

THURROCK DIVERSITY NETWORK LIMITED



Thurrock Diversity Network Limited

The Beehive, West Street, Grays, Essex. RM17 6XP

Submission to the Disabled Motoring UK Blue Badge “Baywatch” Campaign 2019

About Thurrock Diversity Network

[Thurrock Diversity Network Limited](#) is a local Community Benefit Society registered under the Co-operative and Community Benefit Societies Act 2014 and is a founding member of [Thurrock Coalition – the User-Led Organisation for Thurrock](#).

We work alongside disabled adult residents of Thurrock, focussing upon equality, independent living & inclusive communities.

Thurrock Diversity Network Limited works to promote the physical, emotional, mental well-being of the community, especially those who participate in the activities of the Society, and shall support, foster and promote the principles and practice of common ownership and co-operation in its own affairs and in society generally.

Thurrock Diversity Network Limited campaigns through User-Led consultation and co-production initiatives to shape & influence local and national policies and strategies affecting disabled people of all impairment types.

About Disabled Motoring UK (“DMUK”)

DMUK works with government and businesses across the UK in order to improve parking, refuelling, and access provision for disabled people, so that they can access the goods and services that they need.

About the Blue Badge “Baywatch” Campaign 2019

DMUK is asking as many people as possible to survey their local supermarket car park to investigate levels of disabled parking abuse. Every response received puts DMUK another step forward in stamping out disabled parking abuse at supermarkets for good!

The spending power of disabled people and their families in the UK is £249 billion and supermarkets lose £501 million every month by not being accessible.¹

The car park is the first port of call when a customer arrives at a supermarket and if the car park isn't accessible because the disabled parking bays aren't enforced properly disabled customers will leave and shop elsewhere. 75% of disabled people and their families have walked away from a UK business because of poor accessibility or customer service. *

It's really important that DMUK obtains good data on the levels of disabled parking abuse at supermarkets around the country so we can prove to UK supermarkets that the lack of disabled bay enforcement is a barrier to their disabled customers. The charity can only achieve this with public participation.

Specifically, the survey questions ask participants to count how many disabled bays are provided and how many cars that are parked in them without displaying a Blue Badge. The other information the survey asks is details of the type of enforcement (if any) carried out by the parking operator responsible for the car park. Details of the operator and enforcement actions should be displayed on the signage near the disabled bays.

The survey closes at the end of June 2019 and the results are calculated, published and shared with the supermarkets to encourage them to work with the charity to improve their parking policies with regard to tackling disabled bay abuse by using effective enforcement. The Baywatch Campaign also aims to **change public attitudes** by bringing to the attention of disabled bay abusers the impact that their actions can have.

How Thurrock Diversity Network participated and contributed to the DMUK Blue Badge Baywatch campaign

One of the TDN Committee Members highlighted the importance of Blue Badge Parking, availability and enforcement at the May 2019 meeting of Thurrock Diversity Network Limited (TDN), at which Officers from the Local Authority Blue Badge Team gave a presentation on the system, rules and procedures and answered questions on the Blue Badge Scheme.

The presentation included information about upcoming changes and broadening of eligibility criteria for individuals with hidden impairments, including mental health conditions, such as anxiety and depression. As DMUK highlights:

[Once] the changes to the eligibility criteria for the Blue Badge come into effect on 30th August 2019 there is likely to be an increase in Blue Badge holders and therefore an increase in demand for Blue

¹ See: Disability Facts & Figures – Available at: <https://www.scope.org.uk/media/disability-facts-figures/>. Last accessed on 27/6/19 at 1:00pm

Badge parking. It is now more important than ever that disabled bays are enforced properly and effectively to ensure that only genuine Blue Badge holders are using them. If supermarkets do not act now we could see sad and tragic incidents arising from the frustration Blue Badge holders have because disabled bays are not properly enforced.

The decision was taken for a number of TDN members to participate in gathering and submitting information as part of the Blue Badge “Baywatch” campaign locally.

Details of the information gathered by TDN

- 5 members of TDN took part in the campaign
- This involved visits to 5 individual sites across Thurrock, including the “Big 4” supermarket chains –
 - Tesco Extra, Lakeside
 - Sainsbury’s, Chafford Hundred
 - Asda Tilbury
 - Morrison’s, Grays
 - Morrison’s, Corringham
- General quantitative information was gathered under the following headings:
 - Name and address of supermarket
 - Date and time of visit
 - Number of accessible (Blue Badge) bays provided
 - Number of vehicles occupying these bays without displaying a Blue Badge
 - Number of vacant Blue Badge spaces
 - Whether there is signage or information detailing if/how enforcement of the Blue Badge bays takes place
 - The name of the parking operator (where relevant)
- TDN members carried out the site visits and information gathering between the 24th and the 27th June 2019 at peak times – either 9am or 5pm respectively. The results were submitted to DMUK via an online survey. The collated information appears in the Appendix to this report.

Conclusion

It is hoped that by contributing to this campaign, TDN is able to draw attention to the various barriers and issues facing Disabled people when trying to access supermarket car parks locally in order to do their everyday grocery shopping, and that the information gathered helps to raise awareness and generates subsequent action of supermarkets to take the needs of their Disabled customers seriously. We look forward to reading and analysing the overall national results of the campaign, as soon as they are made available.

Thurrock Diversity Network – June 2019

Appendix - The collated information gathered by TDN appears below:

Name and address of supermarket	Date & time of visit	# of accessible (Blue Badge) bays provided	# of vehicles occupying these bays without displaying a Blue Badge	# of vacant Blue Badge spaces	Signage or information detailing if/how enforcement of the Blue Badge bays takes place (Yes/No)	The name of the parking operator (where relevant)
Sainsbury's, Howard Road, Chafford Hundred RM16 6YJ	24/6/19 @5:00pm	30	2	24	Yes	Horizon Parking
Asda, Thurrock Park Way, Tilbury RM18 7HJ	25/6/19 @9:30am	40	0	29	Yes	Parking Eye
Morrison's, 27 St. John's Way, Corringham SS17 7NA	26/6/19 @9:00am	8	0	5	Yes	C.P. Plus (020 7431 4001)
Morrison's, 1 London Road, Grays RM17 5XZ	27/6/19 @9:00am	25	0	12	Yes	Euro Car Parks
Tesco Extra, Cygnet View, Grays RM20 1TX	27/6/19 @9:00am	52	4	39	Yes	Horizon Parking