

## Highly commended at BPA awards

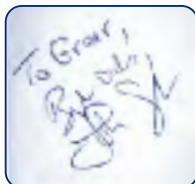
**TCP's Disabled, Parent and Child initiative with Asda was highly commended in the innovation category at this year's British Parking Awards.**

The British Parking Awards are the leading showcase for innovation, excellence and achievement in UK parking. This year's awards lunch, held at the Dorchester, was hosted by 'Strictly Come Dancing' favourite John Sergeant.

Elaine Montgomery and some of the other managers from Head Office were lucky enough to be at the lunch, and although we were pipped at the post by NCP, the judges said the competition was extremely close and that the TCP initiative fully deserved its 'highly commended' status.

Elaine commented, "We entered last year and were short listed. We've been highly commended this year, so next year we plan to win! It is great for TCP to be recognised as an important player in the parking industry".

Elaine came home with an extra treat for her daughters, both ardent 'Strictly' fans. Not only did she secure John Sergeant's autograph, she even had a photo taken with him.



*Elaine, Alan, Paul and David in their best frocks at the British Parking Association awards lunch*

## Ards targets disabled space abuse

Ards Shopping Centre has followed Asda by introducing fines for drivers who misuse designated Disabled and

Parent and Child parking spaces in the centre's 1,200 space free car park.

TCP will manage the scheme for Ards, with staff authorised to issue £60 fixed penalty notices in a bid to deter offenders and free up the spaces for customers who require accessible parking.



*Ken McGavock, Ards Centre Manager, with Andrew Burnside, Town & City Parking N Ireland Area Manager*

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## Bernie's space

As you will all know we recently embarked on a major reorganisation of the operational side of our business. That is how we deliver our service on the ground. There are other articles in TCP News today about this but I want to reiterate how important these changes are and how they will allow us to meet the challenges we are all faced with now, given the current economic climate but also to ensure we are best placed to further grow our business. I appreciate all of the hard work that is taking place and would like to thank everyone involved but in particular John McLean and Steve Crowther as they are charged with the difficult task of delivering!



I recently received confirmation from Sainsbury's that they are going to be the second major supermarket group after Asda to move to a nationwide management system of the disabled and parent and child parking bays. We will let you know what that means for us shortly. I expect more business in this particular area of car park management particularly as the Scottish Parliament recently voted into law that all such spaces will in future need to be actively managed.

All the best,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Bernie".

Bernie Dickson  
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## Time for change



An interview with  
**John McLean,**  
Regional Director

### Q. Why are we changing our operational management structure?

**A.** In September 2008, Bernie sent a message throughout the company: "2008 has been a year of significant growth and we now face a challenge to ensure that we are geared up to support the additional business. Over the coming months we will be reviewing the business structure with the objective of delivering a 'step-change' in service to our clients."

Since then Bernie, Elaine, Simon and I have been working on a reorganisation of our operational management and the 'new shape' has now been presented to the management team in a series of briefing sessions across the country.

### Q. How will it all work in practice?

**A.** There are four main elements to the reorganisation: a network of twenty Area Managers all reporting to the Regional Director; key objectives for Area Managers (and also the supporting role of Team Leader) set out in detailed job descriptions; a new set of ten training modules covering a range of management skills, created by Gary Harris-Deans; later in the year a programme of Employee Development Reviews will measure progress on a range of key reporting areas.

### Q. What is the main difference for our Managers?

**A.** We will be eliminating the uncertainty over the difference between an Area Manager and an Area Supervisor.

## TCP faces

During March John McLean visited TCP's new Area Managers and collected these snapshots from the Midlands and London (from left to right: Eugene at Colliers Wood, Adnan and Rizwan at Stevenage, George at Longton and Lincoln and Rob at Leicester). Look out for more faces from other areas in the next edition of TCP News!



