Parkingeye

One parking partner. Infinite possibilities.

Parking in Education

Sites across the UK are unlocking next generation technologies to support our next generation of students. But how?

Market-leader Parkingeye, has conducted detailed research across its own estate comprising hundreds of schools, universities and colleges in the UK, to unveil a number of interesting findings about parking strategies at different types of facility, the rate of technology adoption and most importantly, the opportunities they may be overlooking. The data also highlights some thought-provoking discoveries about certain strategic imperatives whilst offering advice to different stakeholders within the education ecosystem to really 'move the needle' and ensure the modern hubs of tomorrow can support longer-term sustainable growth.

Setting the scene

Whilst there's no legal requirement to provide parking on education premises, the rising number of cars on the road and the assumption that parking is available in some guise at a site, can place significant pressure on busy estates/facilities teams.

This is especially true in a school environment where drop-off and pick-up is an especially stressful experience for users and staff like. To add complexity, as the world continues to navigate the impact from COVID-19, the education sector must rally to ensure sites are safe to welcome students and staff back in earnest, all whilst evaluating the new technologies which can enable their institution to work more efficiently.

Challenges come in many forms and often, the car park can suffer from poor management which can lead to student and staff complaints, restricted revenues, huge operational effort for what seems like little gain and in the worst cases, reputational damage.

One thing's for certain

With an increasing squeeze on space alongside the usual push to secure funding, the education sector has never been under more pressure to do more with less. Surprisingly, information gleaned from the lowly car park – an often-overlooked asset – can hold the key to helping busy facilities teams meet ambitious cost, revenue and efficiency targets as they look to realise the inspiring learning hubs of tomorrow.

With referenceable successes such as Warwick University, Leeds Beckett University and Manchester Metropolitan University as well as countless other clients, Parkingeye are uniquely positioned to understand the challenges facing today's teaching facilities.

The COVID curve

The COVID-19 pandemic has affected everyone. It has been utterly indiscriminate in its devastation across small businesses and huge global giants alike, no matter the sector. Education is no different and from early February, it became clear the virus was going to be a game-changer – across the short, medium and long-term.

parkingeye's own customers have faced bitter challenges: either dealing with an almost complete shutdown or managing huge spikes in traffic volumes as they worked to keep the nation fed, warm, safe and healthy. Supermarkets for instance, have seen huge spikes in morning traffic but overall visitor numbers are still half what they were – less trips, longer lists it seems. Sites which were closed, like churches for instance, experienced unauthorised people parking on their land regardless.

Specifically for education, sites were welcoming over 113,000 cars every single week during normal term time – half a million vehicles each month. However, by the end of April this had gone down to just over 10,000 per week – 8% of what it was. These low traffic levels were unsurprisingly maintained across the summer following lockdown and into the holiday season – undoubtedly busy teaching, facilities and cleaning teams working relentlessly to prepare for the start of the new term. It's worth noting that school car parks seemed to be much busier when compared against the sector as a whole – these figures may also be bolstered by unauthorised use, particularly where sites are in popular areas with little parking supply perhaps.

September saw a good recovery but Parkingeye report that sector usage as a whole appears to be resting at half their normal levels, when compared to 2019 figures. No doubt the result of virtualised lessons, and maybe bubbles/self-isolators staying at home.

Jan 2020
113,000 cars per week

Apr 2020
10,000 cars per week

Sep 2020
62,000 cars per week
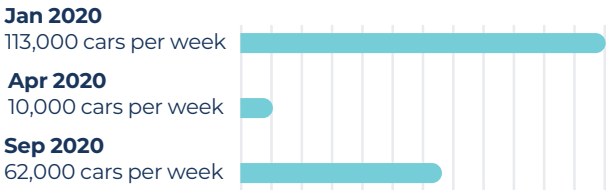
Key findings

Parkingeye are the largest ANPR provider on private land in the UK – 5 times larger than their nearest competitor – with the capability to capture over 4m data points every single day. They expert team oversee 10,000 spaces across hundreds of sites within the education sector. The following research findings are taken from 200+ live sites, spanning schools, colleges and some of the UK's most prestigious universities.

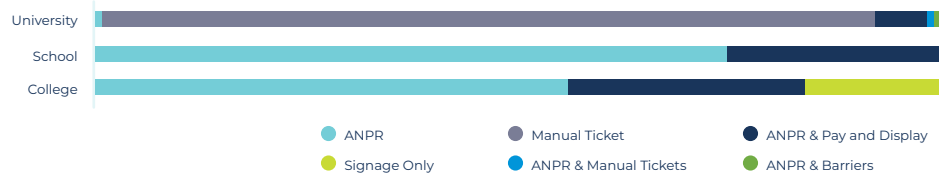| 20%	78%	9%	>1%	7% : 4%	1/4
Low uptake of ANPR: Only 20% of education sites utilise ANPR technology, compared to an average of 66% across the wider 3,500-strong Parkingeye estate.	78% of all sites still require some form of manual ticketing.	As a whole, only 9% of education sites adopt a paid parking strategy.	A small fraction of universities embrace a modern permit solution – less than 1%.	There is a greater proportion of hybrid/ electric vehicles at universities – 7% of all vehicles compared to just 4% for colleges and schools.	Across all sites, the level of contraventions issued to motorists' breaking the rules on site is halved within just 3 months and drops to just a quarter after 6 months.

A closer look

Universities favour manual ticketing it seems – this can be delivered by internal teams or 3rd party attendants who monitor the flow of traffic on site, spot blue bay abuse and issue physical Parking Charge Notices (PCNs) to those breaking the rules. Parkingeye clients often comment about the complexities involved with a large campus, juggling visitors, contractors, staff and of course students. It's worth noting that only circa 7% of universities take an ANPR with paid parking solution – this could suggest a slow adoption of new parking technologies.

