

Community Helps Extend Residents Parking Scheme



Coventry Community Empowerment Network -
The Key To Our Success

Before Coventry's new Ricoh Arena was built, local residents were promised that the parking problems which had existed around the old Highfield Road Stadium would not be imported into residential areas around the new arena. Community Representatives helped ensure the promise was kept by successfully negotiating an extension to the residents' parking scheme in Holbrooks. June Jeffrey, Chair of Holbrooks Ricoh Arena Residents Association (HRARA) explains how they achieved their success.

Holbrook Ward is on the doorstep of the Ricoh Arena, new home of Coventry City Football Club. A Government requirement for granting of planning permission for the development was that public transport options should be available to and from the facility, to encourage 75 per cent of visitors to travel by means other than the private car. Therefore the number of on-site parking spaces was limited to 2000.

To ensure this requirement is met, a Green Travel Plan (another planning condition) is operated for events of over 10,000 attendees by Arena Coventry Ltd (ACL), the company which runs the Ricoh Arena. An integral part of the Green Travel Plan is a protective residents-only parking scheme that helps preserve quality of life for the inhabitants of the long established residential communities next to which the development was placed.

Valuing local knowledge

Arena Coventry Ltd. played a key part in enabling residents to input their local knowledge into the Green Travel Plan at its development stage, both by working with community representatives, and organising public consultation meetings in January 2005. These gave residents the opportunity to comment on the draft proposals and positively influence the final outcome. The opportunity to input local knowledge into the development of the Green Travel Plan and the residents' parking scheme has greatly contributed to its success, and to the preservation of the status quo in relation to parking issues on event days.

Giving Evidence

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Background - Ricoh Arena

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Monitoring developments

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Protective Parking scheme

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Keys to success

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The Ricoh Arena and the adjoining retail park is one of the largest regeneration projects in Coventry. Its location next to long established residential areas will inevitably bring changes. It is therefore essential that the benefits achieved are monitored and evaluated so they are preserved and continue to work as effectively for the future. To ensure this happens a Monitoring Group has been established which includes Community Representatives, Arena Coventry Ltd., Coventry City Council, Warwickshire County Council, Warwickshire and West Midlands Police, Coventry City Football Club, Sky Blue Supporters Trust, and Transport Operators.

The key to the success achieved so far in positively influencing the development of the residents' parking scheme is partnership working. This will continue, to ensure that the benefits from the Ricoh Arena development are fully realised, both in terms of the regeneration it is bringing to the area and the access to first class facilities for local communities and the rest of the city.

Protective Parking scheme

The Ricoh Arena's parking scheme extends to 1.3 miles (2.2 km) and includes over 12,000 households. The scheme helps to preserve quality of life for the inhabitants of the long established communities next to the development.

Keys to success

- Inputting local knowledge to the parking scheme
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HRARA

PO Box 4113, Coventry, CV6 9AZ

Community Empowerment Network

T: 024 7622 0381

E: covcen@coventry-vsc.org.uk

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Community Helps Extend Residents Parking Scheme



Coventry Community Empowerment Network -
The Key To Our Success

Before Coventry's new Ricoh Arena was built, local residents were promised that the parking problems which had existed around the old Highfield Road Stadium would not be imported into residential areas around the new arena. Community Representatives helped ensure the promise was kept by successfully negotiating an extension to the residents' parking scheme in Holbrooks. June Jeffrey, Chair of Holbrooks Ricoh Arena Residents Association (HRARA) explains how they achieved their success.

Holbrook Ward is on the doorstep of the Ricoh Arena, new home of Coventry City Football Club. A Government requirement for granting of planning permission for the development was that public transport options should be available to and from the facility, to encourage 75 per cent of visitors to travel by means other than the private car. Therefore the number of on-site parking spaces was limited to 2000.

To ensure this requirement is met, a Green Travel Plan (another planning condition) is operated for events of over 10,000 attendees by Arena Coventry Ltd (ACL), the company which runs the Ricoh Arena. An integral part of the Green Travel Plan is a protective residents-only parking scheme that helps preserve quality of life for the inhabitants of the long established residential communities next to which the development was placed.

Valuing local knowledge

Arena Coventry Ltd. played a key part in enabling residents to input their local knowledge into the Green Travel Plan at its development stage, both by working with community representatives, and organising public consultation meetings in January 2005. These gave residents the opportunity to comment on the draft proposals and positively influence the final outcome. The opportunity to input local knowledge into the development of the Green Travel Plan and the residents' parking scheme has greatly contributed to its success, and to the preservation of the status quo in relation to parking issues on event days.

Giving Evidence

Holbrooks community representatives, working in partnership with Arena Coventry Ltd., Coventry City Council and the Federation of Stadium Communities, helped ensure parking problems were not brought to the area by successfully proposing that an



June Jeffrey

Background - Ricoh Arena

In addition to the state of the art 32,000 seater football stadium, the complex includes conferencing facilities, exhibition halls (which can also be used for indoor concerts seating up to 8,000 people), a health and fitness centre, a dedicated community space, restaurants, and a casino. The adjoining retail park is said to include the biggest Tesco Extra in the country. When fully completed the Ricoh will be a twenty-four seven, 365-days a year facility.

A Coventry Community Empowerment Briefing

additional part of Holbrooks be included in the residents' parking scheme, in accordance with residents' wishes.

This was achieved by writing a report providing evidence of why it was essential to extend the proposed area to preserve residents' quality of life and the through flow of traffic (so that emergency vehicles can access properties in residential areas). To help provide this evidence, community representatives undertook a number of walks from areas of Holbrooks to the Ricoh Arena which were timed and measured. This information was then included in a table summarising the information obtained from the walks. The table was incorporated in the report together with a map showing the walk routes taken to and from the Ricoh.

The report was then presented as a formal proposal to Coventry City Council for consideration. The author of the report was invited to attend and speak in support of their proposal at the meeting of the council committee considering the extent of the final scheme to be implemented. Following this, the formal proposal was accepted and the extended area requested for Holbrooks was agreed.

The residents' parking scheme now in place is considered the most important mechanism necessary to protect residents' quality of life on event days. It has been extremely effective and will be needed even more as Coventry City Football Club pursues a return to the Premiership, Isle of Capri's Casino opens and more concerts are planned.

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