

# Parking Transformed

From this...

Camden Council has announced it is turning Alfred Place into a park.

Eight ways  
to transform parking and make  
London a better place

To this



The countryside charity  
London

Working for a greener city

# Why parking matters

Three quarters of car trips made in London could be made easily by walking, cycling or public transport. Also, only half of London's households have a car. We believe it is time re-think the space we give to car parking.



**Parking in London takes up a huge 1,400 hectares of land – or 'greyspace'.**

That's the equivalent to 10 Hyde Parks. Parking for private cars is a particularly inefficient use of space which in London is at a premium and much needed for alternative, more useful purposes, such as new parks and housing, wider pavements and cycle lanes.

London has only two thirds of the greenspace it needs for a population its size so we need to find more space for parks and playgrounds.

We also need sites for new homes. And since the coronavirus outbreak, it has emerged that only 36% of London's pavements are wide enough to observe social distancing – a statistic which highlights a bigger problem, namely that space for car parking is disproportionately allocated when compared to pavement space or space for cycle lanes.



**Parking has a big impact on road safety.**

Parked vehicles can impact on safety because they make it hard to see oncoming traffic particularly at junctions. This is not just for pedestrians and cyclists: it is also for drivers. Parked vehicles can also block access for emergency services, utilities and other drivers – sometimes called nuisance or inconsiderate parking.



**If parking is unrestricted, more people travel by car and fewer people walk, cycle or take public transport.**

This means more congestion, air pollution, road danger and noise. But in many London boroughs parking is largely unrestricted and many more trips are made by car than need to be.

Depending on how much is available, where it is, and how much it costs, parking can either encourage or discourage people from making 'switchable' car journeys – those which could readily be made by walking, cycling or public transport.

There is a clear link between the amount of car parking available and resulting car-use so it can have a big impact on the amount of congestion, air pollution, road danger and traffic noise.

## Why parking matters



A disproportionate amount of space is given to private cars when compared to the number of trips by public transport, walking or cycling.

In areas where the majority of people do not own a car, where street space is limited or the environment is poor, allocating too much space for parking, or providing car owners with private use of public space, particularly for no charge or at low cost, is unfair to residents who do not own a car.



Action on parking will be needed by the London Boroughs to meet three key targets in the Mayor's Transport Strategy:

- To increase the trips made by 'sustainable mode of transport' (walking, cycling, public transport) from 63% to 80% by 2041
- For everyone to undertake the daily 20 minutes of active travel they need to stay healthy by 2041
- Vision Zero for road danger: the elimination of all deaths and serious injuries on London's transport system by 2041

**HEALTHY  
STREETS  
SCORECARD**



CPRE London is part of the London Boroughs Healthy Streets Scorecard coalition, a group of transport and environment campaigners who are tracking the progress of London boroughs in making our streets healthier by increasing travel by public transport, walking and cycling. Action on parking is one of the key Scorecard metrics.

» [www.healthystreetsscorecard.london](http://www.healthystreetsscorecard.london) @HSScorecard

# Londoners

## take action!

Whether you're a driver or not, action on parking can improve your environment and make your roads safer. Ask your local council to take action on parking today!

### Eight ways to transform parking – and make London a better place!

We're calling on London boroughs and the Mayor to:

- 1 Promote the **redevelopment of parking space at retail parks** and supermarkets
- 2 Revitalise **high streets** with more space for greenery, cafes and relaxation
- 3 Transform **town centres** with new pedestrianised areas
- 4 Establish much needed **parks and play spaces**
- 5 Use single parking spaces for **parklets or cycle hangars**
- 6 Introduce **new cycle lanes** or wider pavements
- 7 Implement effective **parking controls** and levies to promote sustainable travel
- 8 Plan for and deliver **car-free housing** development

We want London boroughs and the Mayor to:

# 1 Promote the redevelopment of parking space at retail parks and supermarkets

Boroughs can promote redevelopment of retail ‘parks’, as well as supermarket sites, usually characterised by one-storey, low-rise retail units with large surface car parks, which use space very inefficiently.

These sites are often so large they can be redeveloped with both residential and commercial space, to create whole new neighbourhoods where people can live close to amenities without the need for a car. The London Mayor is supporting intensification of this type of retail and industrial space his Draft London Plan.

This approach will also encourage sustainable travel and reduce car trips by facilitating a move away from outdated, car-dependent retail.

## Colosseum Retail Park in Enfield

From this...



To this



Proposals to transform the Colosseum Retail Park in Enfield, hitherto a large car park with ‘big box’ retail units.

We want London boroughs and the Mayor to:

## 2 Revitalise high streets with more space for greenery, cafes and relaxation

High streets can be dramatically improved by removing parking to create space for seating for people to linger, chat or rest.

Space can be created for seating for restaurants or cafes. Evidence shows that where places are less dominated by cars and traffic, they are less-polluted and quieter, so people linger and spend more so it's good for local business. Removing parking also helps reduce unnecessary car trips.