Schools are the big adopters of ANPR and all it's associated benefits, maybe due to parking not being 'anyone's core job', thereby creating even more stress when it lands in the lap of headteachers or maintenance staff. Here, we don't witness any manned services at all which makes sense, given that school teams are looking for total automation of the parking provision without any need to get involved day-to-day. Interestingly, colleges are a mix of ANPR, paid parking to generate revenues and signage only, whereby signs alone are an effective deterrent without any need for full ANPR.

Car Park Type By Facility

Legend:
- ANPR
- Manual Ticket
- ANPR & Pay and Display
- Signage Only
- ANPR & Manual Tickets
- ANPR & Barriers

Fuel type has also revealed some interesting information. Year-to-date, Parkingeye have proportionally seen a slight reduction in petrol cars across the sector as a whole - from 54% in February, to 44% across June and July.

The data suggests an increase in diesel cars - from 41% in February, to 50% in June and July – although this could also be driven by an increase in Electric/Hybrid vehicles arriving on site. This group accounted for just 3% of all education traffic in Feb but now account for over 5%. When Parkingeye investigated these results more closely, they found that there is a greater proportion of hybrid/electric vehicles at universities than schools and colleges with their estate – 7% compared to just 4% for colleges and schools. This has a positive bearing on CSR policies and is certainly food for thought when it comes to planning – for instance, is your site ready for Electric Vehicle Charging Points and if so, how many?

Education Sector Traffic - Fuel Type Makeup

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Legend:
- Petrol
- Diesel
- Electric/Hybrid
- Other
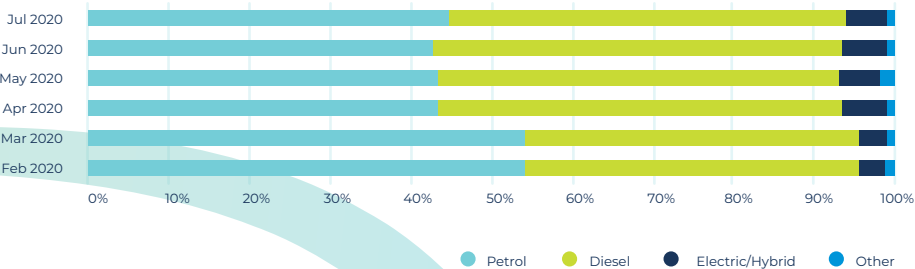
Daily traffic flows from site to site also differ. Schools see a steady flow across the week with still reasonably high levels across the weekend (80% on Saturdays, 50% on Sundays), whereas colleges see a gradually declining daily profile as the week progresses. Friday shows a drop of over 20% from their highest peak day which is surprisingly Tuesday. Saturday levels are higher than expected, with Sunday traffic the lowest at just over a third of those seen Mon-Fri.

Average Traffic By Day
Sub-Sector School
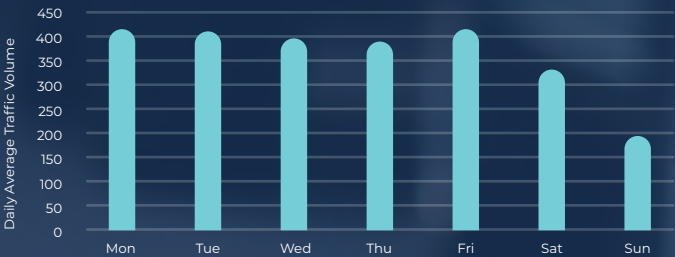
Average Traffic By Day
Sub-Sector College
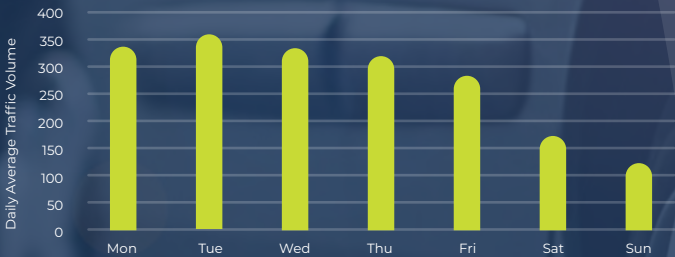
Universities also show a traffic peak on Tuesdays and a low on Friday, with a generally more jagged daily profile than colleges – Saturdays show similar levels to Sunday. Four of the largest universities which Parkingeye oversees utilise a modern ANPR-integrated permit system. This enables internal teams to easily manage e-applications, waiting lists, green permits (for people car sharing or driving lower emission vehicles), bulk communications and re-allocate zones for temporary works at the click of a button. Permit systems now offer a range of ways for people to pay, from salary sacrifice through to direct debit and can even link into a Google API to ascertain alternative public transport options when prioritising and allocating applications.

Average Traffic By Day
Sub-Sector University
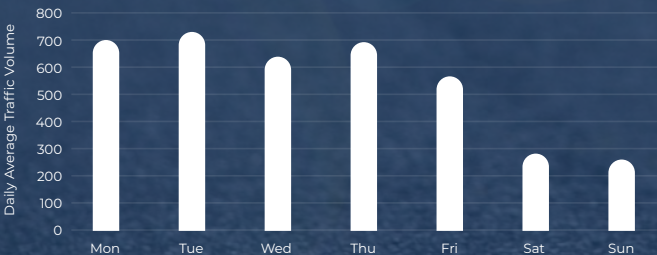
A tale of two halves

Whilst both education facilities, there is a huge difference in the challenges faced by schools compared to universities and colleges, driven by site size & layout, daily timings, motorist demographic, geography and much more.

