

Committee: Streets & Walkways Sub Committee	Dated: 09/07/2024
Subject: Red Badge Holder Survey	Public
Which outcomes in the City Corporation's Corporate Plan does this proposal aim to impact directly?	Vibrant thriving destination Diverse engaged communities
Does this proposal require extra revenue and/or capital spending?	N
If so, how much?	£
What is the source of Funding?	n/a
Has this Funding Source been agreed with the Chamberlain's Department?	N
Report of: Interim Executive Director Environment	For Information
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Summary

In Summer 2023 the City of London Corporation conducted a survey to gain insights into the parking experiences of Red Badge holders in the City of London. The survey findings will inform the wider Disabled Parking Review, as part of the ongoing review on kerbside space and its utilisation in the City, as outlined in the Transport Strategy.

The Survey was sent to all 154 registered Red Badge holders, with options to respond online, via paper, or over the phone. Respondents were asked to reply to ten questions that collected both quantitative and qualitative data on their experiences and were given six weeks to complete the Survey. The City Corporation received 54 completed surveys (a 35% response rate).

Analysis of responses found general satisfaction with current parking provision and availability while also highlighting several specific challenges and opportunities for improvement. Seven key actions were developed in response to survey findings. These include:

- Further examining parking occupancy data against the findings of the survey to determine if additional bays are needed.
- Consider parking distribution to identify areas that need additional bays.
- Implementing stricter enforcement to prevent the misuse of disabled parking bays.

The Disabled Parking Review will ensure disabled parking provision better meets the needs of disabled individuals, ensuring a more inclusive and efficient use of kerbside space.

Final recommendations will be brought to this committee for decision as part of the Disabled Parking Review in January 2025

Recommendation(s)

Members of the Streets & Walkways Sub Committee are asked to note the report.

Main Report

Background

1. The kerbside is an important area public space that serves a variety of functions and purposes, including for public transport, loading and servicing activities, greenery, public amenities, space for people walking and a variety of other uses.
2. As part of a wider review of how kerbside space is used the City Corporation is assessing how Disabled Parking is utilised. To inform this review it was important to engage with Red Badge holders to better understand their experiences of parking in the City of London.
3. A local Red Badge parking scheme applies in the City with specific criteria and restrictions different to those for the national Blue Badge scheme. The Red Badge parking concession scheme is for City workers and residents. The Blue Badge scheme applies but with more limited benefits.
4. Currently, to qualify for a Red Badge the applicant must meet the following criteria:
 - Live within the City of London or work on a permanent basis at least 21 hours per week in the City of London; and
 - Be in receipt mobility allowance or the higher rate of the mobility component of the disability living allowance and provide satisfactory proof that they are in receipt of this.
5. The Contact Centre (City of London Police) is responsible for the administration of the Blue Badge Scheme for City residents and the Red Badge Scheme for City residents and permanent City workers. This includes making decisions on who is eligible for a badge, carrying out residency and identity checks, and dealing with applications and telephone enquiries from applicants for both schemes.
6. A survey of Red Badge holders was carried to:
 - Explore perceptions of the amount of disabled parking in the City of London
 - Identify barriers to disabled people parking in the City, including but not limited to availability of spaces, and potential solutions for removing / reducing these.

- Gather insight around the impact of other travel modes and issues on disabled people.
- Capture participants' ideas for any further actions to improve parking in the City of London, which may include action in relation to specific bays.
- Gather insight around the impacts on disabled people of being able to / not being able to park in a suitable location for an end destination in the City.

The results of the survey are summarised below and provided in full in Appendix 1.

7. Red Badges are valid for one year and as of July 2023, when this survey was undertaken' there were 154 Red Badges on issue.

Red Badge holder survey methodology

8. The survey was developed with the support of Transport for All, a “disabled-led group breaking down barriers and transforming the transport system so disabled people can make the journeys we want, with freedom, dignity, ease and confidence”. Transport for All gave feedback on questions, ensured language was inclusive, and advised on the survey distribution to ensure it reached as wide an audience as possible.
9. The survey was circulated to 154 Red Badge holders in July 2023 who were given six weeks to respond. The survey was made available in a range of formats to encourage participation including:
 - An online Microsoft Form survey
 - A paper survey posted to each Red Badge holders registered address, with a prepaid return envelope
 - an option to complete the survey via telephone
10. Posters were displayed in the Barbican, Shoe Lane and Artizan Libraries to help remind badge holders to respond to the survey, where to obtain one if they did not receive it, and who to contact if they preferred to have help filling it.
11. The survey asked ten questions using both open text and closed questions, collecting both quantitative and qualitative data from respondents. Analysis of all qualitative data received through responses to open text questions were processed using an open text coding analysis method called Response Coding. For this purpose, a code is a word or short phrase that describes something that is characterised in the data. The code captures the meaning or the aspects that are relevant to the question within that data segment. Open coding adopts an inductive approach, requiring officers to examine the data with as few preconceived notions as possible.