### Grey Street, Newcastle



Plans for removal of parking on Grey Street in Newcastle will make way for a more pleasant and safer street environment while discouraging unnecessary car journeys.

We want London boroughs and the Mayor to:

### 3 Transform town centres with new pedestrianised areas

Public realm schemes can see visitor or shopping attractions, or historic squares, transformed from car parks into attractive new public spaces.

There are many examples where removal of car parking has transformed public spaces in London, for example at Somerset House. So much more could be done, in particular to transform historic squares and settings to their former glory.



From this...



To this

Proposed improvements to Market Square in Enfield.

We want London boroughs and the Mayor to:

## 4 Establish much needed parks and play spaces

Street parking can be transformed into new parks and safe play spaces.

London has just half the green space it needs for a population its size. Not all our streets are needed for parking or as through-routes for cars. Some residential streets, and also streets in central London, can be converted to attractive, green, traffic-free spaces for relaxation or play.



A street in Holland where parking spaces were removed to create a safe play space.



In Lambeth, a section of road was turned into a play space and safe, attractive walking route.

We want London boroughs and the Mayor to:

## 5 Use single parking spaces for parklets or cycle hangars

Single parking spaces can become useful or attractive features, like ‘parklets’ or cycle hangars, to make streets better for walking and cycling.

Boroughs can identify areas where parking is over-provided and where road space could be redeployed. To demonstrate a clear commitment to non-car owners and to make streets more pleasant environments which are less dominated by cars, the borough should offer the opportunity to residents to use on-street car parking spaces for other purposes, for example a bicycle hangar, ‘parklet’ or rain garden.



A ‘parklet’ uses up one parking space but provides an attractive place to rest for pedestrians or those with without a garden.



A ‘parklet’ in Hackney brightens up a road otherwise monopolised by parked cars.



Cycle hangars which take up one parking space are now also becoming more common around London, catering for people who live in flats and don’t have space for bicycles indoors and want to leave their bike in a secure place.

We want London boroughs and the Mayor to:

## 6 Introduce new cycle lanes or wider pavements



Parking can be removed from one or both sides of a street to allow for widened pavements or for new cycle lanes to make walking and cycling safer and more pleasant.

Responding to the coronavirus crisis, researchers at UCL found that only 36% of London's pavements are wide enough for social distancing and said there is an urgent need to reallocate street space in London so everyone can use streets safely. But they also pointed out that the lack of space for walking and cycling is a long-term problem.

Left: Parking was removed from one side of West Bank in Hackney to create a safe route for cycling.



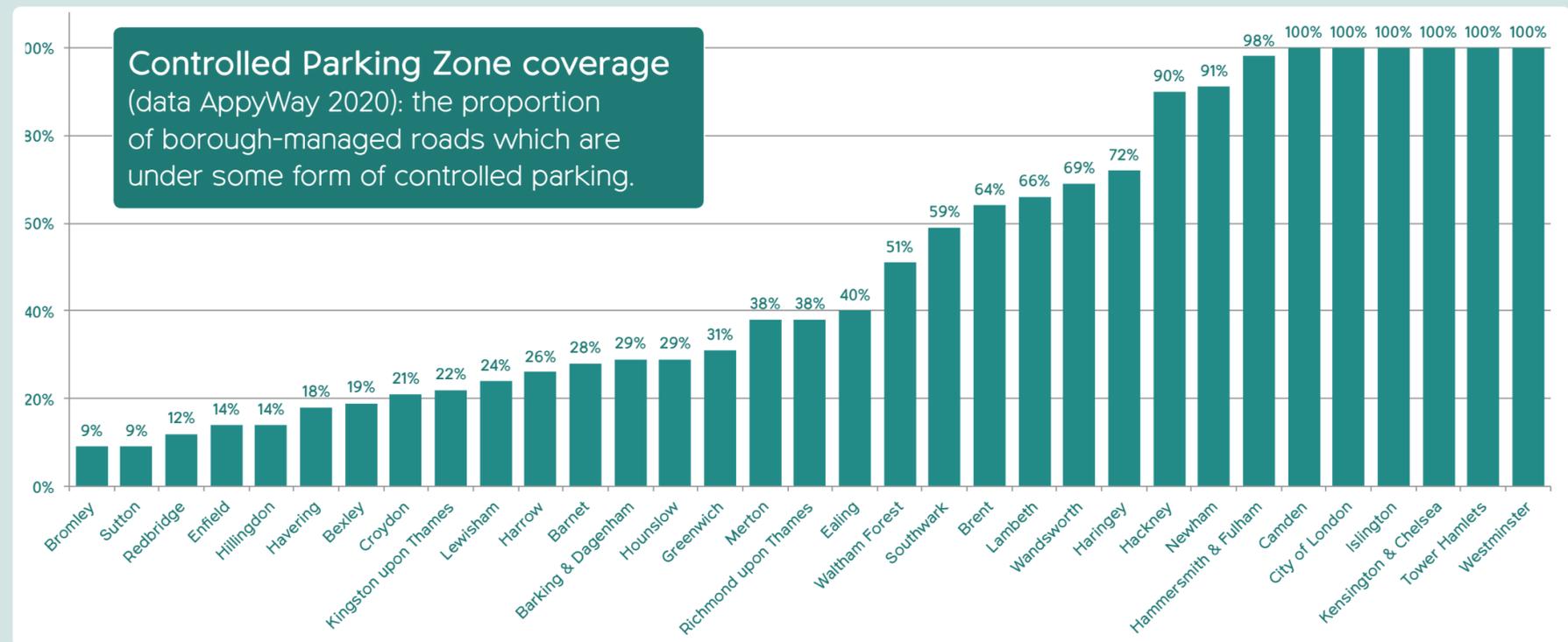
Making space for pedestrians: pavements can be widened if parking spaces are suspended and cordoned off.