Schools

The school environment is unique in parking terms – huge spikes in traffic for short periods across the day, safety & security considerations, issues with anti-social behaviour once closed, pressure to be more efficient whilst getting results, challenges with funding amidst more cuts, the list goes on.

Teachers are already expected to play an overwhelming number of roles so Parking Attendant shouldn't be another but naturally, drivers and the local community (when surrounding routes become blocked) will turn to the school itself for a resolution.

Typical Challenges

Drop off/pick up congestion

- Schools rarely have adequate parking space to satisfy everyone, from staff and disabled users to unhindered routes for deliveries and the parents

- On top of the already busy roads around schools, people slowing or waiting whilst trying to park further compounds an already stressful and dangerous situation

- Restriction on people wanting and needing to go about their daily lives in accessing homes, businesses and amenities nearby

- Operational headaches for already busy schools, with complaints and bad press having the potential to negatively impact the school's reputation

Poor parking behaviours

- In the dash to find a safe and convenient place to park during drop-off/pick-up, many opt for pavement parking, parking on double-yellow lines or across dropped curbs

- With renewed focus on children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), creating a stress-free environment at school is key and that starts and ends with the trip to school. Those with disabilities who rely on the use of a wheelchair, a cane, or perhaps even a carer, will find it incredibly difficult to access the safety of the pavement when it's over-run with parked cars

- Parents with prams or pushchairs will face the same practical difficulties

- Local residents may also struggle to access or leave their own property, local people out on walks or runs who may be forced into the road, and local businesses may find it tough to provide access for deliveries and spaces for their customers

Generating revenues to support school facilities

FACT: *Per-pupil school spending has reduced by 8% in real terms between 2010 and 2019 in the UK.

FACT: *Since 2015, costs have been rising more rapidly than income. Most of the reduction in spending comes from cuts to local authority (LA) budgets, which have had a significant impact on schools.

It seems schools are responding to these pressures by reducing staffing and cutting back on non-essential building maintenance amongst other things. But whilst working in a challenging financial environment, there are numerous ways in which the lowly car park can be used innovatively to help buffer tight budgets.

* https://www.gov.uk/government/ speeches/commentary-on-school-funding

Anti-social behaviour & vandalism out-of-hours

Like many sites, schools often find themselves subject to anti-social behaviours outside opening times and even vandalism. This can represent anything from mild littering to extreme damage such as smashed windows and graffiti – with many UK counties spending thousands each year in repairs.

Common scenarios

- Usually falls to teaching staff
- Low parking provision
- Huge spikes in daily traffic
- Anti-social behaviour & vandalism
- Complaints

AIMS: Security, reputation, simplicity

Some large universities and colleges are more like small towns, with a host of different campuses and facilities making up one modern, holistic experience. Others are a single site. No matter the set-up, higher education locations wishing to offer a more positive parking experience and improve flow across site(s) must be clear on the current challenges before settling on their final car park management strategy:

Universities & Colleges

"The site was a permit only car park across all areas and we had barriers dotted around which were all in different states of repair. We had no formal enforcement in place, just our guys on site putting notes on people's cars. We had a ballooning issue of oversubscribed parking with worsening traffic flows on site – resulting in backlogs. We simply couldn't go on."

A busy North West based education site

Typical Challenges

"Our college is located in St Helens town centre where parking is limited and expensive. Prior to Parkingeye installing the new system, our staff struggled to park on site because the car parks were constantly full of unauthorised users.

The Parkingeye team provided us with all the tools we need to manage different types of permits and visitors on site, as well as installing and maintaining all of the equipment free of charge. We now have full visibility of how the carpark is being used through detailed reports and have seen a drastic improvement in parking behaviours on site."

St Helens College

- Limited number of parking bays in comparison to the number of permit holders and applications being received – supply doesn't meet demand
- An effective deterrent against unauthorised parking
- How to deal with repeat offenders fairly
- Juggling the mix of users – staff, students, contractors, visitors
- Current software/systems/hardware nearing end-of-life, ageing maintenance contracts
- Time-poor internal teams struggling to support parking management
- Validation to help assign genuine permit applications and managing the waiting list effectively
- Manned parking attendants on site is no longer feasible
- Blue Bay monitoring
- FACT: It's estimated that disabled badge fraud has quadrupled since 2014, with Disabled Motoring UK (DMUK) concluding that, as part of their Annual Baywatch Campaign, a staggering 1 in 5 supermarket disabled bays are being abused. Is it the same for education sites?

- Unauthorised access during out-of-hours
- The ability to allow parking for other on-campus facilities – such as gym members – within set criteria
- Paper-based tickets hard to manage and outdated – virtual is preferred
- The ability to generate new revenue streams, especially outside term-time
- Barriers can be 'laggy', leading to backlogs across campus
- Reallocating parking zones quickly – due to emergency work, for instance
- Suitable performance reporting to share to senior team(s)

Common scenarios

- Dedicated facilities staff to support
- Reasonable parking provision
- Can operate 24/7
- Complex mix of users
- Struggle to monetise

AIMS: User management, revenue, lower operational effort

The adoption of technology in education

Education is embracing technology in many forms, from secondary school kids now carrying laptops around, software like BookingsPlus which allows organisations to rent out facilities (meeting, sports, even wedding or event space) outside term time and the stratospheric rise of virtualised learning.

COVID itself has forced us everyone to embrace technology in ways we wouldn't have thought possible just 12 months ago – Zoom meetings are just one of a million examples.

