Coliseum Leisure Park praised for tackling car crime

Security staff at the Coliseum Leisure Park in Ellesmere Port have been praised by police chiefs for helping to cut car crime by winning a coveted Safer Parking Scheme Park Mark® Award.

Following a stringent police inspection, the leisure park, which attracts thousands of visitors a week, scooped the prestigious Park Mark® Award, run on behalf of the Association of Chief Police Officers.

Mr Jackson said: “Staff at the Coliseum Leisure Park should be congratulated on winning the Park Mark® Award. The benefit of this type of scheme is that it both reduces vehicle crime while also making the area a safer place for people to visit. Anything that reduces car crime and frees up our officers’ time to fight crime in other areas has to be welcomed.”

Coliseum Leisure Park Manager Mike Jeffries said: "The Park Mark® Award is a well earned recognition of the hard work put in by the Security Team at the Coliseum to ensure that customers can visit while happy in the knowledge that their cars are as safe as possible."

More than 2,900 Park Mark Awards have now been issued throughout the UK since the launch of the scheme in 2004.

Bob Quick of the Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO), which owns the scheme, commented: “I am delighted with the growth of the scheme. It is going from strength to strength and will make an important contribution to safety and crime reduction in 2007 and beyond.”

Welcome

Welcome to our new look Park Mark® Times!

With the continued success of the Safer Parking Scheme (currently 2,922 Awards) we are looking to have more in depth comment on the scheme from the many different perspectives of our Award holders and member organisations.

Our new Park Mark® exhibition stand had its first outing to the Retailers Against Crime Conference in Glasgow during March. This was a very well attended event by all sectors of the retail industry. There was extremely good feedback on our stand presentation and we made a number of positive contacts at all levels of the retail sector.

We are currently assisting in the first investigation by a Trading Standards Office into the misuse of the Safer Parking Park Mark® logo. Following an internal investigation we took the unfortunate step of suspending a site. They failed to conform to the terms and conditions of the scheme by continuing to display the logo having been instructed to remove it. The company is being pursued on a number of Trading Standards issues. This reinforces our commitment to keeping the integrity of the scheme and Park Mark® logo at the highest standards.

We welcome any information where there is concern that the Park Mark® logo is being misused in any way.

All information will be treated confidentially and a full internal investigation will be undertaken.

If you have any ideas regarding Park Mark Times, we would like to hear these as well – keep in touch!

Richard Bickell, Operations Manager, Safer Parking Scheme
DM boundary changes for the better

Region Changes for Development Managers

New Development Manager for Bedfordshire, Buckinghamshire and Hertfordshire.

With the tremendous success and growth of the Safer Parking Scheme, we have been reviewing the geographical areas covered by Development Managers. In particular, we have addressed how to further improve and extend the services provided to Award holders, given the distance and volumes of Awards in the Development Managers’ regions.

Consequently, we are proposing a minor change to boundaries in the London, South East and South West areas. From 1 April 2007 Mark Ruoff (pictured on page 3) started to serve the counties of Bedfordshire, Buckinghamshire and Hertfordshire as well as London, in a new region to be called London and Chilterns.

The boundary review is continuing and further changes may be introduced later in 2007. It may be that an additional Development Manager will be recruited and if that happens, a more fundamental review of boundaries might be required. Full details will be posted in Park Mark® Times and the BPA publication Parking News and on our website of course.

Changing fees

The fees for the registration of Park Mark® Awards have remained unchanged since 2004. However, due to the phenomenal growth of the Safer Parking Scheme, we have reviewed running costs and minor increases to the fees were implemented from the 1 April 2007. The revised fees are listed in the table on the right.

The revised fees reflect the increased costs of operating the Safer Parking Scheme since its launch in 2004, when the current fees were introduced. With ever increasing public awareness, the roll out of signage starter packs for all Award holders, public demand for safer parking is growing and our services to members is improving.

Remember the more Safer Parking Scheme Park Mark® Awards you hold, the lower the unit cost!

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of parking facilities with Park Mark® Award</th>
<th>Fees for 2007</th>
<th>Original (2004) Fees</th>
</tr>
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<tr>
<td>1-5</td>
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<td>(£200)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>£95</td>
<td>(£90)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>300</td>
<td>£90</td>
<td>(£85)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Institute of Parking Professionals launches

On Tuesday 17 April the BPA officially launched the Institute of Parking Professionals (IPP) at Parkex International 2007, Europe’s largest parking event. The IPA will be an independent body representing individuals engaged in the UK parking industry and traffic management sector. It will provide a focus for the exchange of views for members and aims to benefit the public through helping raise standards across the industry.

