The countryside charity
CPRE London

Grey2Green

Parking policy
time for change

Why parking matters

- **Traffic.** Every car journey starts and ends in a parking space. If parking is unrestricted, people drive more

- **Space.** Parking takes up much needed space: 10 Hyde Parks in London is given to kerbside parking (excludes all other parking)

- **Urban realm.** Residential streets, historic settings, town centres, streets – all can be dramatically improved by removing parking

Why parking matters

Parking policy is key to

- reducing **traffic** (thereby also combatting the climate crisis, improving air quality, reducing noise and road danger)
- **health** – promoting active, shared and sustainable travel
- freeing up space to tackle deficiency of green space / **parks**
- delivering **green** infrastructure / SUDS (for climate adaptation)
- delivering **safe** streets
- delivering local **economic** recovery (shopping, visitor attractions)
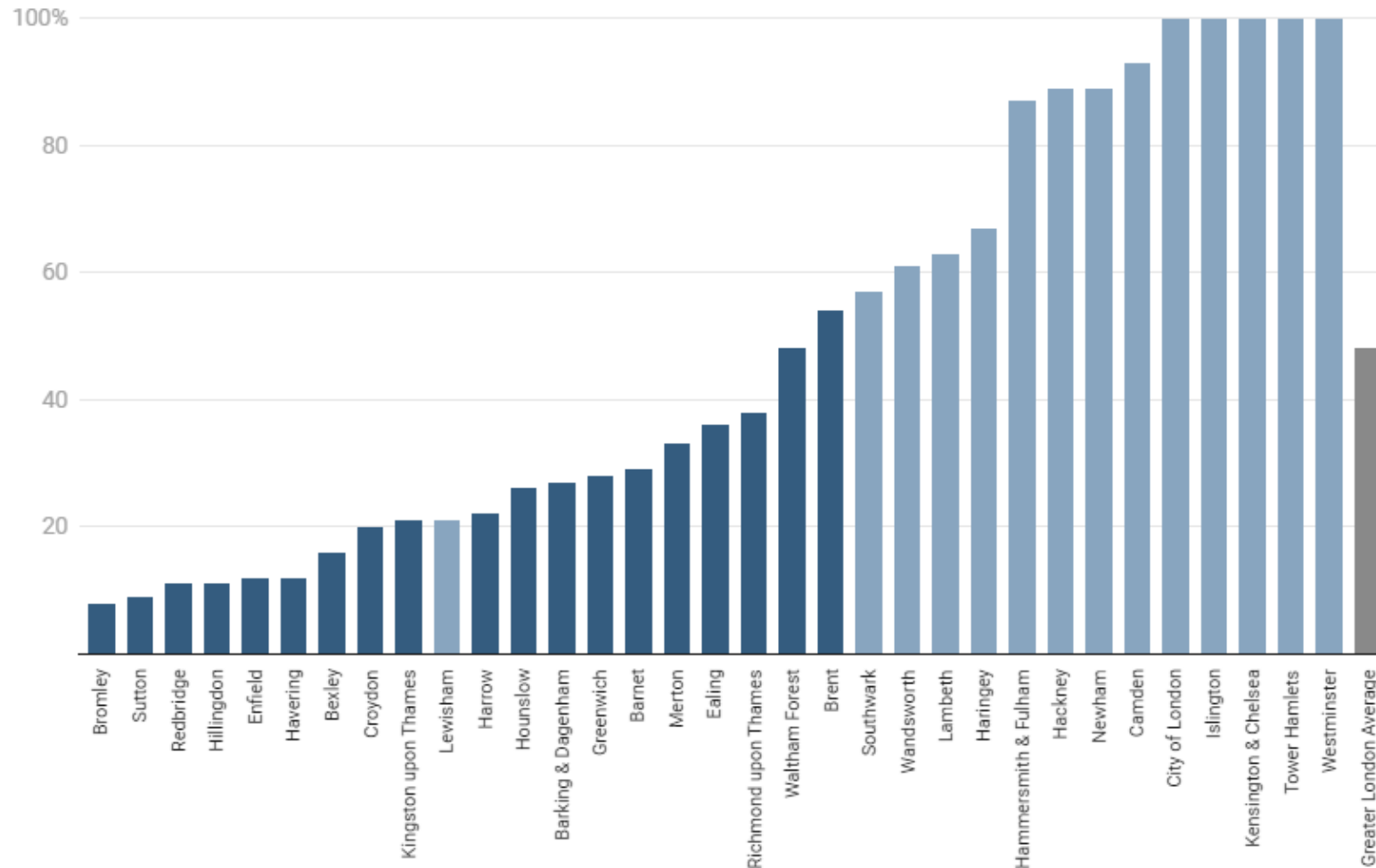- saving the **countryside** (compact cities vs urban sprawl)

