The London Borough of Ealing’s strategy to deliver the Council’s Parking Policy Objectives
Ealing Council prioritises making the borough a safer, cleaner and more accessible place and the provision of parking plays a role in helping to make this happen. The management of traffic flow through the London Borough of Ealing is an important job, the borough is one of the most populated districts in the UK, home to over 335,000 people and has around 470 million miles of racked up through vehicle journey’s each year. Perhaps it’s not surprising that cars, motorbikes and busses all play a big role in the lives of our residents with 33% of people living in the borough choosing to travel to work by motor vehicle.

The job of keeping traffic moving falls to the Council, with the management of parking playing a significant role in improving road safety, congestion, the environment and making life easier for all road users, whether in a vehicle or on foot. In the last four years the Council has successfully delivered a number of key projects and programmes leading to improvements to service delivery which include:

- Successfully combating the misuse of blue badges leading to over 50 prosecutions
- Digitisation of CCTV enforcement providing more efficient technology
- Development and introduction of award winning online products and services
- Introducing parking permits protecting disabled people
- Winning a national parking award each year since 2012
- Worked in partnership with Brent and Hounslow Councils to generate value for money for West London residents through innovative procurement of services
- Providing cost effective parking for carers
- Improving parking outside schools throughout the borough
- Contributing on average £16 million each year to the provision of free travel through concessionary fares schemes like the Freedom Pass

Moving forward we are keen to continue with the positive work and look to align the key focus of work for the parking service with the Council’s Parking Policy Objectives aiming to provide excellent parking services that are considered and appropriate for the area reflecting value for money offering and supporting investment in wider transport and highways initiatives.

Thank you for taking the time to read our Parking Strategy Report.

Cllr Bassam Mahfouz
Cabinet Member for Environment & Transport
Parking Strategy 2016-2020

Executive Summary

This document sets out the strategy for delivery of the Council’s Parking Policy Objectives through a series of key work streams split broadly into four areas:

**WS.1** Development and implementation of car club policy
**WS.2** Parking enforcement controls and plans for Council managed land
**WS.3** CPZ implementation programme
**WS.4** Review of on and off street parking

The strategy is intended to not only support the Mayors Transport Strategy (MTS), with particular reference to Supporting local economic growth, Improving the safety and security of all Londoners and Reduce transport’s contribution to climate change and improve its resilience, but also underpin the Council’s parking Policy Objectives which are:

**P.1** Utilise technology to enhance customer journeys when using the council’s parking services
**P.2** Manage traffic flow and offer appropriate parking solutions to our customers through fair, robust and consistent enforcement
**P.3** Provide parking options to all motorists ensuring a balance of kerbside space
**P.4** Drive value for money through appropriate commercialisation of assets

Each of these work streams are outlined in this document and will run as independent projects in their own right, commissioned by the Council’s Parking Service and will support each of the Parking Policy Objectives in their own right, however each has been designed to ensure one or more of the objectives are substantially delivered throughout the strategies timeframe.
Car club schemes

Car clubs in London have grown in membership, as they have across the nation, in recent years and are expected to continue to grow. They offer rental access to vehicles in urban environments without the need to visit car rental company forecourts through the utilisation of council owned on and off street land. Analysis undertaken as part of the review indicated that Ealing is doing relatively well among outer London Boroughs in respect of scheme evolution and it was considered that there was great potential to expand car clubs.

Currently there are 67 car club bays in the borough’s Controlled Parking Zones with each company purchasing Business Permits. There are an additional 24 bays located in uncontrolled parts of the borough where the land rental is currently free of charge.

At the end of 2014 Ealing Council reviewed its car club operations culminating in an independent research project completed by the consultancy firm Steer Davis Gleave (SDG) which showed an increased level of car club membership across the borough in recent years but also emphasised a significant ‘clustering’ of bays in certain parts of the borough alongside a mix of providers offering inconsistent services to the borough residents. The diagram below highlights the concentration of bays to certain parts of the borough.
The report went on to identify a number of locations where the council had attempted to introduce car club offerings without success, leading to empty parking places restricted from residents and other borough motorists as illustrated in the diagram below.

