

FLINTSHIRE

Parking Strategy

2015



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OVERVIEW

Civil Parking Enforcement was introduced in Flintshire in October 2013, and through effective enforcement many vehicles have been displaced to off street car parks, in order to maintain the vibrancy and vitality of a community/town it is essential to effectively manage off street parking usage.

Parking measures and enforcement are key tools in managing an effective highway network, in support of the effective movement of traffic. There are numerous conflicts between town centre visitor and residential parking where previously ineffective management of these areas has led to congestion. Pay and Display parking is a good parking tool which, through the use of appropriate charging, encourages the commuters to the car parks on the periphery of the centre, whilst promoting proximity spaces for short stay.

The introduction of Civil Parking Enforcement has resulted in more effective management of on-street parking, which has had a positive impact on the movement of traffic in town centres.

Flintshire has 48 public off-street car parks which are subject to car park management, of which 6 car parks are controlled through pay and display, 1 car park is a 'permit holders only' car park, 1 car park is a free short stay car park and 40 car parks are free of charge. All facilities are still subject to a Parking Order; vehicles must be parked wholly in a lined bay and if parked in a disabled bay the vehicle must be displaying a valid disability badge (all car parks are clearly signed with their conditions of use).

This project is designed to replicate the benefits already realised across more areas of the authority, through introducing more effective management of on and off street parking resources through the expansion of pay and display across numerous sites throughout Flintshire, considering levels of demand and vibrancy of each area. The concept would be adapted to suit the needs of all local communities at all viable car parks, for example which offer a parking facility of 50 spaces or more.

This project will deliver;

- A summary of each parking facility and a contextual strategy for each area.
- Review existing Traffic Regulation / Parking Orders and determine the need to introduce new ones.
- A pricing strategy which will need to reflect the attractiveness, vibrancy and needs of the community / town.
- Strategies for each substantive area will also suggest the most appropriate areas which should be considered for future residential parking schemes, specifically where

there is demand and a conflict with off street Pay and Display measures and on street restrictions.

- Introduction of a workplace charging scheme.

Each local strategy will look to;

- prioritise the needs of disabled people, local residents, businesses and their customers
- promote more sustainable travel choices through the availability and effective costing of car parking, where demand is identified in support of the highway network
- where appropriate discourage the use of central parking spaces for long stay and seek to maximise the availability of short stay spaces
- retain long stay parking places and offer competitively priced permits
- ensure all on and off street restrictions are effectively enforced and the impact on surrounding residential areas minimised
- identify areas where on-street restrictions need amendment or where new restrictions are required to alleviate identified issues or risks
- identify areas where residential parking schemes may be required in the future, accounting from feedback of the initial pilot scheme.

The benefits of effective and efficient enforcement of both on and off street areas are many and varied;

- a co-ordinated and locally accountable parking enforcement service across Flintshire in support of an effective and efficient highway network
- ability to keep roads clear of vehicles parked in contravention of a restriction, which create safety and obstruction issues. In doing so, this can reduce traffic delays, improve the reliability of bus services, enhance the environment for pedestrians and cyclists and provide easier access for emergency vehicles
- increased turnover of short-stay spaces and encouragement for the appropriate use of long-stay spaces through better enforcement which can result in less circulating traffic and help support the vitality and vibrancy of community / town centres
- residents' parking schemes are able to be introduced in the knowledge that they will be effectively enforced
- improved enforcement helps 'Blue Badge' holders by ensuring that dedicated spaces are not used inappropriately
- more reliable access to designated loading bays and facilities for deliveries, assisting local businesses.

CURRENT DEVELOPMENTS

A new car park has been designed and constructed in Talacre at Gamfa Wen Car Park, management of this facility will take effect from April 2015. This car park is for seasonal use only (April to September) and controlled through the use of a barrier (to be opened and closed at the start of each day) and will be subject to charging through the use of pay and display machines.

When Civil Parking Enforcement was introduced Mold was the only town which opted to retain charging, and has recently undergone a 12 month review of processes and tariff which has also incorporated options for the future.

All off street income generated from charging will be re-invested within the Streetscene and Transportation budgets to enhance associated transport infrastructure.