Time for change

- Parking policy is key to combatting the climate crisis, improving air quality, promoting active, shared and sustainable travel, making transport more accessible, and delivering safe and attractive streets. ***It is one of the most effective tools local authorities can use*** to reduce car use and ownership and is about much more than just providing parking spaces.

- But after a preliminary assessment of a sample of borough policies, we noticed very ***low ambition in using parking policy to tackle serious issues*** like climate change and air pollution, so we decided to try to raise the bar by creating a benchmark, which we have done in consultation with sustainable travel organisations.

- Parking policy – is it falling between the gaps?

Controlled Parking Zone coverage: Inner/Outer London boroughs, 2021 Scorecard data

Proportion of borough-managed roads under some form of Controlled Parking Zone (CPZ) in % for London boroughs for 2021 Scorecard data. View all results

Dark blue: Outer London boroughs, Light blue: Inner London boroughs. View CPZ results

Chart: London Boroughs Healthy Streets Scorecard • Source: AppyWay • Get the data • Created with Datawrapper

Time for change

One key indicator of whether a borough is taking action on parking is the proportion of streets in the borough where parking is controlled. (Data is from the 2021 Healthy Streets Scorecard.)

Local authority powers

- the **local highway and local traffic authority**, controlling parking on residential streets and at town centres and other destinations, and responsible for good management of streets and pavements

- **managers of housing estates**, able to control residential parking

- the **owner/operator of public car parks**

- the **local planning authority** which sets parking levels for new housing; can enable development on car parks; and can end front-garden parking

- the **local transport authority** with powers to introduce local workplace parking levies

- **employer with workplace parking**, able to show leadership by restricting parking in council offices, schools etc.

Planning for sustainable transport

Parking at the heart of urban planning: plan for cars, get cars

The countryside charity
CPRE London
Grey2Green

| *Compact cities with Green Belt*	*Urban Sprawl*
High density	Low density
Less than 30 cars per 100 households	More than 50 cars per 100 households
Low carbon	**High carbon**
Public transport financially viable	**Car dependent**
Active travel = **healthier**	**Inactive lifestyles**
'Climate safe' environment	'Climate unsafe' environment

Density is key e.g. bus services become financially viable with densities over 60 dwellings per hectare (dph) though good use of space would mean higher densities, upwards of 100dph.

These two examples show two areas:
25 dwellings per hectare and **69** dwellings per hectare

The final existing area is in Wilmington ward, with the first housing site example to the south of the A2 on Whitehead Close, Barn End Lane, Gerdview Drive, Rowlatt Road, Rowlatt Close and Stock Lane. Average house price value on Whitehead Close is £366,000.

Whitehead Close
Gerdview Drive
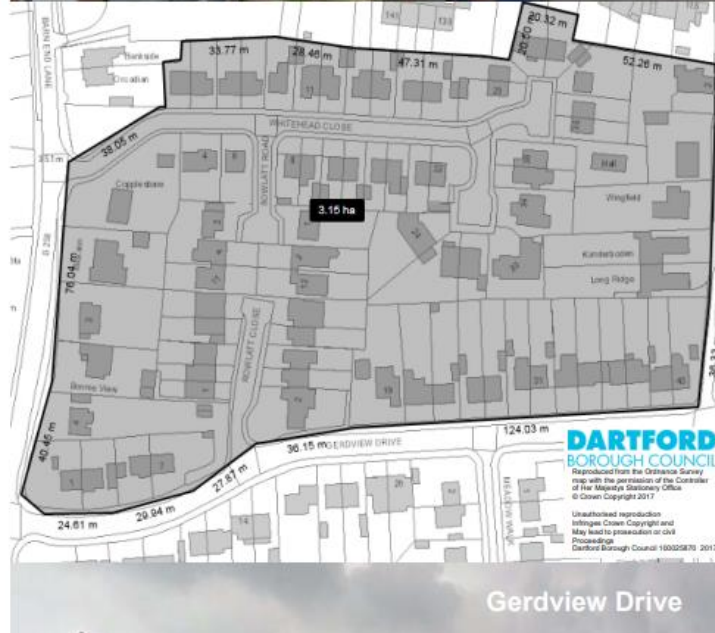
Fact File:

