

Campaigners want to stop 'carspreading' in cities

4th September 2025



The Clean Cities Campaign (CCC) group in the UK wants to stop "carspreading". It says: "Carspreading is when cars get too wide for urban spaces, causing congestion, increased risk of accidents, and more fuel consumption." The CCC is

targeting large cars like SUVs - sport utility vehicles - which are increasing in number. The Sky News website says there are 10 times more large cars in the UK now than 20 years ago. The CCC wants higher parking fees for SUVs. It wrote: "Bigger cars take up a lot more space, but the cost of parking has stayed the same." The group wants to follow Paris, which tripled parking costs for SUVs, from €6 (\$7) to €18 (\$21) an hour. This has reduced the number of SUVs in Paris.

The CCC explained why it wants SUV drivers to pay more for parking, saying: "Drivers are struggling to park because of 'carspreading', while people walking and cycling are more at risk." The CCC said: "More than half of new cars in the UK are too wide for urban parking spaces, leaving our cities crowded and congested. As cars get bigger, so do the risks. People hit by larger cars when walking or cycling are far less likely to survive." It added: "SUVs burn around 20 per cent more fuel...and require more...battery minerals. Not everyone agrees with the CCC. The Alliance of British Drivers said it was unfair "to make life more expensive and unpleasant for people" who drive SUVs.

Sources: cleancitiescampaign.org / sky.com / theguardian.com

Writing

No one needs to buy an SUV. Discuss.

Chat

Talk about these words from the article.

cities / campaign / carspreading / urban spaces / fuel consumption / SUVs / Paris / SUV drivers / parking / cycling / congestion / survive / battery / minerals / unpleasant

True / False

- 1) The Clean Cities Campaign wants to stop all cars from spreading. T / F
- 2) There is an increased risk of accidents with SUVs. T / F
- 3) The number of large cars is 10 times greater now than 20 years ago. T / F
- 4) Paris doubled parking fees for SUVs. T / F
- 5) Cyclists are more at danger from smaller cars than from SUVs. T / F
- 6) More than half of new cars in the UK are too wide parking spaces. T / F
- 7) SUVs use up to 50% more fuel than other cars. T / F
- 8) The Alliance of British Drivers said banning SUVs was fair. T / F

Synonym Match

(The words in **bold** are from the news article.)

- | | |
|-----------------------|----------------|
| 1. caused | a. fighting |
| 2. targeting | b. built-up |
| 3. fees | c. unjust |
| 4. urban | d. cut |
| 5. reduced | e. probable |
| 6. struggling | f. horrible |
| 7. likely | g. charges |
| 8. require | h. created |
| 9. unfair | i. need |
| 10. unpleasant | j. picking out |

Discussion – Student A

- a) What do you think about what you read?
- b) What are the benefits of SUVs in a city?
- c) What do you think of parking fees?
- d) What can cities do about solving parking problems?
- e) Should people be able to drive whatever they want?
- f) What did you read that you disagree with?
- g) What's your favourite car?
- h) What questions would you like to ask the CCC?

Phrase Match

1. increased risk
2. fuel
3. there are 10 times
4. Bigger cars take
5. This has reduced the number
6. Drivers are struggling
7. people walking and cycling are more
8. As cars get bigger,
9. Not everyone agrees
10. make life more expensive and unpleasant

- a. to park
- b. up a lot more space
- c. with the CCC
- d. at risk
- e. more large cars in the UK
- f. so do the risks
- g. of accidents
- h. of SUVs in Paris
- i. for people who drive
- j. consumption

Discussion – Student B

- a) What do you think of cars spreading?
- b) What is parking like in your town?
- c) What do you think of SUVs?
- d) Why do people need an SUV in a city?
- e) Should we all be driving smaller cars?
- f) Should larger cars pay more for parking?
- g) Should people who are single not be allowed to buy an SUV?
- h) What advice do you have for an SUV owner?

Spelling

1. too wide for ruab spaces
2. causing oseinotnccg
3. increased risk of nctsecaid
4. SUVs - sport utility ecelsivh
5. itdlerp parking costs for SUVs
6. This has ercuedd the number
7. Drivers are nsirtggulg to park
8. As cars get bigger, so do the sikrs
9. far less likely to vseiruv
10. iurqere more battery minerals
11. Not everyone eeargs with the CCC
12. expensive and ueasnatpln

Comprehension Questions

Listen to / read the news article. Answer these questions.
(Answers are on p. 27 of the 27-page PDF.)

1.	What does the abbreviation CCC mean?
2.	What is there an increased risk of with SUVs on the road?
3.	How many more SUVs are on UK roads than there were 20 years ago?
4.	By how much did Paris put up the parking fees for SUVs?
5.	What happened after Paris put up the parking charges for SUVs?
6.	What are drivers struggling to do because of the number of SUVs?
7.	Who are more at risk because of SUVs?
8.	How much more fuel do SUVs consume?
9.	Why do SUVs require more minerals than other cars?
10.	What did the Alliance of British Drivers think of higher SUV parking fees?

Speaking – SUVs

Rank these with your partner. Put the worst things about SUVs at the top. Change partners often and share your rankings.

- Fuel consumption
- Price
- Danger to pedestrians
- Pollution
- Just a status symbol
- Rollover risk
- Higher insurance
- Parking space