*Diagram 1.2 – Empty Car Club Only Locations*
Additionally, a number of bays have been installed over the years with operators deciding not to use them leading to bays being restricted for use and unnecessarily occupying kerbside space.

It is recognised that access to rental vehicles can be a benefit for some residents, particularly where constant open access to a vehicle is restricted and as such the council has decided to prioritise the expansion of the scheme whilst developing it to ensure it reflects value for residents, is of a high quality and creates economic growth for the borough through the trading activities undertaken by the car clubs themselves.

It is anticipated that the evolution of the scheme will aid the council in meeting its climate change obligations as well as meeting Parking Policy Objectives P.2, P.3 and P.4 through provision of parking options in a controlled and considered manner, designed and priced in a way which reflects the value of the space and offering a commercial return for the borough.

The planned approach to evolve the scheme is to initially engage the car club providers via a soft market test to gain an understanding of what the ambition, product and position is of each organisation. Following an information gathering exercise the council will then engage either an individual, or a selection of providers through an appropriate partnering arrangement ensuring that the boroughs residents can expect the following from any car club scheme:

- Consistent pricing structures throughout the borough
- Quality controlled products
- Accessible locations throughout the borough
- Clearly advertised information on the schemes in operation

It is expected that 2016 will see the implementation of the partnering arrangements with significant scheme evolution taking place throughout the boroughs to 2020.
WS.2 Parking enforcement controls and plans for Council managed land

Enforcement of council housing land and adoption of new enforcement technology

Technology is at the very heart of parking services and operations. Whether it’s through online customer services such as mobile payments, online applications or mapped car park information or related to enforcement methods and approaches such as the use of ANPR (Automated Number Plate Recognition) or unattended CCTV cameras technology helps to improve service delivery in an efficient and effective way.

The Council will be stepping up the adoption of technology in future years and will also look to create a wider benefit for customers through harmonisation of enforcement practices in all council managed land. Currently the council uses the 2004 Traffic Management Act to regulate parking on the public highway and in council managed car parks, but there are a number of areas where different parking management arrangements exist including car parks next to parks and open spaces, Council buildings such as local Town Halls and Council managed Housing Estates.

Since the introduction of the Protection of Freedoms Act 2012, it is unlawful to clamp or remove vehicles on private land forcing private enforcement companies to change their operations and in some cases reducing the effectiveness of any parking management schemes. The Council currently uses a private contractor, PCM, to manage the parking of housing estate land which is currently enforced and regulated through contract law.

As part of a wider review of parking the Council will be changing the current arrangements to ensure better enforcement, improvements to processing of permits and provision of parking for visitors as well as delivering improvements to the car parking areas on the estates managed by the Council. These improvements will include refreshed and renewed signage and surfacing improving the look and feel of each parking area. The changes will
support Parking Policy Objectives P.2 and P.3 whilst also utilising the Council’s parking services infrastructure to ensure the delivery of value through economies of scale. Any income generated through the parking schemes will also be reinvested into the council rather than kept by a private enterprising third party.

The changes are not likely to be implemented until mid to late 2017 and will follow consultation and communication processes to ensure the changes are fully understood and as effective as possible. In order to keep costs low paper permits are not planned to be introduced with permits mimicking the current resident scheme rolled out. This will help to keep prices low for customers whilst still ensuring improved service delivery through greater patrols from uniformed officers helping to increase safety levels.

The changes will take place following the inclusion of parking land into the council’s on and off street special enforcement area meaning the Traffic Management Act 2004, the legislation used for the governance of Council highways, will become the enacting legislation. This will ensure provision of a legislated appeals process, regulation of enforcement activity and reinvestment of funding will all be applicable to the Council owned estates.

The Council has in recent years upgraded its parking enforcement and CCTV equipment making use of cutting edge technology to generate more efficient enforcement solutions. Over the coming years the Council will look to invest in new technologies where further service enhancements can be provided.