- Site area: 3.15ha
- Residual Site Area: 3.11ha
- Homes: 79
- Density: 25dph
- Main housing type: semi-detached and detached
- Community facility

This site area is primarily made up of 3/4 bed semi-detached and detached properties. Houses and gardens are larger in size than previous case studies and others in the rural area.

Fact File:

- Site area: 3.269ha
- Employment/Community Space: 0.13ha
- Residual Site Area: 3.13ha
- Homes: 215
- Density: 69dph
- Main housing type: Terraced
- 16 Lock-up garages

This site is primarily made up of 2 and 3 bed terraced streets, with the average size of a 2 bed terrace on Church Road being 57m^2.

The site exceeds the CS guide of 35-55 dwellings/ha for other urban areas at 69dph.

Further terraces surround the area highlighted, along with Ebbsfleet Central site and station to the east, and a recreation ground and cemetery to the west.

Church Road

Dartford Local Plan   Dartford Housing Density Paper

19 | P a g e

'Big box retail' needs to be allocated for mixed use development. Sites like this one, the A10 retail park in Enfield (which is mainly surface car park), are hugely inefficient of space and encourage car use. Some sites are so big that whole new towns can be created on them. The image opposite shows proposals for a part of the site which is due to be developed for mixed use (residential and commercial).

Controls & charges

CPZs have more benefits than you think… Here's our useful summary Benefits-of-CPZs.pdf (cprelondon.org.uk)

Before controlled parking. Cars are double parked, on pavements and on a corner, restricting access for emergency and utility vehicles and reducing sight lines for pedestrians, making it unsafe to cross.