The Institute aims to:

- act as the voice for the individual parking professional/practitioner;
- facilitate, develop and promote best practice in parking and related areas;
- encourage and facilitate education and training and career development/advancement;
- support and encourage all members to become involved in debate/discussion and research;
- disseminate information related to parking to members, in order to keep them up to date with new developments;
- raise standards in the industry;
- improve the status of the individual in parking, and through them the industry itself, both internally and externally;
- support the work of the British Parking Association.

Peter Guest, BPA President, heralded the launch in typical fashion by handing over his application to become a member – the 161st. A rush to obtain membership packs then took place with over 150 being handed out.

Alan Ashbee, Chair of the Interim Management Board of the IPP, then explained what the Board would do over the next year, including attracting new members and working with the Skills Board to deliver the Sector Skills Strategy.

The meeting was then addressed by Prof. John Raines of Birmingham University, who hailed the development of professionalism in parking and predicted that the IPP would help transform the industry. Prof. Raines also cited the sector skills strategy which will be adopted by the Institute and become a viable basis for “career and personnel development”.

Keith Banbury OBE, Chief Executive of the BPA, stated that: “The launch of the IPP is a fantastic milestone, not just for us, but for the industry. As the parking sector develops, there are many knowledgeable professionals and consultants working within the industry who may not work for parking companies. The IPP aims to harness this talent and support these individuals, providing a natural forum for those who are keen to develop further.”

His views were echoed by another delegate at the opening, who stated that the event was “a historic occasion, future members will look back to the day when the IPP actually began.”

For more information on the Institute of Parking Professionals visit www.theipp.co.uk.

Below: Invited delegates at the official launch of the IPP at Parkex International 2007 in April
Bob Couchman is a Safer Parking Scheme Accredited Assessor for the Metropolitan Police, London Borough of Greenwich. Greenwich has experienced a reduction in motor vehicle crime of 7.3 per cent against a backdrop of a reduction in motor vehicle crime of 1.7 per cent across the Metropolitan police region (London boroughs). That said, there were still 3,729 motor vehicle crimes across the borough, highlighting the ongoing importance of creating safer places to park vehicles.

How many car parks in the borough have now got a Safer Parking Scheme Award?

“There are currently five awards and a number pending within major new residential developments and the O’Dome (formerly the Millennium Dome) complex.

What would you like to see happening with the scheme from your point of view?

“I think a better link between the Safer Parking Scheme and Secured by Design for new developments in particular, as that’s my main area of growth in the borough. For developers there is some confusion as to why there has to be two schemes. I think that is where there is an application for Secured by Design, and parking is included within the development. The parking facilities should meet Safer Parking Scheme standards. Any new development that applies for Secured by Design and has associated parking, I always request that Safer Parking certification is made a condition of planning together with SBD. How can we increase the profile among the police?

“Perhaps with more emphasis on, regularly, informing the senior management with information updates about the Safer Parking Scheme, and how it can have an impact on reducing their crime figures.”

Meet and greet service car parks gain Awards

PAS Direct Ltd of Crawley, recently taken over by Meteor, have been assessed for accreditation and awarded three Park Mark® Awards. The company operate a “Meet & Greet” service at Gatwick Airport via three sites nearby. A great deal of effort has been made by management at these operations to meet the criteria of the scheme and gain Park Mark® status.

There is access control to the main site, with CCTV and staff permanently available who are vigorously vetted. As these are generally long-stay car parks, the annual vehicle throughput is some 15,000 across the three sites, resulting in no crime related incidents recorded by police for many years. This operation, as with all “Meet & Greet” sites, means customers very rarely attend the parking areas, so it is imperative their vehicles are looked after responsibly, and kept secure.

With the recent adverse publicity surrounding airport parking, this is a very good example of how to achieve a legitimate operation worthy of the Park Mark® Award.

Meet and greet service car parks gain Awards.

Mark Ruoff takes some time out of his role as a Development Manager and asks Assessor Bob Couchman some questions about the Safer Parking Scheme

SPS SHORTS

Extended ELGAR funding

The EGLAR funding programme has been extended to September 2007. Local authorities (England only I’m afraid) now have more time to get their car parks into the scheme. There has also been an increase from five to ten for each authority. Please contact your local Development Manager for more information.

Park Mark® merchandising agreements

In recognition of the need to develop the level of Park Mark® signage use at operator sites across the UK, we are pleased to say that we have extended the signage supply options universally and have removed the restriction which requires award holders to use licensed suppliers only. Therefore the previous licensing arrangements ceased on 31 December 2006 as well as the need for royalty and commission payments. As from 1 January 2007, where it is requested by or on behalf of an Award holder, we shall agree to anyone supplying Park Mark® signage and merchandise in accordance with the Brand Manual specifications (subject to first obtaining a license from us). Licensed suppliers will be listed on the Safer Parking Scheme area of the BPA website.