We want London boroughs and the Mayor to:

## 7 Implement effective parking controls and levies to promote sustainable travel

There is a clear link between available parking and car use so one important way that local councils can reduce congestion, pollution and road danger is to control parking.

London Boroughs can manage demand for parking in a number of ways. One important way is to introduce 'Controlled Parking Zones' (or CPZs) for residential parking.



But the amount of controlled parking varies a great deal across London's boroughs and much more can be done to use parking controls to reduce car trips.

Boroughs should also:

- introduce a Workplace Parking Levy, coverage of which should include public sector workplaces;
- introduce parking controls and charges around train stations to tackle commuter parking;
- over time, reduce available parking and number of available permits;
- and implement strong enforcement measures especially around schools, including by introducing *School Streets*.

Controlled Parking Zones have many benefits, including discouraging commuter parking and short car trips, and making our streets safer.

Now a much more attractive street, the introduction of a CPZ in Grosvenor Terrace, Southwark, has transformed parking for residents, improved safety by making pedestrians more visible and leaving spaces for pedestrians to cross safely, and it has ensured deliveries can be made without blocking the road. If you look closely you can see the school yellow zig-zags in the ‘to this’ photo.



## CPZs and train stations

Our research found that many train stations in particular in Outer London do not have Controlled Parking Zones around them, leaving them open to commuter parking. Leonards Road, for example, is a four minute walk from Mortlake Station in the London Borough of Richmond, a busy area with complex traffic problems but no controlled parking to discourage commuters from parking near the station to catch the train.

We want London boroughs and the Mayor to:

## 8 Plan for and deliver car-free housing development

There are 2,560,000 cars licensed in London. But 46% of households don't have a car. In Inner London that figure is much higher: a clear majority (61%) of households don't have a car. Even in outer London, 36% of households don't have a car. So do all the new houses we build really need to have parking for private vehicles?

**New homes are increasingly being built 'car-free'.**

'Car-free' housing developments are where new residents are not allowed to apply for a parking permit. These are becoming common, even in Outer London.

People in these developments live without private cars but usually have access to car clubs, for which parking is provided. Parking in neighbouring streets is controlled with resident-only parking zones: households in the new development cannot apply for a permit on those streets.

This type of housing can support elderly and younger people, and those on low incomes, who are more likely to be among the 46% of London's households which don't have a car.



The Assembly, a car free development in Hounslow in Outer London where residents will use alternatives to privately owned cars, such as car clubs, as well as using public transport, walking and cycling.

## References, facts & figures, and further reading

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- **It's around 50x cheaper to rent a parking space than to rent a home.** For example, in Westminster, the space needed for a single parking space would cost £8,000 a year to rent as housing. It costs just £145 to park there for a year. [www.theguardian.com/world/video/2018/oct/30/why-we-should-be-paying-more-for-parking-video-explainer](http://www.theguardian.com/world/video/2018/oct/30/why-we-should-be-paying-more-for-parking-video-explainer)
- **Benefits of Controlled Parking Zones** [www.healthystreetsscorecard.london/benefits-of-controlled-parking-zones](http://www.healthystreetsscorecard.london/benefits-of-controlled-parking-zones)
- **Healthy Streets Scorecard indicators explained: Controlled Parking Zones** [www.healthystreetsscorecard.london/indicators\\_explained](http://www.healthystreetsscorecard.london/indicators_explained)
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- **London Plan evidence base – residential car parking** [www.london.gov.uk/sites/default/files/london\\_plan\\_evidence\\_base\\_-\\_residential\\_car\\_parking.pdf](http://www.london.gov.uk/sites/default/files/london_plan_evidence_base_-_residential_car_parking.pdf)
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- **Pavements too narrow for social distancing** [www.underscorestreets.com/social-distancing](http://www.underscorestreets.com/social-distancing)
- **How many cars are there in London** [content.tfl.gov.uk/technical-note-12-how-many-cars-are-there-in-london.pdf](http://content.tfl.gov.uk/technical-note-12-how-many-cars-are-there-in-london.pdf)

## Picture credits

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