After introduction of controlled parking. A large number of empty spaces at all times indicates cars previously parked there did not belong to residents. Double yellow lines ensure emergency/utility vehicle access is now clear and pedestrians can cross safely.
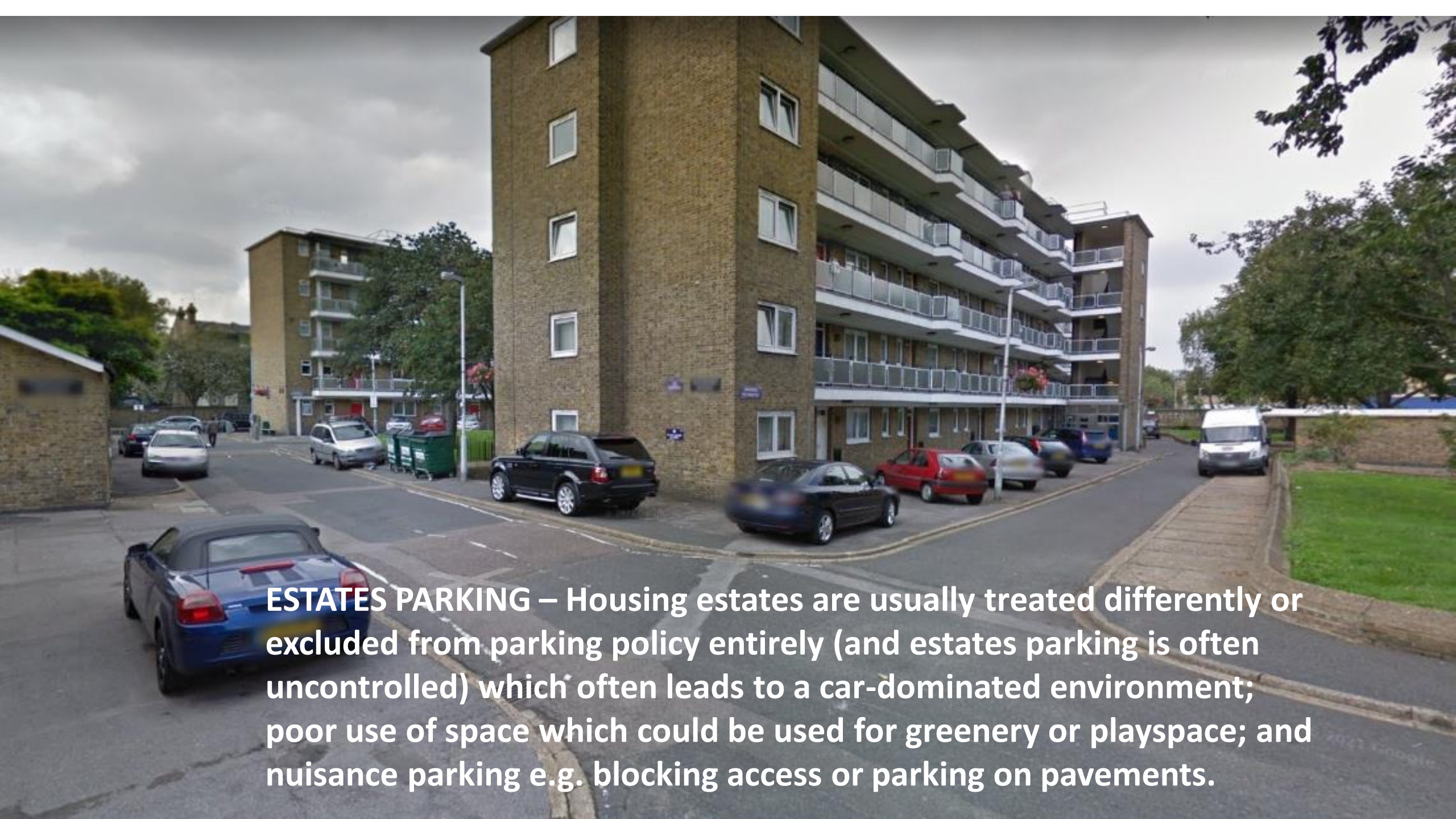
ESTATES PARKING – Housing estates are usually treated differently or excluded from parking policy entirely (and estates parking is often uncontrolled) which often leads to a car-dominated environment; poor use of space which could be used for greenery or playspace; and nuisance parking e.g. blocking access or parking on pavements.

Grey2Green

Front garden parking & private land

Problems with front garden parking (& associated footway crossovers)

- Drivers avoid parking controls / costs
- Crossing the pavement causes danger
- With bigger cars, it is now often causing pavement obstruction
- Pavement crossovers create unlevel pavement which is harder to navigate for pedestrians / wheelchair users etc
- Front gardens are paved, so can't absorb rainwater (though this can be resolved by using a permeable surface)
- It's an eyesore

Boroughs issue planning permission for front garden parking, as well as permission for pavement crossings (aka footway crossovers). They should stop issuing these and find ways to remove permissions where they already exist.

Shopping parade forecourt parking. This is legal because it is private land, as long as there is an official 'crossover' for cars to drive over the pavement to access parking in front of shops etc. But it creates similar problems to front garden parking. Authorities should retract permission to drive over pavements (removing 'crossovers').

Public sector employers including schools like the one shown here (where part of the playground has over time become a car park) can lead the way by not allowing informal parking at a council run workplaces and actively restricting and controlling employer parking.

Improving the public realm / supporting the local economy

Nicer streets. Visually, streetscapes can be dramatically improved by restricting parking and adding greenery, like happened with this street.

Historic settings and visitor attractions can also be dramatically improved by removing and restricting parking, as happened with Somerset House

Supporting the local economy. Evidence shows that removing parking from shopping parades, and instead introducing pedestrianised space or parklets, benches, greening or other public realm improvements, has a positive impact on income for local businesses.

Pedestrians and safety

Pavement parking on Fernbrook Road in Lewisham. In the 21st Century we simply cannot sanction the use of pavements to park cars: we need to be encouraging walking, not making it harder.

