



The Trailblazer Group

- Rukhsar Asgher, project manager, Alpha Parking
- Paul Bowman, parking services manager, Coventry City Council
- Deborah Cooper, group organisational development director, Marston Holdings (for NSL)
- Lorna Day, parking manager, Kent County Council
- Andrew Dunn, parking manager, Bath & North East Somerset Council
- John Dunne, national business manager, Kingdom Security
- Melanie Gadd, head of environmental services and contract management, London Borough of Hounslow
- Chris Hooper, learning & development business partner, Indigo
- Glen Horton, head of HR, APCOA Parking
- Kam Hothi, parking enforcement manager, Slough Borough Council
- James Kyle, parking manager, Whitehaven Docks
- Sara O'Toole, HR manager, APCOA Parking
- Jozef Pasieczak, West London Alliance (WLA) back office team leader, Serco
- Melissa Payne, parking appeals supervisor, Slough Borough Council
- Owen Salked, parking enforcement operations manager, London Borough of Hackney
- Penny Winder, director, Alpha Parking
- Tim Winder, director, Alpha Parking

Mapping apprenticeships to build parking people's skills

A Parking Trailblazer Group is developing both front line and back office apprenticeships

Apprenticeships for the parking industry are being developed by a group of organisations in the sector who are liaising with the Institute of Apprentices. The Parking Apprenticeships are being created within the context of a new government approach that sees large organisations having to pay 0.05% of their annual salary costs into an Apprenticeship Levy since 1 April 2017.

Organisations that will be contributing to the Apprenticeship Levy include private companies, such as private car park operations, and public bodies including local authorities and their contractors. Organisations paying the levy are being incentivised to support apprenticeships by being allowed to reclaim costs against it for each apprentice they take on within an approved framework.

The government requires a "Trailblazer Group" to lead the development of any new apprenticeship. The group must consist of a minimum of 10 employer organisations from across the industry and all the members must be organisations likely to employ the proposed apprentices.

Alpha Parking, which is facilitating the development of the Parking Apprenticeship and co-chairing the Parking Trailblazer Group, arranged an initial meeting of parking employers at the Royal Society in central London. Twelve organisations have expressed an interest in contributing as members of the Trailblazer Group, and ten were able to attend the meeting (see panel).

The meeting's objectives were to: explain the 9-12 month development process; discuss and agree benefits to the industry of implementing Parking Apprenticeships; and agree the next steps.

The group agreed that there is a wide range of benefits to the parking industry in implementing Parking Apprenticeships, including: encouraging the growth of parking skills; developing professionalism; and improving staff retention.

For the parking sector, two apprenticeships are being developed by the Trailblazer Group. The apprenticeships are:

Enforcement Officers: public and private parking enforcement and environmental enforcement

Notice Processing: public and private parking operations

Having agreed to move forward, the group heard that are three stages to be completed within the next 12 months in order to implement apprenticeships: The three stages are:

- Expression of Interest
- Apprenticeship Standards
- End Point Assessment Plan.

The Trailblazer Group submits a document at completion of each stage, and each submission is assessed and must be agreed and signed off by the Institute of Apprentices (IoA), a new body set up by the Department of Education to support and quality assess the development, funding and operation of all new apprenticeships. The IoA is employer led with approximately 80 staff split between Coventry and London. The IoA has agreed that the parking industry has potential for apprenticeship development and have allo-

cated a specific and experienced account manager to assist the Parking Trailblazer Group over the next 12 months.

Deborah Cooper, group organisational development director, Marston Holdings, and Penny Winder, director of Alpha Parking, have been appointed as co-chairs of the Trailblazer Group. Alpha Parking will facilitate the process with Rukhsar Asgher as project manager.

"Attendees at the meeting found it informative and positive and are committed to the development going forward," says Penny Winder. "Alpha sees this as a positive next step in developing skills and professionalism within the parking industry and we are committed to assisting the development process."

Deborah Cooper adds: "The development of these apprenticeships is an important step for all involved in the parking industry. Such apprenticeships will have a positive impact on our profession. Having the ability to lead on the design and eventual delivery of these pioneering programmes is significantly important. Apprenticeships provide employers with an important tool for the development of both technical and soft skills of their staff."

