



*North Essex
Parking Partnership*

Operational Report

PART 1: **April to August 2018**

Contents

Page 3 – Service overview
Page 4 – On-street parking
Page 5 – Off-street parking
Page 6 – Parking education

Page 7 – People and performance
Page 9 – Work programme
Page 10 – How we invest and develop

Part of the drive for setting up this new style Operational Report is to improve everyone's understanding of what we deliver on a daily basis and to give you more up-to-date information about our service. This is the first quarterly Operational Report, which will become Part 1 of our Annual Report 2018/19, so you won't have to wait until mid-2019 to see it!



1 Service overview

The North Essex Parking Partnership (NEPP) is a council-run organisation which brings together all street based parking in north Essex on behalf of Braintree, Colchester, Epping Forest, Harlow, Tendring and Uttlesford Councils.

Becoming more efficient

Until now, the way our parking restrictions were written, in longhand text, made them difficult to understand and hard to follow. We are working with the South Essex Parking Partnership and software provider Buchanan Computing to create a state-of-the-art digital map of all parking restrictions in Essex. This also paves the way for more connected projects in future, such as supplying up-to-date data for in-car information systems, and will save us a huge amount of staff time enabling us to focus on local projects. Read more in section 2.

Partnership working

We work with our Partner Authorities on community events, such as the Night of Action in Colchester and Safer Streets Days in Uttlesford. Read more in section 2.

Positive Parking Agenda

As a founding member, we will continue to champion the Positive Parking Agenda (PPA). We embed the key principles in our everyday work and lead by example. Our Parking Partnership Group Manager has been out and about promoting the PPA with the British Parking Association. Read more in section 6.

3PR: schools parking project

Our Joint Committee has agreed to set aside £50,000 to fund the new 3PR scheme in north Essex to help tackle inconsiderate parking around primary schools. Read more in section 4.



2 On-street parking

Digital mapping for Essex

We're working with the South Essex Parking Partnership and software provider Buchanan Computing to create an accessible, interactive map-based inventory of all our parking restrictions, lines and signage. This £0.25m project includes a full roadside survey by Buchanan Order Management of every on-street line, sign and parking area in the county and production of new map-based parking restrictions for all Districts.

This new software not only means it is easier for our teams to access and read restrictions, but it also enables our parking restriction-making process to be linked to the map to keep records as up-to-date as possible. The first steps have already been taken, a full audit has been completed for all roads in the south of the county with surveys now being underway across the north area. As part of the survey, the restrictions will be graded to show where any maintenance is required.

In the long term, it is planned to add the software to our website as a customer-facing tool so that anyone can check parking restrictions in an unfamiliar area, before even getting in the car. It is hoped that it will also be able to support the development of Parking as a Service in Essex, with benefits for connected and possible self-driving vehicles at some time in the future.