With some estates generating upward of £350,000 annually from out-of-term rentals, helping them to cope with ever tightening budgets, it's a wonder why parking isn't afforded the same focus. Often seen as the problem child rather than the star, it typically falls down the 'to do' list as facility managers are simply unaware of its capability or just too busy to take action – cue the vicious circle.

ANPR technology is already enabling sites to be super-responsive, giving them complete control over how different sites are managed – for instance, a university with a gym on site can integrate with ANPR to validate parking for their members but still charge for spaces in city centre campuses. ANPR also provides a wealth of insight into how parking can help maximise revenues, improve traffic flow and transform the student experience – that's before we get into a multimodal model of transmitting information – like Oxbridge and MIT were already doing pre-COVID.

Why then are 80% of sites still holding onto manned strategies and why do Parkingeye see a much lower uptake of ANPR solutions compared to other sectors.? Certainly, the wider world's response to the COVID crisis has pushed technology and ANPR to the forefront of many parking strategies – Parkingeye are here to help education do the same.

The importance of data

Let's take a closer look at ANPR data and how it's helping education sites make improvements and generating margin-rich revenues.

In this school scenario, it's clear that core hours are 9-5pm although Friday night extends till later – maybe teachers trying to catch up on the week before heading home for the weekend. There may be a perception that peak points are at the beginning/end of the day and whilst the Parkingeye data suggests a capacity strain in the run up to 9am and 4pm, this school is busy throughout, with plenty of early starts too!

Certainly, the strain times indicate a demand/supply issue which is managed through ANPR technology to ensure traffic flow is maintained throughout and any unauthorised users who compound the problem easily identified. Without it, poor behaviours could creep in, such as pavement parking (covered earlier). Weekend levels are very low indeed which is an untapped opportunity for sites in busy locations to rent out available space.

SCHOOL - Up to 20 spaces

% Car Park Full
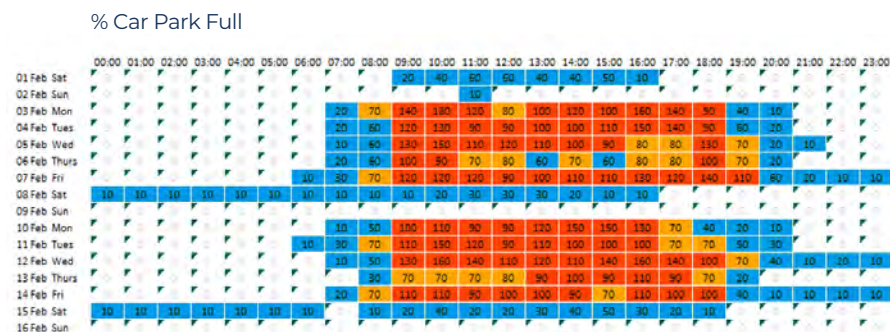
This university example, however, looks quite different. Whilst this site is not in a city centre, it is located within the outskirts, offering plenty of eateries and bars in a 'trendy area'. The site itself doesn't reach capacity until 10am, with Thursday being a much quieter day in comparison to Tuesday and Wednesday. Again, we can see strain points throughout the day but this is managed effectively with a free-flow drop-off area for suppliers and ANPR which enables fast space turnover.

Interestingly, evening events account for spikes on certain dates, with parking clearly required until the early hours. When the Parkingeye team investigated further, they found that in February for instance, up to 500 vehicles could be parked overnight at this university. Indeed, on average the site is still 25% full between 11pm-midnight – something which may come as quite a surprise to some. This insight, and other occupancy data has allowed the client to review both their daytime and evening timetables to level out the site's usage. This has helped to reduce wasted space in the quiet points - and ease any backlogs in the busy ones. Of course, this has also had the added positive effect of better space avilability for everyone and safety, allowing people to park close to the campus rather than parking further away.

The big point to note here is the available space across the weekend – this presents a perfect opportunity for budget-stricken establishments, especially those in busy locations, to rent out space. This offers a great service to the local community, supports nearby businesses and creates a margin rich revenue stream for the facility – just imagine a local business running an offer on a Monday night, when the campus is quiet anyway or charging city dwellers for parking right in the heart of the action.
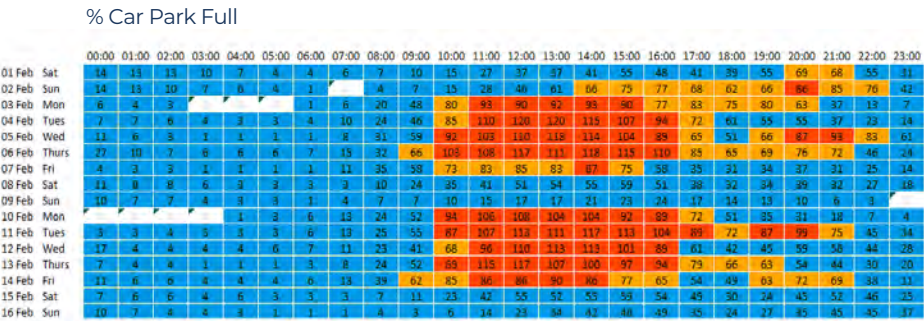
Sheffield Hallam is looking at how it can utilise its assets and services to provide support and value to the community - an approach which Daniel Ladbury, Director of Estates at Sheffield Hallam University, sees as particularly impactful given the financial struggle many local authorities are waging.