Software assisting customers in making online appeals or payments is also in the process of being developed and implemented and will help customers to receive instant feedback in relation to Penalty Charge Notices, explaining why they have been issued and what options are available to recipients.

The customer will remain at the centre of any process or managed service and through the use of technology, management of kerb side space and fair and consistent enforcement the Council aim to provide a parking service which meets the needs of customers whilst carefully balancing demand.
WS.3 CPZ implementation programme

CPZ Programme

Controlled Parking Zones (CPZs) play an integral role in improving road safety, congestion, the environment and making life easier for all road users. Ealing Council have been managing CPZs within the borough since 1998. Since their inception, the way in which they have been delivered and operate, has been adapted to reflect changes in parking trends and legislation.

To assist with delivery of a rolling four year implementation programme, Ealing Council has adopted a renewed strategy to improve the efficiency and delivery of controlled parking schemes within the borough. Conventional practices have been reviewed and developed with the intention of supporting the Mayors Transport Strategy (MTS) and the Council’s Parking Policy Objectives.

Forming a Suitable Consultation Programme

Ealing Council has commissioned an ongoing parking survey of the borough. This will enable the Council to capture an accurate representation of the parking pressures that exist within Ealing. The data collected through these surveys, will form the basis of prospective CPZ consultation programmes. Where average parking occupancy levels are identified as 70% or above, an area will automatically be considered for inclusion on the CPZ programme for consultation.
Consultation

With the assistance of parking survey data, suitable core consultation areas will be formed to focus on those areas where parking pressure is at its heaviest. Survey data will ensure that the Council is able to concentrate its efforts on resolving parking issues in those areas with a real need for support. In view of any prospective parking displacement that may result from the introduction of controlled parking, the Council will identify vulnerable outer areas and advise these residents of the potential impact of a CPZ. Residents will be consulted and given the opportunity to be included in a zone should one be introduced.

Implementation

Consultation results will be considered on an area wide basis, with the collective response of the area determining whether a CPZ is introduced. Results will be assessed by the standard implementation parameters used for all Transport and Council consultations undertaken by Ealing Council. The data gathered from the parking surveys, should ensure that appropriate consultation areas are formed, however while an area may share the same parking problems, its residents may not share the same opinion of controlled parking. If there are roads on the periphery of a consultation area that are not in favour of a CPZ, they may be removed if a suitable zone of those in favour can still be formed.
Safety and Environmental Concerns

There will be a renewed emphasis on safety and the environment for prospective CPZ schemes. Traditionally, CPZs are perceived solely as a means of resolving parking difficulties for residents. However, through their design and operation they also help improve safety and benefit the environment. The implementation of CPZs will primarily be driven through the established consultation process; however pollution, traffic and accident data will be considered as part of this process and may be used as a factor when recommending implementation.

Design

Through our renewed strategy, CPZs will be delivered and designed to support the Council’s Parking Policy Objectives. Controlled parking will support objective P.3 by ensuring suitable parking options are provided for all road users. Prospective zones will continue to cultivate the Council’s pay by phone parking facilities in line with objective P.1 ensuring motorists are provided with a swift and easy means of paying for parking to simplify their journey. Through the intended improvements of kerbside utilisation, future CPZ design will also assist with meeting objective P.4. By identifying under-utilised and suitable kerbside space, CPZs will provide shared-use parking options, ensuring that parking is not exclusive to one set of users and is made available for all. More efficient use of parking will be designed and priced to reflect the value of the space, consequently improving parking provision while offering a commercial return for the borough.

Renewed CPZ strategy – Key Points

- Future CPZ Programmes driven parking stress identified through survey data.
- Consultations to be assessed by standard parameters used for all Transport schemes.
- Increased flexibility in implementation to establish suitable zones.
- Greater emphasis on safety and environmental benefits
- Improvements to kerbside utilisation and availability.
WS.4 Review of on and off street parking

In addition to its miles of public highway, Ealing Council provides 17 off street car parks across the borough. These range from large multi-storey car parks of over 400 spaces to small, surface level car parks with as few as 20 spaces. The on street parking spaces and car parks offer customers a range of parking products enabling traffic to move, load and park for a range of reasons.

