

FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

POLICY FOR RESIDENT PARKING SCHEMES

1.0 Background

1.1 The main purpose of the highway is for traffic movement and there is no inherent right for any vehicle to park on a public highway. Parking is accepted where it does not impact upon the movement of traffic, create a safety hazard, obstruct emergency vehicle access or access to properties.

1.2 In other areas parking on the highway is controlled by restrictions introduced by Traffic Regulation Orders after the completion of formal statutory procedures and the resolution of public objections in consultation and subject to Member approval.

These restrictions can take different forms:-

- * double yellow lines prohibiting all parking, introduced specifically for highway safety needs and generally containing exceptions for loading/unloading and disabled badge holders (Providing that these vehicles do not create an obstruction).

- * Single yellow lines restricting parking to specific periods (usually associated with highway operational needs) and containing the same objections.

- * designated parking areas, identified where vehicles can be parked and under what conditions (e.g. time limited and/or pay on street parking) These ration on-street parking in cases where the demand exceeds the supply. It can also cover residential permit parking where residents' parking is prioritised over other highway users.

1.3 Resident Parking Schemes, also introduced by means of a Traffic Regulation Order, provide an alternative mechanism for managing parking demands, in situations where it is not reasonable to manage parking problems through conventional parking restrictions and to make town centres and fringe areas more attractive.

1.4 This policy sets out the principles for the establishment of Residents Parking Schemes. However the issue as a whole can be very complex, with many individual circumstances that can be difficult to address within a prescriptive policy and a degree of interpretation for specific schemes is therefore desirable and inevitable.

2.0 Advantages and Disadvantages of Residents of Parking Schemes

2.1 Whilst there are immediate and obvious attractions for implementing residents' parking schemes there are both advantages and disadvantages:-

Advantages

- * Discourage commuter/shopper/business parking in residential streets.
- * Enhanced environment in residential areas.
- * Residents may find their on-street parking to be easier and more convenient.
- * May provide improved parking and traffic management.
- * Can produce road safety benefits.

Disadvantages.

- * Possible knock-on effect of relocated commuter/shopper/business parking.
- * Costs of introduction and management and payment for permits. On these grounds it is recommended that any individual scheme should be self-financing.
- * Permits do not absolutely guarantee a parking space.
- * May only help manage an under supply of spaces and not solve problems.
- * Can lead to inefficient use of on-street parking space.
- * There are risks that a scheme could reduce levels of on-street parking, with problems for visitors and businesses.

3.0 Types of Parking Permit Schemes

3.1 There may be considered, to be broadly three types of location where residents parking schemes may be appropriate:-

3.2 Demand for Parking Exceeds Supply - Exclusive Permit Schemes.

This is the most traditional and common form of scheme, where a street or area is divided into prohibited and permitted parking areas. To park in a permitted area, a vehicle would be required to display a valid permit. The permit categories may vary but usually provide for residents, visitors, health care workers serving residents and other users the Council may consider to be appropriate. This system provides optimum benefit to residents but low levels of residents' parking can lead to an inefficient use of on-street parking provision, in areas where the overall parking supply is limited.

In areas where the demand for on-street spaces from residents alone exceeds the supply, the management and allocation of permits can be problematic. This is particularly so where a scheme results in a reduction in kerbside space

by the formalisation of parking provision, e.g. clearing parking from junctions etc.

3.3 On-Street Parking Control with Relaxation for Residents – Shared Spaces.

This type of scheme is referred to as 'shared space', where there is dual use of on-street space, overcoming the under use, resulting from the under use issues experience in the exclusive permit schemes detailed above. This scheme enables the time-limited use of on street space (which may or may not be charged for) to operate alongside vehicles with residents' permits that would be exempt from either time or charge restrictions. In isolation, these schemes may eliminate the need for the administration of permits for visitors, carers etc. Possible variations to this type of scheme could provide for the provision of exclusive residents parking bays.

3.4 Areas where Parking has Environmental/Safety/Traffic Management Issues

In some instances the management of parking may be desirable for highway management of traffic flow/safety reasons. Whilst this category can include residents' parking as a management feature, it should be noted that more conventional parking restrictions can be as effective, but where these could interfere with residents, schemes to accommodate their needs may be appropriate.

4.0 Criteria for the Consideration of Residents' Parking Schemes

4.1 The main criteria for the justification of a residents' parking scheme is that there is insufficient highway space for the residents of an area to park, as a result of the presence of vehicles arising from visitor, business or commuter parking and/or as a result of existing parking restrictions. Initial principles would be that:-

- * There should be clear evidence of residents support for a scheme in advance of any details of the scheme being prepared.
- * The enforcement associated with all schemes to be undertaken by the Councils Civil Parking Enforcement Officers.
- * Residents' parking schemes would not be introduced where the majority of residents have off-street parking or where there is insufficient on-street space to accommodate both residential and non residential parking.
- * Generally schemes should not be introduced to manage parking in situations where the problem is linked to over demand from residents for on-street spaces.
- * There is a presumption against small isolated areas remote from the principle areas of parking enforcement.