"Universities will be more welcoming to businesses, members of the broader community and general public," he says. **"They will become 'outward-facing' and less 'ivory tower'."**

Daniel Ladbury, Director of Estates at Sheffield Hallam University

UNIVERSITY - Busy, city suburb site

% Car Park Full

		00:00	01:00	02:00	03:00	04:00	05:00	06:00	07:00	08:00	09:00	10:00	11:00	12:00	13:00	14:00	15:00	16:00	17:00	18:00	19:00	20:00	21:00	22:00	23:00
01 Feb	Sat	14	13	13	10	7	4	4	6	7	10	15	27	37	37	41	55	48	41	39	55	69	68	55	31
02 Feb	Sun	14	13	10	7	6	4	1		4	7	15	28	40	61	66	75	77	68	62	66	66	85	76	42
03 Feb	Mon	6	4	3	2	1	1	6	20	48	80	93	90	92	93	90	77	83	75	80	63	37	13	7	
04 Feb	Tues	7	7	4	3	3	3	4	10	24	46	85	110	120	120	115	107	94	72	61	55	55	37	23	14
05 Feb	Wed	11	6	3	1	1	1	1	8	31	59	92	103	110	118	114	104	89	65	51	66	87	93	83	61
06 Feb	Thurs	27	10	7	6	6	6	7	15	32	66	108	108	117	113	118	115	110	85	65	69	76	72	46	24
07 Feb	Fri	4	3	3	1	1	1	11	35	58	73	83	85	83	87	75	58	35	31	34	37	31	25	14	
08 Feb	Sat	11	8	8	6	4	3	2	10	24	35	41	54	55	59	51	38	32	54	39	32	27	18		
09 Feb	Sun	10	7	7	4	3	3	1	4	7	10	15	17	17	21	73	24	17	14	13	10	8	3		
10 Feb	Mon						1	3	6	13	24	52	94	106	108	104	104	92	89	72	51	35	31	18	7
11 Feb	Tues	3	3	4	1		1	6	13	25	55	67	107	113	111	117	113	104	89	72	87	99	75	45	34
12 Feb	Wed	17	4	4	4	6	7	11	23	41	68	96	110	113	113	101	86	61	42	45	59	58	44	28	
13 Feb	Thurs	6	4	4	1	4	4	8	24	52	69	115	117	107	100	97	94	79	66	63	54	44	30	20	
14 Feb	Fri	11	6	4	4	4	4	6	13	39	62	85	86	86	90	86	77	65	54	49	63	72	69	38	11
15 Feb	Sat	7	6	6	4	6	5	3	7	11	23	42	55	52	55	55	54	45	30	24	45	45	52	46	23
16 Feb	Sun	10	7	4	4	3	1	1	4	6	14	23	54	42	40	49	35	24	27	45	45	45	37		

The good news

The Public Sector Executive have recently announced that over 180 colleges are set to share in £200m of funding for repairs and campus refurbishments. The investment makes up part of a larger £1.5bn package, which will be given to further education institutes over the next five years.

Of course, most plans start with site layout and whilst this must be considered as part of your parking strategy – is there a designated parking zone for staff, are blue badge holders struggling for space as there aren't enough bays, is it time to invest in electric charging points – the car park has much more to offer. 10 years ago, the car park management industry was known in the main for 'parking tickets' but today, changing behaviours and the explosion of next generation technology, like ANPR, has enabled parking to contribute to the over-arching brand experience in ways previously unimagined.

Parking can play a huge part in helping to evolve what a modern learning facility can offer but it's clear from the findings that facility leaders are either unclear about ANPR capabilities or nervous about a switch to the fully virtualised world, where you don't need barriers at all. Parkingeye offer a huge range of services spanning the entire spectrum, from enforcement of course but right through to payment options, site performance boosters and solutions which are hugely effective at driving out operational cost.

Essentially, ANPR uses discreet cameras at entry/exit points to capture number plates which track, understand and improve behaviours on-site. For years used as a highly effective way to deter unauthorised users, today its applications are far wider than core enforcement and much more sophisticated. Parkingeye regularly experience what they call the 'poor relation' moment - the point at which a client realises that their car park is actually a hugely underutilised capital asset. Then comes the 'lightbulb' moment – yep, a moment of excitement when various stakeholders begin to appreciate how parking can yield transformational benefits, from improved student experiences and app-based technology through to serious automation to free up internal teams and pure bottom line revenues. If you take nothing else away from this research, we urge you to embrace the fact that parking in a highly connected world is about so much more than enforcement.

Parkingeye's research has already touched on the importance of data but repurposed data can also be utilised in a number of ways to support educational growth, even helping to attract both students and on-site tenants. Loyalty apps are a great way of using ANPR visitor data to trigger offers to registered users as they enter a site – this technology can lift repeat visitors to a particular tenant by up to 20%, be it a coffee house or bookstore. Not only can this attract cash-strapped students but allows larger campuses to negotiate more attractive and longer-term tenancies. Alternatively, auto-pay technology enables a site to be wholly 'free-flow' without any need to pay on-foot or register – ANPR cameras recognise vehicles on entry and automatically deduct any fee due on exit, before confirming via SMS. Optimum space turnover, entirely stress free, guaranteed payments, simple.

Education Secretary, Gavin Williamson, said,

"We want to build a world class further education system which delivers for the whole nation, and a key part of this is ensuring colleges are fit for the future - with better facilities and brand-new buildings."

Astonishingly, the car park can also contribute to a site's green credentials; one space can now house a bike 'vending machine' capable of holding 20 bikes for example. To put that into context, facilities which allow children to cycle to school are estimated to save hundreds of millions of pounds in both the public cost of school travel and the NHS in healthcare effort. When taken alongside virtual parking permits, EV charging points and solar powered payment kiosks (all without impacting space provision), the full picture is very powerful indeed.