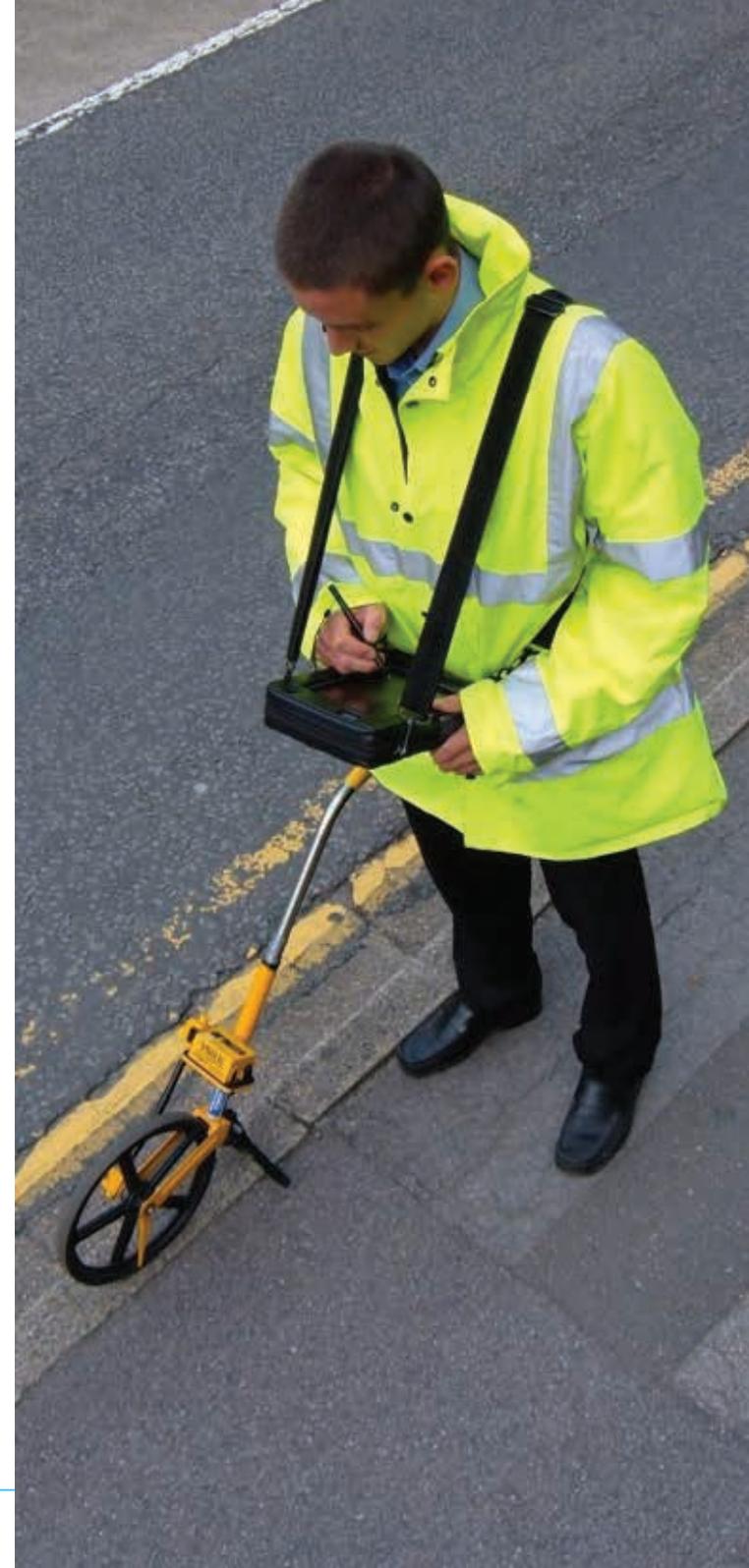
Partnership working

We continue to work with Colchester Borough Council and take part in Nights of Action, and Uttlesford District Council to attend its Safer Streets Days. The aim of these events is to promote a safer, more pleasant environment for the public and they have a multi-agency approach including Police, Border Force, Military Police, SOS bus, working alongside Council Zone Wardens, Licensing team, and our Civil Enforcement Officers.

ParkSafe car

We have updated our ParkSafe car software to add more enforceable parking restrictions for Colchester and Tendring, and all previous parking restrictions have been checked and re-aligned for improved accuracy. We are now working to update our other Partner Authority areas.

The role of the ParkSafe car is to provide a more effective deterrent against motorists taking the chance of parking on school zig-zag markings. Being mobile, it can cover more sites more effectively than an officer on foot. Several schools are patrolled every day, particularly at school start and finish times. Its use also supports existing Police and Essex County Council road safety campaigns.



3 Off-street parking

Beside managing the kerbside of our highway network, we also work with our Partner Authorities in Braintree, Colchester, Harlow, and Uttlesford Councils to operate their car parks; this section describes more about the work we carry out in car parks.

Smarter parking with MiPermit

It has been six years since we introduced the MiPermit app payment system to the car parks we manage in north Essex. Since 2012, the usage of the app has increased by 2153% - this is a great figure, but we'd like to increase it further.

During the summer, we displayed banners and posters in car parks across all our districts, promoting 'Smarter Parking' using the MiPermit app. To encourage a behaviour change we've also reduced coin machines in some car parks to encourage customers to move to payment via the app (we ensured there were still coin machines within a short walking distance if needed). We also issued some MiPermit app 'Top Tips' on our Twitter and LinkedIn pages.