## Q. Will you have support in your role?

A. Good communication throughout the Area Manager team is essential and this will be driven by the new Regional Operations Manager, Steve Crowther.

## Q. What is the timetable for implementation?

A. The go-live date was March 2009. There has been lots of work to do to implement these changes. Area Managers have been briefing existing staff transferring to new areas, organising handovers to new Area Managers and visiting sites in their new areas.

Steve and I will be finalised the selection process for Team Leaders. Gary Harris Deans, Paul Carnegie and Steve Crowther have been delivering Area Manager training sessions covering key elements from the training modules.

## Q. What's Bernie's perspective on the reorganisation?

A. Bernie has commented, "It is vitally important that businesses continue to develop and strengthen their position in their chosen field. At Town and City we are the operator of more car parks than any other company in the country and we have a reputation for delivering excellent customer service. However, if we do not continue to invest in and develop our business this would quickly count for very little.

Competition remains fierce and the economy is in very bad shape. This makes it an excellent time to embark on these changes which are exciting, challenging and will put in place a platform for our business for the next five years.

It is an opportunity for our new Area Managers to make an impact, to make a difference, and it is individuals in a great team who make a difference. I am excited by the changes and I will be closely involved in the implementation".



## Barry's space

*TPC's off-street and residents' parking enforcement contract for Forest Heath District Council (see last issue of TCP News) is now into its third month of operation. The client has reported satisfactory progress, with the number of Excess Charge*



*Notices (ECNs) exceeding expectations and the income from pay and display machines increasing. A number of positive comments have been received from local residents, even from some who have received ECNs and are appealing against them. Obviously, the TCP ethos of fair and consistent enforcement, coupled with good customer service, passed on during the training period by Gary Harris-Deans and their area manager, Jackie Young, was understood and taken on board by the staff now employed on this contract. Well done to Terry, Gary and Jenni.*

*Ken and I are still extremely busy preparing Pre-Qualification documents and tender submissions for a variety of potential local government clients, and hope that we will be able to report further success soon. Unfortunately, the 'wheels' of local government turn exceedingly slowly!*

*We have a couple of other interesting projects in the pipeline. The first concerns the introduction of a system for the enforcement of bus lanes for a major city in the Midlands, the second to plan and design a system to track, remove and impound vehicles that are identified as persistent evaders of parking fines.*

*The next major event is Parkex 2009 at the NEC in Birmingham, where Andrew Busby and I, assisted by other staff from head office, will be spending three days communicating the joint TCP-TPC message to visitors. If you are visiting the exhibition, please drop by the stand for a chat.*

*Barry Nelms*

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## Regional update

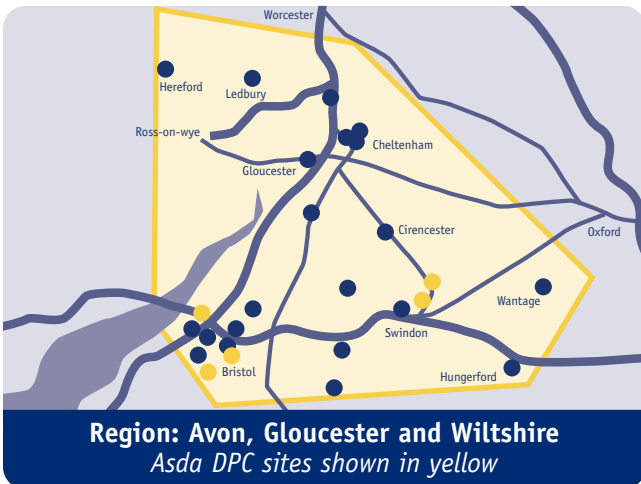
### Avon, Gloucester and Wiltshire



I have just been promoted to the position of Area Manager for the Avon, Gloucester and Wiltshire area. The company is moving forward, as it has been restructured. As well as internal promotions, the areas have been redefined, and we are also gaining some new Sainsbury's Stores on the 20th April.