All boroughs should end pavement parking immediately

Road danger

Before – cars are parked on both sides along the length of the narrow road creating danger for drivers, cyclists and pedestrians

After – parking is no longer an issue for residents and the school yellow zig-zags are visable

Keeping pavements clear

NEW STREET TREES should be placed on the road, taking space from parking, not on the pavement where they take space from pedestrians, wheelchairs etc. (We do not advocate removal of trees causing obstacles. Instead, a pavement should be built out into the street around the tree).

PARKING SIGNPOSTS are often located without thought to the barrier they will create. As a result they often cause obstacles on the pavement and, as with much pavement clutter, also create an eyesore. They should be placed discretely and in such a way that leaves space for pedestrians and avoids pavement clutter, like in the example below.

Electric Vehicle CHARGING POINTS should be placed on the road, taking space from parking, not on the pavement where they take space from pedestrians, wheelchairs etc

Bins on the street, taking space from parking, not on the pavement where they take space from pedestrians. Where councils have introduced wheelie bins (like in Hackney below) but there is no space in front gardens to store them, they end up cluttering the pavement. Councils can instead put communal waste and recycling bins on the street, in parking spaces. See Brighton example opposite.

… though managing on-street communal rubbish and recycling bins does have its complexities …

Making space for other things

'Streateries' aka seating for cafes, pubs and restaurants.
Boroughs are increasingly enabling local businesses to use space for seating, like this one outside an Islington pub. This has been an important way councils have been able to provide support for post-Covid economic recovery.

**Parklets.** Parking spaces can be used for community seating or flower beds

Cycle hangars. Parking spaces can be used to accommodate secure cycle parking like these cycle hangars

Green infrastructure / sustainable urban drainage.
Parking spaces can be replaced with much-needed 'rain gardens' aka Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems, like this one in Hackney (the image to the right shows the same space when it still had parking)
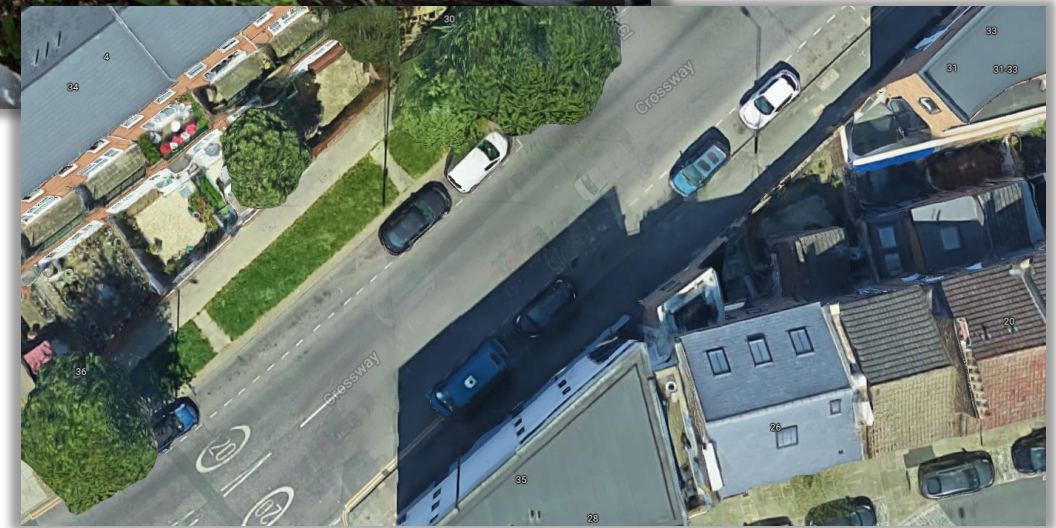
Bus lanes. Often parking for private cars is given priority over buses.

The road in the image to the left (Hackney Road near to the junction with the A10) is in central London and hosts two high frequency buses, the 26 and 55.