Red Badge holder survey key findings

12. The City Corporation received 54 completed Surveys representing a 35% response rate. 19 surveys were completed online and 35 were returned via post as paper copies.

13. Of the 54 respondents, 29 were City workers (54%), 21 were City residents (39%), three were both a City resident and a City worker (6%), and one respondent did not provide a response.

Respondents use their badges frequently

14. All respondents completed this question and when asked how frequently respondents make trips that require them to park in the City, 87% said they do so at least once a week, with 50% saying they do so at least once a day, suggesting that respondents use their Red Badges frequently. Very few respondents (14%) indicated they make trips fortnightly or less.

15. Usage of parking facilities included:

- On-Street Parking: The most popular option, used by 93% of respondents.
- Pay and Display: Used by 65% of respondents.
- Single Yellow Lines: Used by 33% of respondents.
- Disabled bays in car parks: Used by 24%
- Residential parking: Used by 22%,
- Workplace parking: Used by 11%

Parking is generally available when needed

16. All respondents completed this question, and it showed that Red Badge holders felt parking availability was:

- High: 52% of the respondents reported that they could always or nearly always find a place to park where they needed to.
- Moderate: 41% of respondents could sometimes find a parking space
- Low: Only 6% said they rarely could.

A majority are satisfied with parking provision

17. Satisfaction with parking provision:

- Satisfied: 61% of respondents were satisfied or very satisfied with the amount of Red Badge parking available in the City.
- Neutral: 19% were neutral,
- Dissatisfied: 21% were dissatisfied or very dissatisfied.

Respondents face a number of barriers

18. 45 out of 54 respondents completed this question.

19. Nine respondents did not leave a response and five respondents noted they did not have barriers to parking in the City of London. Having no barriers to parking was the fifth highest response.

20. The main barriers to parking in the City:

- Lack of disabled parking bays: Identified as the main issue by majority of respondents.
- Misuse of bays: Disabled bays occupied by non-badge holders were a significant barrier.
- Yellow Line time restrictions: The 30-minute parking limit on yellow lines was considered too short by many respondents.
- Not being able to park close enough to the respondent's destination.
- Access issues relating to bays: including cycles locked to signs blocking disabled spaces, unlevel surfaces by bays, and difficulty locating bays were also cited as barriers.

21. The top three suggestions to improve parking in the City of London given by respondents were:

- Increase the number of disabled parking bays, especially near points of interest.
- Increase education and enforcement of bays to prevent non-badge holders from using disabled bays.
- Extend time limits on single yellow lines to allow Red Badge holders more time to complete their tasks.

22. Respondents left 39 locations related comments, where they felt additional bays or changes were needed to improve their experience of parking in the City. In total 30 individual locations were cited, with the following locations mentioned more than twice:

- Cheapside/One New Change was recorded five times
- St Bartholomews Hospital/EC1A 7BE was recorded three times
- Bank/Bank of England was recorded four times

23. Other notable comments received from Red Badge holders included requests for:

- further accessibility improvements across the City, such as safer and more accessible pavements.
- give more consideration to disabled drivers affected by road closures and construction.
- improve wayfinding.
- review of the Red Badge application process and criteria, including considering bi-annual or tri-annual Red Badge renewals. One

respondent expressed concern that changes in their working hours could affect their eligibility for a Red Badge.

Other modes of transport respondents use

24. Walking or wheeling was the most common alternative to driving, with 11 respondents noting its use. Eight of these highlighted negative sentiments, citing challenging street environments like cobblestones and steep slopes, long distances from stations.
25. Taxis were the second most common mode and experiences were mixed; some praised the accessibility of taxis, while others mentioned high costs, wayfinding difficulties, and unpredictable journey times.
26. Six respondents used the Underground or rail, mostly expressing negative sentiments about cost, inaccessibility, and overcrowding. Six respondents also used buses, generally reporting negative experiences due to overcrowding, unsafe driving practices, and unpredictable journey times, although two had positive experiences. Six people stated they do not or cannot use other transport modes, often for health reasons.
27. Three respondents used mobility scooters but faced issues with kerbs and wayfinding. Four respondents did not specify a mode of transport but mentioned difficulties with wayfinding, cyclists travelling too fast, and road closures or restrictions.