Contactless in Colchester and Braintree

We introduced contactless, Apple Pay and chip card payment into Vineyard Street Car Park in Colchester and George Yard, White Horse Lane and Newlands Drive in the Braintree District. We now have contactless payment options in seven of the car parks we manage. We plan to install a further 15 machines across 5 car parks over the next six months. Using contactless, chip card or Apple Pay for transactions complements traditional coin payment, and cashless MiPermit online, text and phone options already available in all our car parks.

We're planning to install new '3 simple steps' signage in Colchester car parks to support people to use the contactless payment option.

Artist illustrates Colchester's history in mural

We are very pleased to be working with a local Colchester based artist, supporting them to paint two murals in St Mary's Car Park in Colchester. The murals, which will be painted on the walls of two stairwells in the car park, take inspiration from Colchester's 2000 years of amazing history, including the Trinovantes tribe, Boudicca, Roman soldiers and will use elements of Celtic design.

The work began in April and it is planned to be completed by the end of the summer.



4 Parking education

3PR: schools parking project

Our Joint Committee has agreed to set aside £50,000 to fund the new 3PR scheme in north Essex to help tackle inconsiderate parking around primary schools. Engagement with primary schools is going well and the first launch is scheduled to take place at a school in Colchester in early November. On top of this good news, three Enforcement Agents have sponsored the project for £7,500 a year for four years, a total of £30,000! This will enable us to fund 60 extra schools. To find out more about 3PR visit schoolparking.org.uk

Annual Report 2017/18

We've launched our 2017/18 Annual Report. The design keeps the figure reporting clear, interesting graphics are used to highlight facts and we've continued to use concise and jargon free text to tell a story without the need to wade through lots of in-depth copy. We're really pleased with the results, so pleased in fact that we're now using a similar template for this, our Operational Report. We'll link to these new quarterly reports in future newsletters, enabling you to access our information quicker and easier. Visit our website to read it!

E-brief newsletter

We introduced our new E-brief digital newsletter for stakeholders and Councillors across our Partner Authorities in April 2018. Part of the drive for setting up this e-newsletter is to improve everyone's understanding of parking management and encourage innovation in its delivery. We've issued two editions so far, which we hope you've found useful and interesting.

Social media engagement

To support the integration of the Positive Parking Agenda principles into our communications strategy, we refreshed our Twitter page during 2017 to focus on raising awareness of considerate parking and parking restrictions. We used a mix of serious and light-hearted posts in a positive tone, including quizzes, images and topical hashtags, alongside consistent helpful replies to questions. Engagement doubled from 14,400 impressions to 28,800 by the end of March 2018. Our messages will continue to be developed to increase engagement and awareness of the work we do.



5 People and performance

Our focus for the way we work is “Innovation, Efficiency, Education and Communication”.

Innovation

We launched Yammer, an internal social media network in 2017. It's a great tool for our employees to share ideas, ask questions and gather feedback from colleagues. It was so successful with our Management and Business Unit teams that we decided to encourage our Patrol teams to use area specific Yammer 'groups'. As Yammer is not limited to a desktop computer, our Patrol teams are now able to use a Yammer mobile app to stay in touch with their manager and colleagues, whilst out on site. This enables our Officers to be much more reactive to calls we get from the public when someone is seen parking where they shouldn't.

We have replaced Officers' body worn cameras in Harlow and Epping Forest with the most up to date ones available. Our aim is to replace one of our three area's body worn cameras every year to ensure we have the most current equipment for our Officers to use as the safety of our staff is a priority for us. We have seen a significant

reduction in serious incidents reported by our Officers since they started wearing body worn cameras. The figures have reduced from 85 reported serious incidents in 2015/16, to 50 in 2016/17. Officers have also reported that they feel safer and more secure when conflict arises knowing that everything is being recorded.

Efficiency

We trialled new handheld devices for our Civil Enforcement Officers in Harlow and Epping. The new devices will be considerably smaller and lighter and have a better battery life. Reception signal should be better which will help resolve issues in some rural areas, and they have built-in cameras, which can be used to take the contravention photos in place of separate cameras. If the trial goes well we will look to roll this out to all enforcement areas over the next few months.

Education

We're supporting the new Colchester Borough Council (our lead authority) No Engine Idling policy.

Although our officers do this most of the time already, we've committed to switching off our vehicle engines, when stationary, across the whole north Essex area, helping to protect the health of people in any cars behind and pedestrians on the pavement.