4.2 It is recommended that the following general principles should be adopted to help further define a manageable scheme or to develop an initial scheme:-

- * At least 50% of properties in any proposed area to have no off-street parking.
- * At times when parking problems are caused by non-residents the kerb space occupied by residents should exceed 40% of the total available.
- * There is sufficient kerb space to enable 85% of all households to park at least one vehicle on-street.
- * Schemes should not create unacceptable problems on adjacent roads.
- * The introduction of reserved parking in areas where parking spaces are severely limited shall not affect the commercial viability of the area.

4.3 Any requests that do not meet these criteria should not be considered further unless:-

- * The scheme forms part of a wider integrated traffic/parking management scheme.
- * There are road safety problems.
- * The parking impact from development in residential areas would be adverse.
- * There are schemes being promoted to use alternative facilities such as off-street parking.

5.0 Legal Framework & Management

5.1 The issue of a Parking Permit will at no time absolve the permit holder from parking legally, without due care and without creating an obstruction. The Council will not accept any responsibility for the damage, theft or loss of, or to, any vehicle or its contents whilst parked in a Residents' Parking Zone. When operated under Civil Parking enforcement procedures, vehicles parking in Residents' Parking Zones without displaying a valid permit will be subject to a Penalty Charge Notice, enforced through the Civil Parking processes and powers, and normal approved procedures will be followed.

5.2 Any schemes implemented under the Civil Parking Enforcement processes will be managed by the Councils parking Services and all appropriate management and appeals processes would apply.

5.3 All schemes will be operated in full accordance with the Council's race and equal opportunities policies and in all decisions preceding any scheme implementation, all comments from special needs groups will be assessed.

6.0 Definitions and Permit Details

6.1 In order for schemes to operate satisfactorily and without ambiguity, it is necessary to detail vehicles that would qualify for permits and the type of permits issued.

6.2 Permitted Vehicles

* Permits will only be issued to cars and light goods vehicles with a weight limit of 3.5 tonnes or under. Vehicles that exceed 6 metres in length, 2.44 metres in height or are capable of carrying more than 13 people including the driver will all be excluded from applying for permits.

* Permits will not be issued to motor cycles due to display practicalities, but, wherever possible, motorcycles will be provided a designated parking area where there is a demand. Should this not be possible or if there is insufficient demand motorcycles may park in permit bays without a permit, subject to prior written approval from the Council.

* Individual permits will not be issued for caravans or trailers, although these may be parked within a scheme on a short term basis whilst loading/unloading provided that they are hitched to a vehicle bearing a valid permit.

6.3 Issue of Permits and Associated Definitions.

The holding of a permit will not guarantee a parking space within a zone and where there are separate zones within an area permits will be zone specific. **No scheme will however be designed, unless the likelihood of spaces not being available to permit holders is low.** Although some indication of definitions and requirements for permit eligibility is provided in this document, further considerations may be required for specific designs.

6.4 Permits and Use

* Permits will be issued on a renewable annual basis and be effective for a period of 12 months. The issue and renewal will be by individual request and via appropriate application forms.

* Permits will show the name and title of the issuing Authority, the relevant parking zone, the vehicle registration number and a reference number. Any specialist permits will provide individual details.

* All permits must be displayed on the inside surface of the windscreen so that recorded particulars are clearly visible.

* The council reserves the right to permits in the event of fraudulent or inappropriate use without any reimbursement of costs.

* Where a hire or courtesy car replaces an existing vehicle a Visitor/Temporary Permit may be issued for a limited period.

* A permit will not be required for vehicles carrying out essential duties and statutory powers, including emergency service vehicles whilst attending an emergency, statutory undertakers, postal collection/delivery, council/government business and formal wedding cars and hearses. In addition permits will not be required for vehicles engaged in the loading/unloading of goods or where passengers are boarding or alighting.

6.5 Residents Permits

The following definitions and guidance should be considered as a part of a residents' parking scheme:-

* A resident will be considered as any person who resides at a residence within the defined scheme, for at least four nights a week and should be registered in the Council Tax records.

* A residence will be defined as a domestic property listed under the Council Tax definitions.