The Council’s parking customer varies from local residents and businesses to commuters and shoppers all requiring differing services from the available town centre kerb side space. The demand for parking places depends on a number of factors including the time of year, day of the week, time of day, number of permit holders, natural draw of local amenities, proximity to temporary events and price. A means of assessing the use of parking spaces is desirable to ascertain whether the Council is successfully meeting the needs of local residents/businesses, and to identify whether the opportunities presented by each site are being fully realised. To determine if different locations are providing an optimal service to motorists it is necessary to obtain an understanding of the following:

- How occupancy varies at location
- The demand around each location
- The cost of maintaining each location
- The parking tariffs levied by other nearby parking alternatives

To achieve an understanding of the above factors, Parking Services will be undertaking four studies based on the different types of parking with each report including the following:

- Maps of each specific location and the surrounding streets, identifying organisations, institutions and features that generate parking demand.
- Occupancy statistics for each location, cross referenced with the above, to identify any latent demand.
- Recommendations of what pricing points exist in each location.
Commercialisation of Car Park Assets

Ealing Parking Services provides parking solutions to the borough’s road users who are made up from a number of different sections of society including residents, businesses and their customers, visitors to the borough and commuters. As such the service invests a great deal of time and effort trying to understand who our customers are and what their unique requirements and expectations are.

The parking options offered by the service are made up of both on and off street parking places with a total of 17 off street car parks and approximately 35,000 on street parking places. We also provide a number of limited waiting free bays for residents of the borough, which we have named ‘Stop and Shop Bays’ which encourage motorists to use local businesses for their shopping needs, and we work closely with local business owners and managers to ensure we can help their companies thrive.

Being such a large and busy borough we recognise the need to involve the local community in all aspects of the council’s delivery of service with parking being at the forefront due to the wide nature of natural customers, ranging from residents, businesses and visitors alike. As such we decided to develop a community engagement plan which would challenge the perception of the council, parking services and more generally the industry. We want to help others see that service users from all backgrounds, not necessarily just residents, are not only symbiotic with the local community but also an integral part of the local community.

In 2014, as part of our engagement plan, Ealing Parking Services decided to set ourselves a mission statement which, although short, summarises and reminds us why the community needs to be at the heart of our service. ‘Parking is more than a space to rent; it’s a solution to community problems. It is the solution to house moves, the solution to urban development, the solution to local businesses footfall, the solution to ensuring the best use of open community space. Parking is central to the community and ultimately for the local community.’

The off street car parks offer great parking options to customers at competitive prices but, given the nature of parking demand, spend much of a 24 hour period empty. With this in mind the Council has started working towards improving the ways the car parks can be used whilst working to identify ways to make these spaces more valuable to the local community.

In conjunction with the Off Street Car Parking occupancy study, the Council will investigate ways of generating revenue from the car parks which lie beyond their use for the provision of parking. Primarily where these opportunities do not impinge on the primary operation of the car park, means of generating revenue through the lease of space may be a valuable source of revenue in the future. These opportunities make use of the fact that the car parks offer the Council and third parties an audience that can be identified through analysis of the occupancy study. These opportunities include the lease of space for the purposes of:
Also, picking up on the success of the roof top cinema held in 2013 and 2014 new ideas for how to vary the use of the car park will be explored with the Council using links to local business, charities and education providers to help make Ealing’s car parks interesting, different and useful.

In conjunction with the work off street and the commencement of occupancy studies of on-street town centre parking for residents and short-stay visitors, we will undertake a turnover analysis across town centre parking spaces. Parking Services are seeking to develop their understanding of customer behaviour through analysis of data generated by the department, as well as working with 3rd party organisations such as West London University, BIDs and local business groups to review the needs and expectations of customer visiting Ealing’s high streets, and how the service can respond to these factors. As well as looking at ways to increase churn, it is hoped that liaison with these 3rd parties will help identify other innovative ways in which Parking Services, and the Council as a whole, can support Ealing’s high streets and shopping precincts.