When considering what the car park can offer, don't overlook soft FM (cleaning, security and so on) and hard FM (lining, lighting, surfacing, maintenance and landscaping) to ensure first and last impressions of your site are positive. After all, parents and students alike will want loved ones to be safe when in a learning environment so aspects such as accessibility, layout, security and so on will subliminally register. This becomes even more powerful when you consider the capability of ANPR data to support services such as Click & Assist (alerts staff to a vulnerable/disabled user requiring help) and Click & Collect within a retail environment.

What role can ANPR play in the evolution of educational parking facilities?

From pure enforcement-only options or virtual permits, all the way through to solutions which seamlessly combine on-site payments, pre-booking capability and staff pre-booking into one hassle-free package, ANPR is a powerful enabler.

- Provide 24/7 accurate visibility & insight
- Help inform layout choices and improve site flow
- Enable touchless & paperless environments, especially important in the COVID era
- Manage different users at the click of a button
- Generate 'out of term/out of hours' revenues
- Improve paid parking rates – some sites see 40% increase
- Identify trends – such as electric vehicle adoption (EVCs)
- Automate manned tasks to give time back to internal teams
- Liberate the site from barriers – let ANPR do the hard work and improve traffic flows
- Offer auto-pay & pre-book services to delight users
- Adopt loyalty strategies and boost tenant negotiations
- Access camera footage to assist in police investigations relating to vandalism

Analytics

Behavioural analysis, now fundamental in other sectors but yet to be fully embraced by education, can really drive more informed decision-making and ongoing operational improvements. Imagine teams being able to understand seasonal trends, types of visitors in the car park at any one time, fuel type (to help understand demand for electric vehicle charging points) and car volumes across the day to help inform staff rotas and planning. Parkingeye alone capture a staggering 4m data points every single day – why not use it?

Referenceable successes

Many forward-thinking establishments are already looking to ANPR to modernise the parking experience and give time back to busy internal teams.

Unlock revenues to reinvest back into facilities

Wanted to modernise their approach, reduce reliance on manual attendant(s)

Needed to reduce parking abuse, required easy self-serve tools to save time and better visibility through reporting

Leading by example

A large university based in the North of England were finding it difficult to monetise their estate of 17 sites and wanted to embrace new technologies to transform revenues. Originally managing users with a simple permit system, they migrated their main city centre car parks onto ANPR, which not only helped drive cost out of the organisation through time savings but saw top line revenues rocket circa £2k p/month to £50k in their highest month.

Realised revenues at large university estate
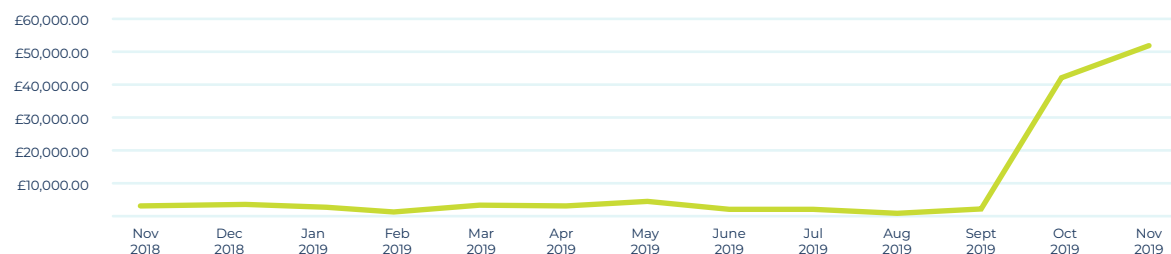
Finance & Procurement

The UK is in a demographic dip, facing historically low numbers of 18- to 19-year-olds - the traditional undergraduate student cohort. Its future funding is also uncertain, with the government's Augar review into post-18 education expected to recommend a reduction in students' tuition fees, directly affecting institutions' income.

Amidst pressure to reduce spend, today's finance and procurement teams must look to digitalisation and automation for more transformational gains. Technologies like ANPR offer superb resiliency, up-time and accuracy to drive insight, maximum payment ratios and cost out efficiencies so it's surprising that awareness of the wider benefits aren't well known - leaving a wealth of opportunity going unseen.

The modern education hubs of tomorrow are rooted in the virtual world, where capex-heavy hardware and manual processes are no longer needed. Traditional barriers have long-since been superseded by new technologies due to often-problematic maintenance (plus the time and money drain to manage). New flexible permit services are able to configure each car park individually to suit traffic peaks/troughs and boost payment revenues without heavy additional investment. Able to facilitate touchless services too, the automation offered by ANPR can transform on-site efficiencies and be implemented in a matter of weeks to give busy teams one less thing to worry about.

Out-of-term revenues

Outside term time, why not offer unused parking space to the local community. Especially for city centre locations, parking demands a premium and with dynamic pricing, spaces will always attract the best possible tariff depending on demand in the surrounding area. During term time, permits can be used like normal but outside core dates, motorists looking for parking nearby can pre-book/pre-pay to use your site(s) and generate new margin-rich revenue to reinvest back into the facilities. What's more, with a fully virtualised system there is no need for surplus hardware or a mix of different measures on site, leaving users with a smooth experience and internal teams finally able to get back to the 'day job'.

University accommodation has been rented out/re-purposed for years so why not the car park?

Finally, look to reputable bodies who can validate operator quality - NHS Shared Business Services have a 'Car Park Management & Infrastructure' Framework, which offers both education and healthcare sites an OJEU-complaint route to securing market-leading car park management services.

"We would recommend Parkingeye to any company looking to properly, effectively and easily manage their car parks."