* Specific notes should be made of Houses of Multiple Occupancy, where a house has been converted into a number of separate flats or apartments, at the time of the introduction of the scheme, each of which meets the formal classification of a residence, then each would be eligible to apply for both residents' and visitors permits (as applicable) and as allowed under the policy, or applicable to the individual scheme. However where one house has been converted to contain a number of habitable rooms, remaining as one property, it will be treated as a single residence.

* The number of Residents' Permits available to one property will be specific to the scheme, to allow some flexibility in interpretation.

*The following guidelines will be adopted to underpin permit provision:-

(a) Initially one permit and one visitor permit will be issued to an individual residence but subject to an assessment of parking demand/supply within a zone, additional permits may be available.

(b) Where a residence has at least one off-street parking space available, it would not be eligible for the full allocation of residential permits per residence. It would however be eligible for any allocation of visitors' permits and may be eligible for any subsequent allocation of second round residents' permits.

* (c) Residents' permits will normally be specific to one registered vehicle and proof of ownership/responsibility must be provided to the satisfaction of the Council.

* (d) Residents who are only entitled or choose to apply for only one permit may specify two registration numbers to be inserted on the

permit, to enable them to decide which vehicle is parked in the bays and to avoid swapping cars on and off a driveway. However it is stressed that a permit **must** be displayed at all times on vehicles parked within the residents' parking bays. Penalty Notices will be issued for any vehicle failing to **display** a valid permit and not for failing to **own** a permit.

6.6 Blue Badge Holders

All Blue badge holders will require a relevant Residents Parking permit to park in any Residents' Parking Zone. Any existing on-street disabled parking bays within a zone will be retained, but in order to park within these, both a Blue Badge and valid Residents parking Permit will need to be displayed.

6.7 Attendance Permits

Visitors delivering health and care needs to residents will be afforded access under the schemes. Those residents who live within the zone may apply for a parking permit for family or professionals who visit the property to provide care or medical needs. Where parking demand is heavy, these permits may be restricted to those residents who do not hold a Residents Parking permit. Permit applications in these cases will require to be supported by the resident's medical practitioners.

6.8 Visitors Permits

Visitor permits will be available to all residents within a scheme on submission of proof of residency at a concessionary rate. Should conditions permit additional permits may be available at an undiscounted cost.

6.9 Business Permits

Any business that operates from within a Residents Parking Zone will be eligible for a business permit; although if any form of off-street parking is available these would be severely restricted. Customer parking provision can be catered for by the provision of alternative parking controls e.g. short limited waiting in the vicinity of a small shop.

6.10 Special Permits.

The predominant parking users will be covered by the permits listed above, a few isolated uses lie outside those defined. At the Councils discretion special permits may be authorised for restricted periods on individual application. These will cover health workers, maintenance contractors, visiting tradespersons etc. Within the design of schemes, specific arrangements will be considered for churches and individual businesses located within defined zones but any charges will need to reflect administrative costs.

7.0 Financial Principles

7.1 The costs of Residents Parking Schemes can be split into two categories.

(a) Set up costs i.e. Capital costs covering the investigation of schemes, consultation, design, traffic order and changes to signs and lines.

(b) Ongoing operational costs for enforcement and management.

7.2 It is recommended that all schemes should be fully self financing, including the repayment of all initial set up costs. Any operational surplus should be ring fenced for use on the improvement of parking facilities throughout the County area.

8.0 Scheme Implementation

8.1 From past history it can be expected that the number of schemes requested will be substantial once civil parking is operational and will probably exceed the Authority's resource capacity in any single financial year. It is recommended that all applications are evaluated by Traffic Section staff in conjunction with Parking Services and a shortlist of those considered to be desirable and practical submitted to the respective Local Members for approval, prior to submission to the approval of the Director of Environment and Executive Board Member. Larger schemes covering more than a single Ward may require Executive Board approval.

These approvals are recommended due to the need to alter Traffic Regulation Orders, to rank schemes in order of priority and to verify that a fair and reasonable evaluation has been undertaken.

Factors for determining relative scheme priorities should be:-

- * The tie in with other works being undertaken e.g. town centre reviews.
- * Emergency vehicle access.
- * Availability of off-street parking for non-residents using the area.
- * Impact of displacing non-residents cars.
- * Size of the scheme proposed.
- * Purposes for which non-residents are parking.

8.2 Consultation and Implementation.

All proposed resident parking schemes will be subject to consultation and will include:-

(a) An initial questionnaire sent to all residents and businesses within and adjacent to the proposed area, to identify the level of concern regarding parking difficulties and to establish the level of support for any proposed scheme. This consultation will be used solely to establish the local community requirements for any scheme. The results from this exercise will then be used to determine the need for and to develop proposals based on the majority views expressed. Full details resulting

from the consultation will be available for examination by any consultee.