This proposed strategy document will outline the overall policy in relation to operation and detail the individual proposal for managing off street parking within each community / town also considering any improvements to on-street parking and the identification of areas that may be subject to residential parking going forward.

Currently in Mold, a Residential Parking Scheme is being consulted on with residents residing in Gladstone Street, Water Street, Stanley Street and Chapel Street.

On the following page is a list of all areas where it is proposed to further expand charging.

Facilities where it is proposed to further expand charging:

Area	Car Park	Number of spaces (including disabled provision)	
Buckley	Bistre Avenue	35	
	Precinct	140	
	Black Horse	22	
	Argoed Road	17	
	Brunswick Road	55	
Connah's Quay	Maude Street	40	
	Somerfield / Council Offices	274	
Flint	Allt Goch	88	
	Bolingbroke Heights	41	(8 currently marked as residential)
	Feather Street	21	
	Pavillion Leisure Centre	92	
	Railway Station	70	
	Richard Heights	58	(6 currently marked as residential)
	Swan Street	68	
Holywell	Bevans Yard	17	
	Plas yn Dre	24	
	Somerfield	99	
	Leisure Centre	44	
	Station Road	5	
	Halkyn Street	tbc	

Continued overleaf.....

Area	Car Park	Number of spaces (including disabled provision)
Mold	County Hall	1014
Queensferry	Station Road	76
	Pierce Street	23
Shotton	Alexandra Street (P&R)	26
	Ash Grove	59
	King George Street	46
	Charmleys Lane	46
	Plymouth Street	19
TOTAL SPACES		2519

PARKING STRATEGY

Fundamental to any parking strategy is the need for efficient parking enforcement. This is to ensure that on-street parking supply is managed effectively, to prevent inappropriate parking that could cause congestion and increase dangers for other road users, and to ensure proper management of off-street car parks and time limited on-street parking.

- *Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984*
 - Provides powers under which Councils are able to provide and manage off street car parks. The use of the Council's car parks is regulated by orders permissible under the Act. It also provides powers for the Highway Authority to make Traffic Regulation Orders for the control and regulation of traffic and parking on the highway.
- *Road Traffic Act 1991 (Decriminalised Parking Enforcement)*
 - Introduced to address the increase in illegal parking (growing car ownership and use) and fears that police resources would not be able to accommodate the increased demand for enforcement.
- *Traffic Management Act 2004 (Civil Parking Enforcement)*
 - Imposes a Statutory duty on Local Authorities to reduce the cause of congestion and disruption by controlling parking and the highway network as a whole.
 - Part 6 of the Traffic Management Act provides a single framework to make regulations for the civil enforcement of parking and waiting restrictions, bus lanes (where appropriate) and some moving traffic offences.

Parking enforcement is a highly emotive and contentious subject. The Council has committed to provide a service which is consistent, fair and equitable, and one which operates in a transparent manner.

Flintshire County Council is one of 10 authorities that utilises the resources of the Wales Penalty Processing Partnership in administrating all standard payments, representations and challenges arising from Penalty Charge Notices issued by the authority.

MAIN PRINCIPLES

Off-street public parking:

- Short-stay parking (up to two hours) will be prioritised on sites within an acceptable walking distance of shopping and commercial centres to ensure adequate accessibility
- Short stay only parking will have a 1 hour prohibited return from the expiry of the parking ticket.
- Longer-stay parking will be prioritised on sites further away from shopping and commercial centres
- Long stay commuter parking will be reduced where good sustainable transport alternatives exist
- Disabled bay misuse and abuse will not be tolerated, all bays will be enforced outside of any charging period set.
- 'Out of bay' parking will not be tolerated, all car parks will be enforced outside of any charging period set.

