

OFF STREET PARKING POLICY

1. Integral to Civil Parking Enforcement (CPE), which takes place "On-Street", is the issue of "Off- Street" parking, as a significant proportion of vehicles displaced from roads are likely to resort to public and privately owned car parks.
2. There is an historic inconsistency in the way the Council's car parks are managed across the County which goes back to the precursor authorities of Delyn and Alyn & Deeside. Delyn had a policy of charging, whereas Alyn & Deeside did not and, as a result of this position not having been reviewed since local government re-organisation, we now have the situation where the Council charges for the use of its car parks in Mold and Holywell, whereas all of the other Council car parks are free.

Furthermore, the level of charges have not been reviewed for over 18 years. It is therefore clearly appropriate to review the current situation and to implement proposals aimed at addressing this inconsistency.

3. Surveys have been undertaken of all of the car parks within the seven town centres identified within the Council's UDP. Weekday and Saturday usage figures have been collected, to give indicative utilisation percentages on a daily basis. These have been compared to figures captured during a similar survey undertaken in 2005 and in most cases, the numbers have remained fairly constant.
4. The Regional Transport Plan, which has been developed by TAITH on behalf of all six constituent North Wales authorities, makes a number of references to the importance of 'Demand Management' in relation to the provision of sustainable transport, recognising that over 20% of our community will not have access to a car (this figure will be a lot more in our more disadvantaged neighbourhoods). Demand Management, in relation to car parks, is effectively the process of charging users a proportionate fee, where it's appropriate to do so, in order to encourage a modal shift from cars to public and other forms of transport, thereby reducing congestion and increasing the viability of buses. Extracts from the Regional Transport Plan and Flintshire's Regeneration Strategy are set out below:-

Regional Transport Plan

Managing Demand and Traffic Flows

Techniques for managing demand and traffic flow include road user charging which is a matter for the Welsh Assembly Government although local access control schemes based on charging such as in Durham or the Peak District National Park in England might be considered for some local problems. Parking management, including the use of workplace or retail parking levies might also be considered,

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particularly to generate revenue to support other measures such as public transport services in development of large new commercial sites.

Parking

Parking is an important aspect of transport, given that most vehicles, particularly private cars, spend most of their time not moving and therefore have to be parked somewhere. Taith aims to ensure that the methods used for managing parking are consistent across the region wherever practicable, in line with current joint working on Civil Parking, balancing the needs of all sectors of society in North Wales.

Regeneration Strategy

The Flintshire Economic Regeneration Strategy 2009-2020 identifies the importance of town centre regeneration and stresses the need to 'improve the integrated management of town centres', 'improve the built environment, public realm, and facilities for users' and 'provide alternative means of transport to the private car.'

5. A fundamental review of the Council's subsidised bus services is being undertaken, following the WG announcement of a 27% cut in grants and a commitment given to the Environment Overview & Scrutiny Committee at its budget Scrutiny meeting in January 2012. This review will be based on criteria aimed at maximising sustainable transport provision to meet social and economic needs. This will include an assessment of bus services serving our town centres in Flintshire.
6. Car park charges are sometimes criticised for having a negative impact upon the local economy, on the assumption that they encourage drivers to go to shopping areas that have free parking. This is not considered to be the case, where charging levels are proportionate to the locality, including the local shopping 'offer' available. The table below sets out the number of ground floor commercial units within each of the seven town centre boundaries, together with the vacancy rates in October 2012, compared to the national average vacancy rate for the same period of 14.6%.

Town	Number of Commercial Units	% Vacancy Rate
Buckley	96	5
Connah's Quay	57	11
Flint	122	11
Holywell	112	10
Mold	231	4
Queensferry	69	7
Shotton	94	9

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7. There is clear evidence to show that some of the Council's car parks are used by residents, where they don't have access to their own private or on street parking. In these circumstances, the level of usage by surrounding residents needs to be taken into account in deciding whether or not to charge. Also, where appropriate, residents Parking Permits could be issued.
8. There is also clear evidence to show that our car parks are being used for 'Park and Share' purposes ie cars are left in them all day at no cost, whilst the drivers share a car to into, say Chester, where they have to pay. This practice does not add anything to the local economy and could be managed by the introduction of parking charges and CPE.
9. Similarly, Flint Station car park is heavily used, but not necessarily by rail travellers, who should be able to find a parking space whenever they want to use the train. Charging at the station car parks, but not others in Flint, will displace the vehicles of employees that work in the town and make it more likely to have spaces for rail users.

The Council is obliged to pay 50% of any income generated by charging to the owners of the car parks, Arriva Trains Wales.