The image to the right, Dalston Lane, also in Hackney, shows a section where parking has been removed in favour of a bus lane (though the single yellow lines indicate this is not 24/7 – which we would advocate it should be).
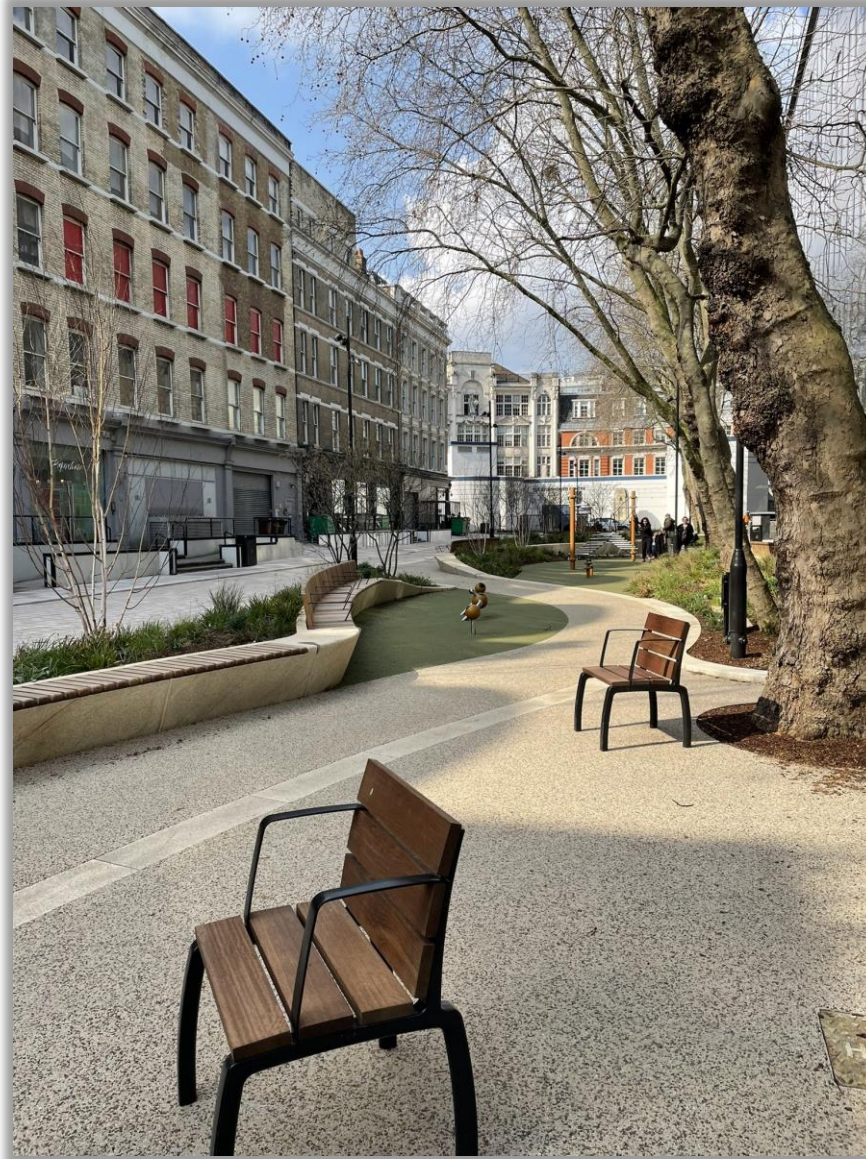
Protected cycle lanes can be created where parking is removed, like in the road shown here, before and after.

Streetparks.
Some boroughs have even removed parking and traffic from streets to create whole new parks, like this one in Camden.
Find out more about our work promoting Streetparks.

Removing parking for private cars can also create space for shared mobility like cycle, scooter and car share schemes.

Parking standards for new development: it should be possible to substitute private car parking spaces with many fewer car share spaces e.g. on a 10 to 1 basis.

Time for change

- One of the most important tools available to local authorities
- Not being used enough
- Review policy – identify urgent action
- Use our Assessment Tool
- https://www.cprelondon.org.uk/news/why-boroughs-need-to-re-assess-parking-policy-now/

alice@cprelondon.org.uk

Time for change

What can councils do now?

- Control parking (small-area CPZs + appropriate charging at destinations)
- Housing estates treated the same
- More double yellow lines for safety
- Reduce space for parking: focus on positive impact e.g. town centres, historic settings, visitor attractions, greening, cycle/bus lanes …
- … and de-cluttering pavements
- End pavement parking
- No more permissions for front garden parking
- Control/reduce parking in council workplaces (including schools); work towards controlling parking on privately owned land