



Frequently Asked Questions about Parklets

Do you have a question about parklets in Camden? Your question may be answered below. If not, please feel free to email Camden Council at safetravel@camden.gov.uk

What is a parklet?

In simple terms, a parklet is *"the repurposing of a parking or loading space, to create a shared space for people"*. They can be used for a variety of functions, but usually for seating and greenery: a place to sit, talk and relax. They are open and free for anyone to use.

Who can sit and use a parklet?

Anyone can use the parklet who wishes to enjoy the location, whilst respecting the local neighbourhood and other users of the parklet. You do not have to buy food or drink from any particular business nearby to be able to use a parklet.

Who 'owns' the parklet?

The Sponsor of a parklet 'owns' the parklet. The parklet Sponsor is the group or organisation that proposed the parklet and has received permission for it to be installed in the street. Whilst the Council allows the structure to be placed in the highway (after all the necessary safety checks are done), the Council does not usually own the parklet.

However, if the Council proposes and pays for the construction of a parklet, then it will also be the parklet Sponsor. This might happen as part of a Council-led transport scheme or street greening initiative.

How long will a parklet exist?

A parklet is an 'impermanent structure' – in other words it might be temporary (12-18 months) or if successful, the parklet could continue to exist for a few years or more. The parklet would then be removed if the Sponsor no longer wishes to maintain the parklet, or the Council wishes to make other changes the street.

Are parklets safe to be installed on the street?

Camden officers carry out a detailed assessment of the design and suitability for each parklet proposal, bearing in mind its proposed location. This is to ensure that design of each parklet responds to the street environment around it including the speed and volume of traffic. An independent Road Safety Audit is also carried out on each proposal, prior to any consultation.



How are parklets legally allowed to be installed on the street?

Each parklet has an initial ‘trial period’ of 12-18 months, during which the previous use of the space (e.g. parking or loading) is suspended. The legal mechanism for this will depend on the circumstance of the parklet. An individual parklet might be created using a simple parking suspension, whilst a bigger scheme might use an Experimental Traffic Order (ETO) to change the parking and other aspects of the street.

During the trial period, the use of the parklet and its upkeep will be monitored to inform the Councils decision on whether to allow the parklet to remain in position at the end of the trial period, or sooner if deemed necessary.

Who maintains and cleans the parklet?

The parklet Caretaker looks after the parklet on a day-to-day basis. Sometimes the parklet Sponsor and Caretaker will be the same group of people (e.g. a Residents Group), or they may be different – a local organisation (parklet Sponsor) might team up with a nearby café (parklet Caretaker) to look after the parklet, and carry out day-to-day clean ups, watering plants etc.

The Council will not clean the parklet itself, (unless the Council is also the parklet Sponsor). However, the Council will continue to carry out normal street cleaning around the parklet, as previously.

Who repairs the parklet?

The parklet Sponsor is responsible for making sure the parklet is kept in good condition and is safe and comfortable for all users, e.g. fixing a broken seat or replacing dead plants. The parklet Sponsor will need to ensure repairs are completed promptly, and to a good standard.

What happens if the parklet is not well maintained or isn’t cleaned regularly?

Before a parklet is installed, the parklet Sponsor will have signed an agreement, or *Memorandum of Understanding* (MOU) with the Council. This MOU will contain details of the agreement to maintain and repair the parklet throughout the year and day-by-day. If the parklet Sponsor fails to keep this agreement, the Council is able to enforce the removal of the parklet within a specified number of days.

If the parklet is broken or unclean, how do people complain?

Each parklet will display a sign indicating who the parklet Sponsor and/or Caretaker is. This sign will also contain contact details for them, to make it easy for people to reach out to them if there is a problem. If the concern is not addressed, residents can contact the Council to complain. The Council will then investigate the situation and decide a course of action.



What happens if someone is hurt when using the parklet, or crashes into it?

The parklet Sponsor and Council will be informed of the incident and the Council will carry out an investigation. The parklet Sponsor must have public liability of £5million, in case they are found to be responsible for the injury occurring due to neglect or lack of maintenance of the parklet.

If a person is injured by crashing into the parklet while travelling along the road, the Council will investigate the incident. This is the same process as would be carried out if someone crashed into a parked car or any other part of the street.

How is a parklet different from 'streatery'?

A streatery may look very similar to a parklet on the street, but a streatery is a licensed area for use by a particular nearby business (café / restaurant / pub). The use of a streatery is prioritised for customers. In a parklet, there is no need to buy any product or service – anyone can use it, and eat their own food or drink. A welcome sign on the structure will tell you if it is a parklet open to all.