St Helens College

Often cost neutral, ANPR solutions can free up a further

40%

of space, extend the lifespan of capital hardware and monetise parking to boost revenues by almost double*

*Dependant on site size and level of abuse prior to the system going live.

✓ Yield rich revenue returns from this overlooked capital asset

✓ Remove costly capex and unnecessary overheads

✓ Rethink maintenance contracts

✓ 99.9% uptime

✓ Implement ANPR in a matter of weeks

✓ OJEU Compliance

What does this mean for the education ecosystem?

Student Experience & Behavioural Insight

The education sector deals in some big numbers – for instance, in 2018–19, there were 2.38 million students studying at UK higher education institutions and almost 12 million kids went to schools. That's a lot of cars, pick-ups and taxis who all need somewhere to park. With increasing competition to win more students, it might be hard to imagine how parking can help you make the best impression.

Much has been written about what students, and parents, look for in an educational facility outside of the pure academic offering. Amongst the top ten answers are campus size, variety of clubs, safety and food! Whilst the car park can't cook, in today's highly connected world it can harness and repurpose real-time parking data to deliver a seamless motorist experience which alleviates stress, enables touchless and ensures everyone can find a parking spot quickly – great for students/staff making a dash for class.

Moreover, sites must also consider the safety and security of students whilst in their care, even as a pedestrian – we've talked a little about the impact of poor parking behaviours on vulnerable and disabled students. The right parking strategy can help ease backlogs and poor parking behaviours to make sure the site is safe for staff, visitors and students alike.

Happy students will refer within their social circle so ensuring a positive experience from the moment they arrive, to the moment they leave should be key. Real-time data can help establishments understand trends to optimise the experience further. For instance, a highly contented car park which is busy on certain dates may benefit from staggered class start times to ease the strain or free parking for gym users, with automatic registration thanks to the ANPR camera on entry.

"Patients already apprehensive of attending appointments were finding a stressful situation made worse by not being able to park, with many of the car parking spaces being used by staff, further compounded by huge queues being caused by a barrier system. Customer care extends to more than just the car park, it sets the tone for the whole hospital experience."

NHS

Tom Higgins, Car Parking and Security Manager, Manchester University NHS Foundation Trust

83%
of users now opting for card

Camera data feeds on-foot payment kiosks, enabling motorists to match their vehicle on-screen. This reassures the user that we have their details and sees revenue rates rocket. Interchangeable payment options: coins, notes, chip & pin, contactless. Solar powered options also available.

Cashless auto-pay capability using ANPR visitor data. The system matches registered users and tracks entry/exit times to calculate payment due, which is auto deducted and confirmed via SMS on exit. Perfect to keep traffic flowing on a busy site.
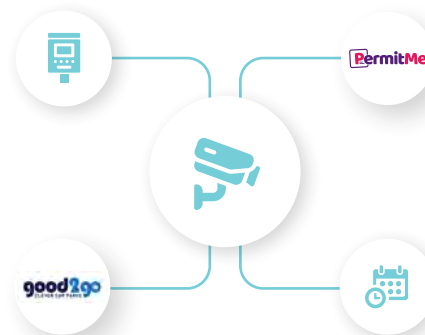
Intuitive ANPR integrated online platform, allowing teams to review, allocate and renew permits at the click of a button to provide a quick turnaround on applications. 100% paperless, with comms tools, waiting list functionality and an appeals service built in as standard to make life easier for everyone.

Pre-booking service: Integrates with accurate ANPR occupancy data to highlight available capacity which can be publicised to a core group only (students or staff for instance) or 4m+ motorists looking for parking nearby.

Facilities & Estate Management

Education estates in the UK span more than 22 million square metres, spread across more than 150 institutions of varying scale and complexity. Given the complex mix of users, often diverse facilities, it's surprising that both modern permit use and ANPR take-up is low – especially compared to other sectors it seems.

The daily demands of managing a 21st century education site, whether that's a busy village school or city-centre university, while implementing financial, time and resource savings to meet government targets must seem relentless. As on-site teams juggle soft and hard FM, utilities, building maintenance & renovation, safety, regulatory compliance and just about everything in-between, it's easy to understand why parking can fall down the list of priorities.

Traditionally the core responsibility of facilities or estate managers, parking is no longer seen as a purely operational endeavour yet it's still common for parking to impact a number of other areas (complaints, revenues, backlogs, etc) before teams reach out for help. Complaints can really hurt a site's reputation and can range from issues with poor parking behaviours (taking up more than one space, parking across a dropped kerb, etc) and issues with paper permits, through to backlogs caused by poor throughput.

When considering opportunities to minimise congestion on site, modernise payment options and improve motorist experience, ANPR has a lot to offer. Plus, with its powerful automation capability and API integration, manual tasks such as staff permit management, hardware maintenance (as an example, Parkingeye fix 75% of faults remotely) and rich behavioural insight, this technology can give significant time back to already stretched teams.

Still largely assumed to be an 'enforcement thing' due to its high accuracy, many may not know this tech can also be used in conjunction with manned solutions (rather than one or the other) thanks to integrated handheld apps to provide complementary bay management and ultimate flexibility. Fully trained on-site attendants can manually issue Parking Charge Notices to those who contravene your rules, with full technical back-office processing but can also help to explain car park terms to motorists, patrol & observe parking behaviours and assist in identifying blue badge fraud – still very popular on education sites as the Parkingeye data shows. Not only can ANPR be blended with pay-on-foot kiosks, permit systems and manned services but also supports a wide range of touchless solutions to ensure sites can offer an end-to-end hands-free environment in the post-COVID era. Not just the best of both worlds, but the best of all worlds some might say.

