

## Smooth running operation



### Background

Dundee City Council is an early member of the Safer Parking Scheme; having joined in 2005 a year after the scheme was founded. Nine of its car parks were awarded the Park Mark in 2006.

The council's parking team manages 33 car parks; half are fee paying in the centre, the remainder are on the outskirts and free. The oldest, in Bell Street, was built in the 1970s. The most recent are two multi-storey car parks built in 2007 and 2013 at Greenmarket and Olympia and awarded

the Safer Parking Scheme's Park Mark on completion.

Strategically located car parks around Marketgait, the inner ring road, provide around 5,000 parking spaces for shoppers, tourists and business people. Each is within easy walking distance of the pedestrianised shopping zone. Additionally there are 530 on-street parking spaces inside the ring road.

All 11 of Dundee's main car parks within the inner ring have achieved the Park Mark award. Between them they provide 2,731 spaces in multi-storey and ground level car parks.

"Our main car parks are all in the Safer Parking Scheme," said Car Parking Officer Paul Zarembski. "Those not in the scheme are smaller or temporary sites that will move as Dundee's £1billion waterfront development continues."

### The challenge

Dundee joined the Safer Parking Scheme to reassure customers that the council's car parks are well-managed and pleasant environments for residents and visitors.

This encourages people to come into the city centre to shop and socialise as they know they can easily find a place to park, tariffs are affordable and their vehicle will not be damaged.



A recent British Parking Association survey revealed that Dundee drivers like to park close to their destination. They do not like queuing and want to drive in and easily find a space that is large enough for their vehicle. Plus they want easy payment methods and pay machines that work.

When the latest car park was opened at Olympia Bill Campbell, depute convener of Dundee City Council's city development committee said: "Drivers who choose to leave their cars in any of the main car parks in Dundee can rest easy since every one of them has been awarded safer parking status.



"Getting the Park Mark status for our car parks is the result of a whole combination of factors that have gone into making them high quality environments in which to leave your car.

"From the initial design, through construction, on-going maintenance and physical security measures, there really is no excuse for commuters or visitors who come to the city by car to park anywhere else."

### Accreditation process

The local crime liaison officer along with the BPA's area manager Tom Porter, accompanied by Paul Zarembski, visually inspect each car park in a three-year cycle. In the intervening years assessment is via electronic reporting of changes and crime statistics.

Their extensive inspection checklist includes crime records, lighting, customer complaints and bouquets, staff training, evacuation procedures, lighting, barriers, payment machines, surveillance, lifts and stairwells, maintenance, traffic circulation, parking bays, pedestrian access and exit routes, direction signs, boundaries, landscaping and staff presence.

"Inspections are usually a straightforward process," said Paul. "We visit three or four car parks on the same day, spending about an hour on the assessments. In Dundee city centre they're fairly close, close enough for us to walk between them."

The police assessor rarely highlights defects for Paul's team to resolve. Perhaps hedges that need cutting back to improve line of sight for surveillance so there are no dark areas for offenders to conceal themselves in. Or storage cupboards that

could do with an added level of security in the form of padlocks.



## Benefits

Dundee drivers are twice as likely to have heard about the Park Mark, know they can search online for an accredited car park, and have done so, than drivers nationally. Much of this is down to publicity as the parking team positions Park Mark posters prominently at vehicle and pedestrian entrances, near lifts and pay machines.

Plus, with the council's public relations team, they develop news releases each time a car park passes the visual assessment. "This has greatly strengthened our reputation," said Paul Zaremski. "Local newspapers and radio stations are opportunities for positive publicity that sell council car parks as the place to park in Dundee. They reinforce our car parks are the safest place to park in the city."

Paul is also pleased with his team's relationship with Tom Porter and the local police liaison team who make him aware of issues facing other car park operators before they happen in Dundee.

"It means we can prevent crime in our car parks. For instance in Scotland there was a problem with vandals breaking into the pay machines and separately a spate of people getting into unlocked vehicles.

"The crime prevention team gave us some posters to put up in all our car parks encouraging people to take valuables with them and double check they have locked their vehicles. We were also able to put measures in place to protect our pay machines."

In Dundee the Safer Parking Scheme and Park Mark are a smooth running operation.

## More information:

[www.britishparking.co.uk/Park-Mark---The-Safer-Parking-Scheme](http://www.britishparking.co.uk/Park-Mark---The-Safer-Parking-Scheme)

[www.dundee.gov.uk/node/18584#](http://www.dundee.gov.uk/node/18584#)