We all know that nobody likes getting a parking ticket, but what people find it hard to believe is that we don't like giving them either; we'd all much rather everyone parks legally. However, our Civil Enforcement Officers have to deal with very challenging people who feel their tickets are unjust. All our Officers have gained conflict management and customer service qualifications, which equip them to resolve these situations as quickly & safely as possible.

OUR MISSION is to “Work in Partnership, providing the best parking service possible” - including to the delivery of “a well-budgeted, effective, efficient and economic service ... leading in innovative parking services; demonstrating continuous service improvement ... high levels of performance and ... clearly and concisely communicating the vision and plans”.

Communication

Colchester Borough Council (our lead authority) runs a Staff Recognition Scheme throughout the year. At the end of the year, the employees who have been nominated are invited to a Celebration Event. We are very pleased that three Officers from the Parking Partnership achieved a staff award this year. Each one went above and beyond their job role whilst interacting with members of the public.

We continue to work in partnership with the Local Community Policing team in Colchester to deliver parking education messages at infant and junior schools; showing parents a united front in keeping children safe. Enforcement and Education to parents were delivered in equal measure during school drop off and pick up times by our parking patrol Officers and Police Community Support Officers.

This year saw a great response from the public to our Officers on patrol during the two days of the Clacton Air Show. Patrols focussed around the areas considered to be most affected by visitors to the event identified by Tendring District Council. The response to our staff was very positive and led to a number of very welcome calls thanking us for our influence on reducing the problems suffered by local people as well as the professionalism shown when dealing with difficult customers.

OUR VISION includes a section setting out our priority to **“Continuously improve by concentrating on four identified themes: Innovation, Communication, Efficiency, Education ... operating as a single enterprise and being a model for others to follow”**



6 Work programme

Our future aims will help shape our work for the coming financial year. Here is just a taster of the projects that we will be focussing on.

Promoting the Positive Parking Agenda

As a founding member, we will continue to champion the Positive Parking Agenda (PPA). We embed the key principles in our everyday work and lead by example. Our Parking Partnership Group Manager has been out and about promoting the PPA with the British Parking Association (BPA).

Richard has attended three events recently, the BPA Annual General Meeting that included the President's Reception at the House of Commons, the Local Government Association Conference and the Parking Forum. The events were very successful and he had some good conversations with Councillors and MPs about changing the perception of parking and issues that need resolving in legislation to help make parking simpler and easier. You can read more about the development of the Positive Parking Agenda at britishparking.co.uk/Positive-Parking-Agenda

We are working with our main software supplier Chipside and Response Master, a company which specialises in customer self-serve systems, to develop a new online process that will give motorists an indication of the likely outcome of their Penalty Charge Notice challenge against our policy, prior to deciding whether to challenge the Penalty or not. The main benefit is that the system will ask for any evidence required at an early stage, outlining what is required to support a challenge and show how to submit it. The first stage is to be launched later in the year with other improvements to follow.

We will continue work on our New Parking Restrictions page on the website enabling more customers to self-serve whatever time is convenient to them.

We are researching a new lone worker device called 'SkyGuard'. If suitable we will trial with one Enforcement team, if that goes well we will look to roll this out to all enforcement areas over the next few months.



7 How we invest and develop

Our Partner Authorities confirmed which parking restriction applications they would like the Joint Committee to approve for 2018/19. Each authority can prioritise up to six schemes a year (the exception is any self-funding restrictions, such as residents parking schemes, which would not count towards those six). Where the Committee decides to approve these, the next step will be to consult on each new parking restriction proposals, locally.

We're always looking to improve our online service, and part of this is refreshing the layout of our website. The new format homepage will be designed and built with the user in mind, linking smoothly to all our self-serve processes, such as challenging a Penalty Charge Notice and looking at a parking restriction application.

To support our drive to use concise and jargon-free text, to enable the customer to navigate our website with ease, and promote the Positive Parking Agenda, the term 'Enforcement' is being replaced with 'Kerbside Management and Patrols' and 'Policies and Procedures' with 'Lines, Signs & Applications'. The new layout of the website will serve us very well for further developments in years to come.





Short stay



Long stay



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The Maltings
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