(b) Once a scheme has been determined there should be further consultations undertaken by means of a local public exhibition, public meeting or residents group meetings and concentrating on the size and scale of any potential scheme to allow officers to answer any questions, followed by a further questionnaire to all residents and business asking respondents to indicate if they agree or disagree with the scheme.

* The formal stage of the process will involve the publication of Notices of Intent in the press and on site. At this stage any objections received will need to be dealt with and resolved in accordance with the Councils agreed procedures.

A scheme should only be considered for implementation if there is clear support for the proposals from households within the zone and agreement to pay the annual permit costs. For any scheme to proceed it is recommended that a minimum response of 50% will be required to the initial questionnaire with 51% remaining in favour of the proposals at all stages of the consultation process.

9.0 Design

9.1 In considering any schemes there needs to be a clear understanding of the parking problems in the area and the implications of the introduction of any new Residents Parking controls, particularly in terms of the potential relocation of displaced parking. All schemes will be introduced on a zonal basis thereby providing greater flexibility by using spare capacity in one street to supplement another. Zone boundaries should remain logical and easily defined and not large enough to provide a benefit for vehicles 'commuting' whilst remaining in their zone.

9.2 In principle daytime parking restrictions reflecting standard scheme timings (for example Monday to Saturday 8am to 6pm), will be adopted and will be the basis for commencing the design process on local schemes. These parking restrictions can however be inconvenient at times when residential demand is at its highest. Flexibility therefore needs to be applied in determining the actual time period of restrictions within each scheme in order to achieve the parking needs of local residents in practical terms. No scheme will be designed that spans night times or excessive cover and the basic principle will be applied that schemes are primarily to resolve the problems created by day time parkers.

9.3 When considering the needs of residents and determining scheme details the following matters will be considered:-

- * Maintaining traffic flow and visibility at junctions.
- * Vehicle accesses.
- * Loading/unloading requirements.

- * Bus stops.
- * Needs of Blue Badge holders.
- * Limited waiting areas for local business.
- * Visitors and other categories of drivers who need to park within the zone.
- * Use of the area i.e. residential or commercial.
- * Safety of public within the zone.

The objective being to maximise the number of residents spaces, reduce the amount of commuter/business parking in residential areas and also provide proper consideration of special issues such as schools/churches and businesses to minimise disruption.

9.4 All signing and markings must be in accordance with the current Traffic Signs Regulations and General Directions and the relevant sections of the Department of Transport/Welsh Assembly Government's Traffic Signs Manual.

9.5 Individual parking bays will not normally be provided. Continual marked bays current at the time will normally be provided in accordance with the Regulations. Vehicles must be wholly parked within a marked bay with no part spanning another bay or extending over yellow lines or some other restriction. Failure to comply with this requirement will make the Permit holder liable to a Penalty Charge Notice.

9.6 Restricted Zones can be used with special authorisation from the Welsh Assembly Government although the approval process can be lengthy. Within these yellow lines can be removed and the marked bays omitted. However, signs are still required to advise motorists of the restrictions and in practice these are only recommended for small areas and cul-de-sacs for clarity of enforcement, as motorists are only made aware of the restrictions at the zone entry points.

9.7 Upon completion of a scheme and within the first year arrangements will be made to undertake an operational review and if necessary initiate improvements in accordance with the approved procedures.

10 Scheme Charges and Review

10.1 Charges for Permits shall be determined by the Authority and should be set at a level that covers the enforcement and operational costs of the scheme. All charges should be clearly set out and published in any consultation literature, along with all other Terms and Conditions of the Residents' Parking scheme.

10.2 All Permit charges shall be reviewed annually.

10.3 The recommended current level of Permit charges are as follows:-

* Residents' Permits	£..... per annum including 'Blue Badge' holders
* Attendance Permits	Provided without costs.
* Visitor Permits	£..... per annum
* Business Permits	£..... per permit
* Second Permits	same charges as above
* Special Permits	covered outside of this policy by dispensations and waivers

10.4 Responsibility for the renewal of Permits is the responsibility of holders. Existing Permit holders will be invited to renew their permits on an annual basis by the Council. In the event that a resident fails to renew their permit before the expiry date, the permit will become invalid.

10.5 The Permit period shall extend from 1 April to 31 March.

10.6 Refunds will be provided where Permits are no longer required. Permits must be returned to the Parking Services Section, Environment Department, County Hall, Mold CH7 6NF and all refunds shall be calculated on the basis of remaining full months less a deduction of 10% of the annual permit costs for administration.

10.7 Lost or stolen Permits must be reported immediately to the Parking Services Section at the address in 10.6 above. A replacement permit will be issued subject to an administration of 10% of the annual permit cost, providing that all terms and conditions are met.