Administration of Red Badges

28. When asked about their understanding of Red Badge holder concessions, 93% of respondents were aware that they had free parking at on-street payment parking bays and disabled bays and free parking on a single yellow line for a period of 30 minutes. This supports that the Red Badge scheme is being well used, and suggests it is being effectively communicated to Badge holders.
29. Furthermore, three respondents praised the Red Badge Administration Team for their helpfulness and excellent service, with comments highlighting their politeness and prompt assistance.
30. Another three respondents emphasized the usefulness of the Red Badge Scheme, expressing gratitude for its continuation.

Next Steps

31. As part of the City Corporation's commitment to improving parking for Red Badge holders and ensuring people have equal opportunities to enrich their lives and

reach their full potential the following recommendations have been put forward for further investigation as part of the Disabled Parking Review:

1. Notify Red Badge holders of the outcomes of the Survey.

Contact all Red Badge holders who took part to thank them for their input, circulate the results of the Survey and notify them that the findings and actions into the wider Disabled Parking Review, which forms part of the wider Kerbside Review 2024/25.

2. Review the report findings against parking occupancy data

Feedback indicates general satisfaction with parking availability but highlights a lack of disabled parking bays as the biggest barrier Red Badge holders face. Further investigation and review of occupancy data to identify overutilised bays and areas needing more bays, particularly for streets with only one disabled bay.

Conduct a Red Badge Parking distribution mapping exercise to identify areas with limited disabled parking. Explore the feasibility of providing additional disabled to address any gaps in provision.

3. Improve education and enforcement to reduce misuse of Red Badge holder parking

Proactively enforce against vehicles illegally parked in disabled bays to reduce misuse of disabled bays by non-disabled users. Consider the use of behaviour change and educational campaigns to remind people not to park in disabled bays or park in a way that can cause obstruction.

Provide Red Badge holders with phone number and email address to report non-badge holders in bays, or other issues, directly to our enforcement service who can despatch rapid response officers.

4. Extend permitted parking time on yellow lines for Red Badge holders

Explore extending the parking time limit on yellow lines for Red Badge holders to allow more time for tasks such as shopping or appointments, alleviating the pressure of short time limits.

5. Audit existing disabled parking spaces to remove accessibility barriers

Audit disabled parking spaces to ensure high standards of accessibility and to prevent occupancy by non-badge holders. This will help remove barriers identified by respondents.

6. Review Red Badge eligibility criteria and administration

Review and update the Red Badge eligibility criteria to reflect post-COVID-19 flexible working patterns. Consider bi-annual renewals to reduce administrative

burdens. Ensure the policy aligns with the Corporate Plan to support workplace equality and a thriving economy.

7. Continue to champion inclusive streets and improve the accessibility of our street and transport connections

Continue improving accessibility through the Transport Strategy by keeping pavements obstruction-free, encouraging safer cycling behaviours, engaging the community in decision-making, and work with Transport for London to enhance accessibility in Underground and DLR stations.

Corporate & Strategic Implications

32. Having a robust Red Badge scheme is integral to ensuring we have a vibrant, thriving destination where everyone prospers. This supports the delivery of Corporate Plan Outcome: Vibrant thriving destination.

33. The Red Badge scheme is integral to ensuring our residents and workers, can feel that they belong. Engaging with our Red Badge holders will help build diverse, engaged communities that are involved in co-creating great services, which supports the delivery of Corporate Plan Outcome: Diverse engaged communities.

Legal implications

34. None identified at present.

Financial implications

35. None identified at present.

Equality Implications

36. A detailed Test of Relevance was conducted ahead of the Survey development and did not highlight any significant issues. Transport for All were appointed to assist with the development of the Survey to ensure we had a disabled-led group advice.

37. Any outcomes resulting from the recommendations will need further Equalities Impact Assessment analysis.

Risk implications

38. There is a possible reputational risk to the City Corporation if the accessibility of our streets is not carefully considered. It is imperative that we work towards an inclusive accessible City where everyone can navigate their surroundings independently and safely.

Climate implications

39. None identified at present.

Conclusion

40. These findings suggest that while a significant portion of Red Badge holders are satisfied and able to find parking in the City of London, there remains a number who experience difficulties locating parking.

41. Further work will need to be done as part of the Disabled Parking Review to better understand the occupancy rates, the distribution of Red Badge holder parking in the City, and the effects of implementing the recommended changes to single yellow line restrictions and the Red Badge Eligibility Criteria.

42. Red Badge holders that took part in the survey will need to be notified of the results and thanked for their input.

Appendix

- **Red Badge Holder Survey**

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