having fostered good support from the police civil protection/community safety team. Of the 77 individual officers who responded, 38 per cent had reported assaults to the police.

The BPA will be using this data in its ongoing work to lobby for better legislative protection for frontline officers, and to compare levels of abuse year on year to see where other action might be needed.

Read more about officer welfare in April's *Parking News* at bit.ly/PNApr240W You can also visit the BPA Frontline Officer Welfare hub for resources to help with managing staff welfare. See britishparking.co.uk/Frontline-officer-welfare



Boxing clever?

Kelvin Reynolds on the current yellow box junction conundrum

From the way the government's 'Plan for Drivers' and call for evidence are focused, you'd think all traffic engineers and parking teams were 'boxing clever' (*definition: 'To act skilfully and cunningly or deceitfully to achieve a desired outcome'*). It's easy for politicians to promote the idea that yellow box junctions are there to deceive motorists, duping them into paying penalties – but is it true?

Traffic engineers use yellow boxes only when unnecessary obstruction that causes congestion and delays occurs regularly.

So, what is driving the government's animosity towards yellow boxes? Are local authorities really boxing clever, deploying yellow boxes to dupe motorists; or is there significant non-compliance at some – in which case, what should be done about it?

Appropriate adjustments

There should always be a fundamental review of any traffic-management scheme where there is significant non-compliance, to try to find out why that is. Then appropriate adjustments can be made to achieve community compliance.

In its 'Plan for Drivers', the government said it would support our work to develop advice around yellow box junctions for local authorities. We've been working diligently with our friends in Cardiff Council, London Councils, PATROL and Buchanan Computing to develop

“We've been working diligently with Cardiff Council, London Councils, PATROL and Buchanan Computing to develop advice around yellow box junctions for local authorities”

it, and have shared it with the government for review – but we've uncovered a conundrum.


Department for Transport (DfT) lawyers say that the law and the Highway Code don't agree. The Highway Code interpretation of the law is too simplistic, but it is the common understanding of motorists and will undoubtedly influence their behaviour. Councils must enforce the law and not the motorist's interpretation of it, albeit influenced by a complimentary government publication (ie, the Highway Code). Now we really do need to 'box clever'!

Sharing best practice

Lawyers require precision; CEOs and camera operators require practical advice. If only they'd think outside the box...

It's important to ensure that any video or images include context, and not simply a vehicle sitting in a yellow box. Civil enforcement officers (CEOs) will then be able to see whether the traffic flow was impeded by a stopped vehicle, considering any mitigation that might have caused the vehicle to stop. Our advice does not need to be definitive; it simply needs to assist CEOs and camera operators when deciding if they 'believed that a contravention had occurred' and then 'whether to issue a warning notice or penalty charge notice (PCN)'.

Civil enforcement is always open to interpretation. CEOs decide whether or not to issue a PCN based on what they observe. Subsequently, extra information might become available through representation and appeals when local authorities and adjudicators come to a different view. These PCNs are not unfair enforcement; that's how it's supposed to work!

We'll get our advice out to share best practice, with the intention of revising it in the light of experience.* Statutory guidance will no doubt follow. Let's hope it doesn't compound the conundrum. Either way, let's keep it simple, straightforward and supportive of sensible civil enforcement. That's boxing clever. 

***Advice is due to be shared with BPA local authority members and published on the BPA website this summer: [britishparking.co.uk/resource-library](https://www.britishparking.co.uk/resource-library)**



Kelvin Reynolds

BPA chief technical services officer and company secretary

kelvin.r@britishparking.co.uk

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Marketplace



products and services guide


Access Control	Advice/Qualifications	Build & Maintenance	Parking Enforcement	Payment Systems	Signage & Guidance	Refuelling/Recharging	Safety & Security
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	<p>HUB Parking Technology HUB Parking Technology develops, manufactures, installs, and provides after-sales support for HUB Parking Access and Revenue Control Systems. The company creates state-of-the-art systems that make parking efficient, profitable and easy to manage.</p>	<p>Sarah Cosby sarah.cosby@faac.co.uk</p>	◆	◆			◆	◆		
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Access Control	Advice/Qualifications	Build & Maintenance	Parking Enforcement	Payment Systems	Signage & Guidance	Refuelling/Recharging	Safety & Security
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