Nottingham crime cut

There are now seven car parks in Nottingham city centre and others throughout the county entitled to display the Safer Parking Scheme ParkMark® sign outside their car parks.

Their low crimes figures for the last 12 months are in sharp contrast with a number of car parks in Nottingham that typically suffer between 150 and 200 crimes a year.

Kevin Brown said: “Statistics show that your car is up to 50 times safer if you leave it in a car park with the Safer Parking Scheme ParkMark® sign (even if you leave it on the street or in a car park that does not take safety seriously.”
PHIL TAYLOR

Last year (2006/7) the North East experienced a smaller increase in growth than anticipated. The number of accredited schemes rose by 73 from 357 in March 2006 to 430 by the end of January 2007. This was due to a number of factors, including the retirement of the previous development manager Mike Whitfield and the lack of accredited assessors within certain areas.

Since I took over in November 2006, a further 50 car parks have been added to the scheme, with the main area of growth coming from local authorities. The authority managers clearly see the benefits of working in partnership with the police, through the Safer Parking Scheme. This gives the management access to the vast experience of police expertise in crime prevention and ultimately a reduction of crime on their facilities. The police also gain in the process by the reduction in crime in car parks, allowing them to release resources to other problem areas.

This truly shows the level of commitment to the scheme from authorities who continue to keep their existing car parks to the Safer Parking Scheme standard, and continuously improve on their efforts to enhance their facilities to make them a crime free and a non-threatening place to leave a vehicle.

Support from the police service

The police service is also an active supporter of the scheme, not only by way of assessor resources, but by themselves having their facilities meet the standard. North Yorkshire Police received accreditation for 17 of their facilities, whilst Cleveland Police added 3. The Cleveland facilities were part of two PFI new-build police stations and the existing police headquarters.

Crime free record

NCP also are very keen supporters of the scheme. They brought three very special sites into the scheme, the Durham Park and Ride facilities. These sites are strategic to the transport plan of Durham City Council and are sited on three corners of the city. Durham City Council was the first in the country to adopt congestion charging. These facilities are critical in winning the hearts and minds of the public leaving their vehicles in a safe and non-threatening environment on the outskirts of the city. The Park and Ride sites were built to Safer Parking Scheme standards and have had a crime free record for over two years. Such was the gratitude of the council that the granting of the certificate saw the presentation of the Award by the Assistant Chief Constable of Durham Constabulary to the Mayor at a full council meeting, greeted by loud applause.

With the large amounts of finance being made available to education, students will be reassured that their vehicles will be safe while they carry out their studies.

Lastly, the newly named Durham Tees Valley Airport (formerly Teeside) added their main passenger parking facility to the scheme. This again shows the faith the larger facilities have in the qualities of the scheme.

Assessor training

On a positive note, assessors within the region, Northumbria Police, held the first assessor training courses in early February. This saw six assessors added to the Northumbria ranks and one for Cleveland Police. Welcome gentlemen! You will be busy in 2007. To those assessors who have supported me and the scheme over my last four months, many thanks.

Phil Taylor

NORTH WEST

MARK OSMOND

Welcome to another update from the North West and yet again it has been an exciting year!

Since my previous update there has been a significant increase in the number of accredited facilities coming onto the scheme. Currently, there are 441 facilities, which equates to an annual increase of approximately 35 per cent. This year will see a further expansion of the scheme.

Many of the organisations have again demonstrated their commitment to the scheme. Airport parking and hotels, Imagine Parking and Spindles Shopping Centre have once again ensured that their facilities are safe and non-threatening, and therefore have been re-accredited.

A number of new organisations have come onto the scheme and had their facilities accredited. These include: North West Wales NHS Trust, who have brought on 7 car parks at Gwynedd Hospital and Barton Grange Hotel in Preston.

For this financial year, Merseylaw will be hoping to add another 15-20 facilities to their existing portfolio.

NCP have once again put forward a considerable number of facilities which will consolidate their commitment to the scheme.

The ELGAR scheme appears to be gaining momentum in the North West with many local authorities taking up the offer and seeing a reduction in their fees. Some of these authorities include:

Barrow Borough Council, Bury MBC, Lancaster City Council and Stockport Council.

Since the start of this year, every accredited facility has received a ‘welcome pack’ which includes Park Mark™ signage and promotional literature. This has significantly increased the profile of the scheme.

Finally, a big thank you must go to all the accredited assessors and operators who have shown support and willingness in this period.

Mark Osmond

HAVE YOU GOT NEWS FOR US?

Contact the editor with your Safer Parking Scheme stories at saferparking@britishparking.co.uk or on 0870 2 408 489.

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