This all shows that there is plenty of opportunity to obtain more business for the company. With the ongoing training and co-operation of everyone involved, from Attendants to Management. If we all support each other and work together as a team, we can achieve an outstanding reputation for the company, deliver excellent customer service and expand the business further.

*Joe Lynch, Area Manager, Avon, Gloucester and Wiltshire*



### Central Scotland



I manage the Central Scotland region, a large area from Perth in the north to Stirling in the west and Dalgety Bay in the south. We have nine pay and display sites plus Asda, Tesco, retail parks and housing associations.

In October last year, we acquired Stirling and Falkirk Infirmarys, followed in January by Perth Infirmary. Under new legislation introduced by the Scottish Government from the 1st of January 2009, all hospital parking charges were scrapped with the exception of three PFI hospitals. These sites now command a full time attendant on a time allowed basis.



I am based in Kinnoull Street multi storey in Perth city centre, which was the first multi story operated by TCP. With the introduction of the hospitals the area has certainly grown recently and I am indebted to my team leader Davie Hunter, who covers the length and breadth of the area. Everything is going well at the moment and we are all kept very busy. We have just taken on a new pay and display car park in Perth town centre and are always on the lookout for more sites.

*Douglas Holden, Area Manager, Central Scotland*

### East Midlands and Warwickshire



The new company restructuring has made a significantly positive impact in my area in terms of managing and monitoring sites and attendants' performance. We will work hard to provide a first class service for my area.

With the tools and training I have acquired over the years, the sky is the limit!

*Robert Musumbu, Area Manager, East Midlands and Warwickshire*



# Training update – the best things in life are free...

**TCP has experienced significant growth over the last few years. With 650 staff and a need to consolidate our position in the marketplace while offering the best service possible, training has become a key issue.**

The senior management team recognised a need to formalise policy and standardise procedures. Training champions existed throughout the company, and their knowledge and skills were harnessed as best practice.

A training team was established to drive changes across the four nations. The team immediately implemented a training needs analysis to identify skills gaps and development needs. With this information, they were then able to write an effective Training Policy, using for guidance the RCA Standards and the BPA Code of Conduct.

After six months of hard work and a major policy drive, TCP's Front Line Skills Programme was launched in September 2007. There were two main elements:

**Delivery:** this included a modular training package consisting of induction, key skills and site specific training such as hand-held computers, Pay & Display machine training and a Conflict Resolution practical workshop, all supported by our Key Skills DVDs and training resources. The entire company received training.

**Accreditation:** working closely with our training provider, TQ Workforce Development, we have developed a career pathway which gives all staff a clear picture of the training and qualifications they can achieve, starting with Controlling Parking Areas at NVQ Level 2, with the opportunity to move to NVQ Level 3 for managers.

TQ have mapped TCP's Key Skills Training initiative to NVQ criteria and deliver all of the NVQ assessment on site, so minimising disruption to the trainee or the client. TQ also accesses funding from Train to Gain and administers this process. This program has allowed us to gain national accreditation for our staff training initiative.

Training Manager Gary Harris-Deans said, "Choosing the NVQ pathway was fantastic for us. It is a really user friendly system, delivered by experienced sector trainers, and is non disruptive to our employees' daily duties. It has made such a difference to our organisation and staff morale. Furthermore, it encourages us to continuously evaluate our existing training materials, allowing us to continuously improve and develop what we do".

Train to Gain has so far provided full funding for the NVQ, enabling the training budget to be utilised for additional development eg learning support materials and other training initiatives such as IT Training.

*For more information contact:*

*gharrisdeans@townandcityparking.co.uk*

## Training Modules for Area Manager



## Employee of the month



### January – Lisa Druett Asda Biggleswade

*Nominated by Jackie Young,  
Area Manager South East*

Lisa joined TCP in June last year and has taken her role very seriously. When she is not busy in the car park, she will always be seen taking trolleys back to the store or helping customers with their shopping. Lisa's tip for keeping warm in the winter is to tie a small hot water bottle with ribbon and hang it round your neck! What a great idea! And if anybody wants to do this I can tell you now the answer is: "No, TCP do not supply the hot water bottles!".