"People were facing queues, difficulty securing a space and issues in paying, alongside regular breakdowns to the barrier system, which all combined to create frustration and stress for patients, staff and visitors alike. We're now able to welcome a further 50,000 cars each month, thanks to the free flow environment ANPR has created."

NHS

Tom Higgins, Car Parking and Security Manager, Manchester University NHS Foundation Trust

75%
Parkingeye fix 75% of faults remotely

- ✓ Find an easier way to manage multiple users
- ✓ Embrace automation to make life easier and give you time back
- ✓ Let go of the barrier
- ✓ Reduce complaints
- ✓ Improve traffic flow & congestion
- ✓ Ease hardware management

What does this mean for the education ecosystem?
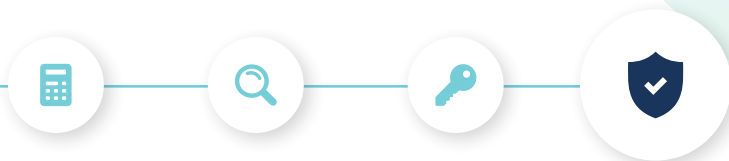
Safety, Security & Compliance

It's hard to mention safety in 2020 without touching on COVID-19 and all its associated considerations. Social Distancing. A term no-one had really heard of before but one which we now hear a million times a day and it's set to stay, for now at least. But what does that mean for safety on site?

With primary and secondary schools, the number of car parking spaces on site tends to be small, but this is all the more reason for matters of social distancing to be adhered to, and for the volume of vehicles being restricted purely to those who the spaces are allocated to – predominantly staff and visitors. Permits are beneficial in those cases, to avoid abuse and overcrowding in the presence of apparently 'empty' spaces. Pavement parking also needs to be more formally addressed – with sanctions enforced via appropriate signage - in order to make it easier for pedestrians to travel to, from and around the school premises. This is both to comply with social distancing and also to ensure that those with SEND – or those parents who access the premises with infants - are not being inconvenienced in trying to access and use the surrounding pavements safely.

For the safeguarding of the children in the care of our primary and secondary schools, the introduction of ANPR can serve as a wonderful tool to track authorised and unauthorised vehicle presence on the premises, thus giving teachers and parents alike extra peace of mind for the safety of their children as they enter and leave the school vicinity. Police can request access to ANPR data for investigations into vehicles of interest and anti-social behaviour.

On larger educational sites, such as colleges and universities, social distancing can be more easily achieved if a barrier system is used to restrict the number of vehicles entering the premises. If a site is tied in with recent capex spend or requires physical barriers for anti-terrorism reasons for instance, ANPR barrier integration could be an option. Essentially, this 'best of both worlds' solution offers contactless arrival on site with no need for the motorist to slow/stop at the barrier. Instead, the camera identifies vehicle registration details on approach and does all the hard work from there to understand whether the motorist is authorised to use the car park or not.

Other ways to improve safety on site is by opting for cashless or fully virtual solutions instead, such as auto-pay services like good2go, which simply deducts parking payments on exit following a simple 3-step registration online – perfect for ad-hoc users who don't require a full permit. Switching to one-way directional flows with a single entry/exit point can alleviate risk of backlogs and minimise close contact, as can clear lining and safety guidance around lifts and public walkways.

Good lighting, up-to-date lining and quality surfacing all ensure a site feels more accessible and is safer for users, especially disabled or elderly motorists. Clearly visible BPA-compliant signage is an effective deterrent against unauthorised use but for sites wishing to go further still, The Park Mark® Safer Parking Scheme is a Police Crime Prevention Initiative (Police-CPI) aimed at reducing both crime and the fear of crime in parking facilities across the UK.

> "Our manned attendant was handling large amounts of cash which created a different set of headaches, both in terms of personal security and fraud. This also meant that if they were absent from work, we wouldn't generate any revenue – something we simply couldn't sustain given the demand for parking."

Dai Davies, Abersoch Golf Club Manager

Stop anti-social behaviour in as little as

3 months

and gain full visibility of who's using your site, and when.

In summary

Technology

It's here to help, don't be left behind

Revenue

Your car park can yield significant revenues to support both top and bottom lines

Time

Embrace automation to drive time and cost out of the organisation

Experience

Remove the stress, enable a free-flow environment and provide a first and last impression which aligns to your brand

All corners of the education ecosystem need to work together to drive change. For years, the humble car park has landed in the lap of busy teaching or operational/facilities teams. Those days are gone, with parking now able to free up threadbare operational teams, drive out cost through automation, utterly transform the user experience and deliver serious revenue to reinvest back into the facility.

Parking is not your problem child, it's your star.

Since 2004 Parkingeye has grown from a pioneering provider into a market-leader who provides a wide range of ANPR, paid parking, permit and manned solutions to ease parking pain for hundreds of education sites across the UK, giving them the capabilities to work and park effortlessly in a highly connected world.

With referenceable successes such as Warwick University, Leeds Beckett University and Manchester Metropolitan University as well as countless schools and colleges, Parkingeye are uniquely positioned to understand the challenges facing today's teaching facilities and work closely with their busy teams to deliver a great parking experience.

Parkingeye's dedicated team work closely with clients to provide a positive parking experience via a highly personalised service which has earned the company a 97% client retention rate. Their range of services has attracted a hugely diverse client base, ranging from large NHS Trust sites, blue-chip household names, thousands of independent retailers and 3 of Britain's top 6 supermarkets. Welcome to the next generation of parking solutions with Parkingeye.

Parkingeye

One parking partner. Infinite possibilities.

To transform the way you approach parking, get in touch.

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