10. Given the above points, a review has been carried out of the Council owned car parks in the County against the following criteria :-
 - Town Centre location, as identified in the Council's UDP
 - Occupancy levels of the car parks
 - Vibrancy of the Town Centres
 - Proximity of the Town Centre to public transport
 - Percentage usage by surrounding residents not having access to a private parking space or on street parking.
11. The outcome of the review is set out in the document attached to this Policy entitled "Initial Proposal for Car Parks Suitable for Charging". It is suggested that the charges will be :-
 - 20p per hour, for up to 3 hours
 - £2.00 for over 3 hours, except the Flint Station Car Park, which will be £3.00 and Love Lane Car Park, Mold, which will be 50p
 - Charges will apply between 08.00 am – 3.00 pm – Monday – Saturday

Annual Parking Permits will be issued at a charge of 75% of the aggregated weekly tariff for business users and 50% for residents.

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12. It is intended to charge more for parking all day at Flint Railway Station as an added 'incentive' for non-rail passengers to park on the 'Free' car parks in Flint. Similarly, Love Lane Car Park in Mold is recommended to remain at the same tariff as now, to provide an option for lower cost parking on the outskirts of the town.
13. It is intended that the Council's Enforcement Officers undertake enforcement action in all of our car parks, whether we charge in them or not. This will cover issues like parking within bays and proper use of disabled bays.
14. As part of the process, it is intended that all car parks proposed for charging will be invested in, to ensure their surfaces, lines and signs are appropriate and that the lighting in them is up to the required quality.
15. It is recognised that the implementation of the above Off-Street Parking policy, together with the introduction of CPE, is likely to have a significant impact upon vehicular usage of our town centres and car parks. It is therefore intended to review the Policy during the 2013-14 financial year, when the initial impact of the introduction of CPE has had time to settle down, and then annually thereafter.

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INITIAL PROPOSAL FOR CAR PARKS SUITABLE FOR CHARGING

All charges will be 20p per hour, for up to 3 hours and £2 all day, unless shown
Charges will apply between 08.00 am – 3.00 pm - Monday - Saturday

Area	Car Park	Proposal to Charge
Buckley	<p><i>FCC Controlled</i> Argoed Road Bistre Avenue (plus 5 cycle bays) Black Horse (plus 4 cycle bays) Brunswick Road Precinct Way</p> <p><i>Privately Controlled</i> Sommerfield</p>	<p>Argoed Road Bistre Avenue Black Horse Brunswick Road</p>
Connah's Quay	<p><i>FCC Controlled</i> Old Dock Road Fron Road Maude Street Sommerfield/Council</p> <p><i>Privately Controlled</i> Area to front of Boathouse/Shops Fron Road Health Centre (has lockable gates)</p>	<p>Sommerfield</p>
Flint	<p><i>FCC Controlled</i> Allt Goch – Large Allt Goch – Small Bollingbroke Heights Castle Heights Feather Street (library) Pavilion Leisure Centre Railway Station Richard Heights (6 residents bays) Swan Street</p> <p><i>Privately Controlled</i> Retail Centre McDonalds/Asda</p>	<p>Railway Station (£3 all day) Swan Street</p>
Holywell	<p><i>FCC Controlled - Free</i> Station Road – inner ring road (7 bays – disabled only) Halkyn Street</p> <p><i>FCC Controlled – Short Stay</i> Bevans Yard (rear 63-69 High Street) Gateway (Sommerfield) Leisure Centre Tower Gardens Upper</p>	<p>Halkyn Street</p> <p>Bevans Yard</p> <p>Tower Gardens Upper</p>

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Area	Car Park	Proposal to Charge
Holywell (Cont)	<p><i>FCC Controlled – Short/Long Stay</i> Plas yn Dre Well Street Car Park</p> <p><i>Privately Controlled</i> Tesco Lidl</p>	Plas yn Dre Well Street
Mold	<p><i>FCC Controlled-Contract</i> Town Hall</p> <p><i>FCC Controlled-Long Stay</i> Love Lane</p> <p><i>FCC controlled – Short Stay</i> Grosvenor Street King Street Meadow Place</p> <p><i>FCC Controlled – Short/Long Stay</i> Griffiths Square New Street</p> <p><i>Privately Controlled</i> Aldi Tesco Lidl</p>	Town Hall Love Lane (50p all day) Grosvenor Street King Street Meadow Place Griffiths Square New Street
Queensferry	<p><i>FCC Controlled</i> Pierce Street Station Road</p> <p><i>Privately Controlled</i> Asda Deeside Leisure Centre</p>	None
Saltney	<p><i>FCC Controlled</i> None</p>	None
Shotton	<p><i>FCC Controlled</i> Alexandra Street P&R Alexandra Street – King Edward Street Ash Grove Bridge Street Central Hotel Charmleys Lane King George Street Plymouth Street</p>	None

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Area	Car Park	Proposal to Charge
Shotton (Cont)	<i>Privately Controlled</i> Old B&Q/Charlies Lidl/B&Q/Pets at Home Pizza Hut Car Park	None
Talacre	<i>FCC Controlled</i> Smugglers Inn Proposed Additional Parking Lighthouse Pub Station Road Beach Car Park BHP	None