### February – Andy Dickie, Asda Livingston

*Nominated by  
Bill and Angus Megarry*

The following letter of commendation from a satisfied customer has earned Andy the 'Employee of the Month' award:

"My son's bicycle (his Christmas present) was stolen two days after Christmas from Halford's at Livingston. As you can imagine, he was heartbroken. He placed posters around Livingston with a photo of the bike, description and contact numbers. On the 9th January the police contacted me saying they had recovered the bike at Asda, Livingston.

When I went to Asda to claim the bike, the police told me it was Andrew Dickie who had seen it and, despite the thief's attempts to disguise it, had connected it with the posters and used his own mobile to call the police. He even stood guard over the bike until the Police arrived!



Without Andrew's attention to detail, memory and thought for others I have no doubt the bicycle would never have been recovered.

Myself and my son have passed on our own thanks to Andrew, but could you please pass on our thanks officially through your Company's channels."



### March – Geoff Mills, Asda Cleethorpes

As reported in the Grimsby Evening Telegraph, Geoff was nominated by two shoppers at the Cleethorpes Asda for the 'Service with a smile award', having helped one of them to change a flat tyre on her car.

### April – Helen Harvey, Middleway Retail Park, Burton-upon-Trent

*Nominated by Dave Meads*

Helen Harvey, our team leader at Middleway Retail Park, Burton -upon-Trent, has won Employee of the Year, awarded by the Town Centre management.



## Welcome to Town and City Parking

The following Trainee Administration Assistants have recently joined Town and City Parking.

**Gary Baird** has joined our Penalty Charge Notice team and **Ryan Hill** has joined the Pay & Display/Finance department. Both Gary and Ryan are working towards completing their NVQ2s in Business Administration.

# Christmas comes early for TCP staff

With Christmas being one of our busiest times, TCP's 2008 festive celebration was held on 24 October.

The 'Christmas' dinner dance was attended by over 100 Managers and Supervisors and their guests, who enjoyed a superb three-course meal and entertainment in the splendid setting of Norton House Hotel & Spa, just outside Edinburgh.

The evening was a great success and enjoyed by all, some even more than others! (Remember, David and Will, the camera never lies – see Caption Competition, TCP News December.) Many thanks to hosts Bernie and Alison, and to those who organised the event. We look forward to the promised North v South football match, proposed by Mick Hansford and Alan Cameron.



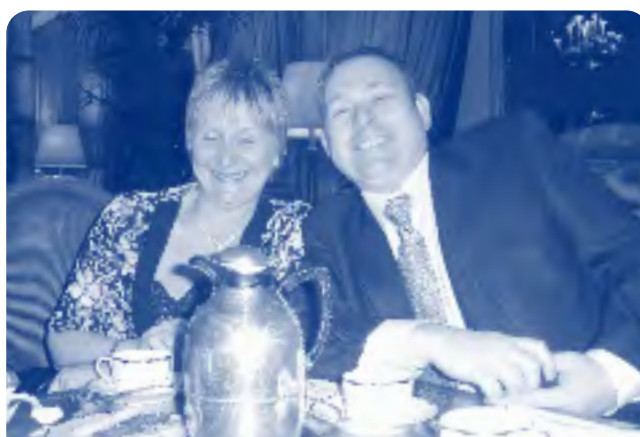
*Dave, Karla and Duncan get in on the action!*



*Our very own Strictly Come Dancing final!!*



*Elaine manages to stay awake while Gary explains his latest training initiative*



*Jackie and Gavin wait patiently for the Genie to pop out of the vase*

## New removal powers for DVLA

From 1st October 2008 the DVLA have had new powers, which allow them to remove untaxed vehicles from private property such as supermarket car parks.

