

Car parking management at Wythenshawe Hospital

Getting the basics right as a necessary first step in developing a workplace car parking policy

This case study focuses on improving the basics of car parking - getting the signs and lines right - as a first step in developing a robust car parking policy to help reduce single occupancy car use by staff. Although this relates to a large hospital site, the issues raised and potential solutions are likely to be typical of a large, established site that has multiple users.

About University of South Manchester NHS Trust

In early 2017, TfGM supported a review of car parking at Wythenshawe Hospital, a major acute teaching hospital in south Manchester, part of the University Hospitals South Manchester NHS Trust (UHSM). Over 6,000 staff are based at the site.

UHSM is a member of Transport for Greater Manchester's Business Travel Network which provides practical support to employers to implement workplace travel plans aimed at reducing single occupancy car use.

Parking at Wythenshawe Hospital

Addressing parking problems is a key element of implementing the Trust's workplace travel plan for the site. The main problems are:

- A lack of spaces to accommodate demand at peak times (9am to 3pm)
- Staff parking in visitor car parks (and vice versa)
- Parking on double yellow lines on site

To better manage its car parking, the Trust recognised the need to ensure that appropriate signage was in place so that all users were clear about where they could and couldn't park, the terms and conditions of parking on site, and how to find their way around the hospital site.

Support from TfGM Travel Choices

TfGM provided expert consultancy support to review the parking problems at the hospital which identified potential improvements to three different types of signs being used:

- Wayfinding signs, which direct visitors to car parks and departments within the hospital
- Designation signs, which indicate who can park in each car park
- Enforcement signs, which outline the terms and conditions of parking

It also identified how the road markings used to denote areas where parking is restricted could be improved to be more effective.

Over-provision of signage: mainly caused by old signs not being removed when new ones are installed



The signage issues are typical of large established sites and included:

- Use of a variety of wayfinding signs, with no consistent colour scheme or style
- A lack of clarity in the designation of parking areas, meaning it was not clear who could park where
- Some outdated enforcement signs which did not meet industry standards

Improving signage and enforcement

To address the above issues, the Trust is taking forward a package of improvement measures in line with industry good practice:

Improvements to Wayfinding signs

- Implementation of a consistent wayfinding strategy
- Removal of old or inconsistent wayfinding signs
- Ensuring all visitor car parks are displayed on wayfinding signs
- Clearly showing all visitor car parks and walking routes on site maps
- Ensuring the location of the nearest pay station is provided on tariff boards
- Ensuring all site maps show the location of payment machines

Improvements to Designation Signs

- Ensuring every car parking area has a sign informing users of its designation such as staff, visitor, or Blue Badge holder parking
- Adoption of a consistent signage design to designate all staff and visitor parking areas
- Implementation of a simple labelling system for all car parks. Staff parking areas will be labelled alphabetically and visitor car parks numerically

Improvements to Enforcement signs

An audit will determine whether the enforcement signs being used follow the principles set out in the British Parking Operators Code of practice 2014. The key elements are to make it easy for visitors to see the terms and conditions, and to have a standard form of sign that is conspicuous, legible and written in intelligible language.

Example good practice designation sign



Improvements to Road Markings

Waiting restrictions on the private roads within the Wythenshawe Hospital site were previously indicated by double yellow lines, identical to those found on the public highway. Two issues with this approach had come to light at Wythenshawe:

- 1 A previous lack of enforcement of the waiting restrictions indicated by the double yellow lines had led to uncontrolled parking in these areas.
- 2 On the public highway, Blue Badge holders are permitted to park for up to 3 hours on double yellow lines. Given that the private roads on the hospital site are indistinguishable from the public highway, many visitors holding Blue Badges assumed that they were also able to park on the double yellow lines at the hospital. This was not appropriate on these access roads which are used by ambulances and therefore have to be kept clear.

To address these issues, double yellow lines within the site have been replaced with double red lines. The initial impact of the lines, installed in February 2017, has been significant – in the first few weeks after implementation, roads which were previously parked up on both sides were clear of vehicles, offering smooth passage for ambulances.

Before



After



Improvements to car parking signage and road markings represent an important step in a wider plan to address parking issues and congestion on the site, as part of the Trust's travel plan.

Reviewing signage: getting started

The signage issues at Wythenshawe Hospital are typical of a site where there has been gradual growth, with signs implemented as new developments, services and changes in parking arrangements on site. If you are familiar with your own site, you may not spot signage problems, as you know your way around and don't rely on signs. Simple steps you could take to assess signage on-site include:

- Walk around your site, making a record of:
 - The different types of sign (wayfinding, enforcement, designation). Note any different styles, gaps where you think signs should be and where there may be over-provision.
 - Are there any locations where signs are visually intrusive and could be better designed?
 - Are signs being used where a physical design solution (such as bollards / kerbs) or more enforcement would be more appropriate?
- Independent assessment by people less familiar with the site is a cost-effective way to identify issues. Obtain feedback informally from people visiting for the first time such as visitors and new starters – they may give insights that you hadn't previously considered.
- If you feel there are issues to address, include questions relating to parking signage and enforcement in your travel surveys.

How TfGM can help

Speak to your Business Travel Advisor for guidance on including questions relating to parking signage and enforcement in travel surveys.

Travel Choices is a free, expert service which supports economic growth by helping businesses take advantage of sustainable travel options, such as public transport, cycling, walking and car sharing.

Adopting sustainable travel can help organisations save money, increase their resilience, become an employer of choice and encourage healthier, more productive workforces.

Around 600 businesses are already signed-up to the network and benefitting from the following services delivered by the Travel Choices team (pictured below):

- Monthly newsletter
- Workshops
- Access to sustainable travel grants
- Self-help advice sheets and case studies online
- Self-help delivery and servicing plan toolkit online
- CarShareGM matching tool

- Cycle training and maintenance classes
- Pool bike loan scheme
- Cycle Champion scheme

The following extra services are available for businesses which meet specific criteria, such as have 100-plus employees or are based in a key employment area:

- One-to-one individual advice from an expert advisor
- Personalised Travel Plan advice for staff and staff awareness events
- Staff travel survey and analysis service
- Public transport ticket offers
- Travel Champions training