The facility to inform DVLA of any untaxed vehicle on our client's property which may be abandoned will assist us with the removal of such vehicles. Any suspected abandoned vehicles should be reported to Head Office as normal.

The only limitations to DVLA powers of removal on private property is that they cannot remove if

the vehicle is parked on land associated with a dwelling or is kept at the business premises of a motor trader. On areas that we patrol for Housing Associations the untaxed vehicles have to be parked on the roadway, DVLA cannot touch the vehicle if it is parked in a marked bay because that constitutes part of the dwelling.

Even with the restrictions to the new powers this facility will go a long way to assist our clients with abandoned vehicles on their property.

# All in a day's work!

By David Farms

Life as an Attendant at Spennymoor Asda...



*The works at Asda Spennymoor*

I arrived on the Monday morning to discover that contractors had converted the colleague car park into a building site with site huts, diggers, dumper trucks and road rollers. They were there to construct a filter lane for entry to the petrol station, which would hopefully ease the congestion at the car park entrance. Because of the location of the operation I was asked to be on duty whenever work was in progress to direct traffic past the work site. I am pleased to report that everything went well and I was able to keep traffic flowing smoothly.

However, there was one scary moment when I attempted to direct a motorist to stop because the single lane was occupied by an approaching road roller. The car swerved around me, missing me by centimetres and continued towards the roller, which somehow got out of the way. When I approached the driver (an elderly lady) about the incident she replied, "I did wonder why you were stood in the road with your hand up, because I never saw any reason for that!"

## On a high at 60

By David Farms

One of the advantages of working for TCP, over my previous job in education, is the potential to book time off for special occasions, rather than having to stick to fixed holiday dates.

I recently celebrated my 60th birthday, so escaped to

a cottage near Keswick for a short break. The days were spent climbing mountains, and the evening enjoying the convivial atmosphere, good food and real ale in the local pub.

While the rest of the country bemoaned the snowy weather, I was in my element. There's something special about getting to the top of a snow covered mountain. While Blencathra and Skiddaw are not Everest and K2, I still felt a sense of achievement.



*My last day as a 59-year-old on top of Blencathra*

## Mick's cookery corner

An old favourite of all budding cooks is to make their own bread. Here is a simple recipe for making two 9 inch x 5 inch white loaves. This can be very satisfying and is, in my opinion best eaten warm with butter and a little jam.

### Ingredients

2fl oz /50ml lukewarm water

1 tbsp/15ml active dried yeast

2 tbsp/30ml sugar

16fl oz/475ml lukewarm milk

1oz/25g butter at room temperature

2 tsp salt

2lb/900g strong flour

### Recipe:

1. Combine the water, yeast and 1 tbsp of sugar in a measuring jug and leave for 15 mins until frothy.
2. Pour the milk in to bowl. Add the remaining sugar, the butter and salt. Stir in the yeast mixture, then stir in 5oz of flour at a time until you have a stiff dough.
3. Transfer dough to a floured surface. Knead the dough until it is smooth and pliable, then place it in a large greased bowl cover with clingfilm or a damp cloth and leave to rise at room temperature for 2-3 hours.
4. Preheat oven Gas5/375F/190C. Grease two 9 inch x 5 inch loaf tins. Divide the dough in half and form into loaf shapes and place in to the tins, cover and leave to rise again about 45 mins.
5. Bake until firm and brown, about 45-50 mins.

**TIP:** Once the loaf is baked turn out on to a wire rack, tap base of loaf and if it sounds hollow it is cooked if not return to oven for a few more mins.



## Caption competition

The winner of December's competition was:

David Kemp, with the following caption:

**"Smile for the camera, Dave. My dad's signed a deal for a new series of 'Strictly Come Parking!'"**

£50 of M&S vouchers are on there way to you David.