On-street parking

- The Authority will provide on street, limited waiting parking facilities where it is considered safe to do so without undue interference with moving traffic, residents, businesses and other urban objectives.
- On residential roads, priority will be given to meeting residents' parking needs

Parking charges

Recommended parking charges (on and off-street) will be set for each community / town taking account of the following factors:

- the service role and popularity of the centre / demand for parking
- the utilisation of existing parking spaces
- the availability of sustainable transport modes
- parking charges in neighbouring areas
- the convenience and quality of parking locations

Short Stay Parking

The Authority will give priority to and manage the provision of short stay parking where viable, as:

- Short stay visitors to the town centre are less likely to travel at peak periods i.e. contributing to reduced congestion; improved performance of the road network.
- Short stay parking generates a high turnover of spaces allowing more visitors to be accommodated per space.
- Availability of short stay spaces is essential to maintaining the commercial viability of the town and community centres.

Long Stay Parking

The Authority will manage the provision of long stay parking in the town centres through effective pricing to encourage the use of more sustainable transport. Also by a system of differential charging to promote the use of peripheral car parks where such parking is to be accommodated:

- Commuters travel at peak periods and are a major contributor to congestion of the highway network.
- Commuter parking monopolises parking spaces for the entire working day.
- Transport objectives may be achieved more easily through parking policy interventions aimed at the commuter. It is more practical, for example, for the commuter to change their travel patterns than it is to continually expand the road network and parking stock.
- Long stay parking provision in connection with bus or rail commuter travel is supported in order to reduce the level of dependency on the motorcar as a means of commuting to work.
- Contract parking: contracts will be made available on selected car parks for regular long stay customers, made available at competitive rates.
- Support the reallocation of long-stay parking either by redevelopment for other uses or reallocation to short or variable stay, where justified by provision of park and ride sites or improvements in public transport accessibility (where applicable).

Disabled Parking Provision

This Authority will prioritise the needs of those people who have no choice but to use the car to access essential services:

- Improve the quality and provision of disabled parking in off street car parks in accordance with Equality Act requirements. Local conditions and demand are also considered in determining the volume and location of spaces to be provided.
- Free parking will be offered to Blue Badge holders when parking in a disabled bay only, on the condition that a valid Blue Badge is exhibited. Parking in non disabled bays will require a valid ticket to be purchased and displayed

Parking Enforcement

The council employs teams of enforcement officers to patrol the streets and car parks. These officers have the responsibility for issuing Penalty Charge Notices to vehicles which have been observed parked in contravention of the Order in place. All officers have clear guidelines to work to and are committed to provide a service which is consistent, fair and equitable and one which operates in a transparent manner.

Income from the payment of PCNs is used to finance the operational costs of the council's parking service.

Residents Parking

Flintshire will prioritise the parking needs of residents in areas, which are affected by non-residential parking, or are likely to be affected as a result of this strategy. Potential sites will be identified and considered as possible residents' on-street parking schemes going forward, all will aim to:

- balance the conflicting demands for kerb space.
- manage the displacement of parking.
- develop robust and fair policies as the available kerb space in many areas will not be sufficient to cater for all demands from residents and other users.

These residential parking schemes will offer a permit which covers the full 24 hour period, including Saturdays and Sundays.

The Councils Residents Parking Policy is available on the Councils website www.flintshire.gov.uk/en/PDFFiles/Roads-and-Travel/Policy-for-resident-parking-schemes.pdf.

Off Street Car Parks

All off street car parks where Pay and Display charging is in place, will be clearly signed within the car park and detailed on the Council's website.

It is the motorist's responsibility when entering the parking place to adhere to the regulations in place, failure to do so may result in a Penalty Charge Notice being issued.

The authority is not responsible for any damage to or theft from cars whilst parked in the car parks; all users park at the own risk.

Where possible, the authority also intends to turn off all lights in car parks, between the hours of 24:00 to 05:00.

Workplace Charging

The introduction of effective parking management; workplace and visitor charging, will clarify the restrictions in place for all employees, visitors and contractors to adhere. In turn this should encourage the use of public transport and/or car sharing, where possible.

All employees would be expected to use an affordable permit system (chargeable per year, pro rata). Visitors will be expected to pay through the use of Pay and Display machines

Permits

Flintshire will offer at a cost a number of different permits, these permits will be car park specific (non transferable amongst other car parks or vehicles);

Seasonal Permits – will be offered in long stay car parks only, they will be chargeable per year pro rata per vehicle, the cost will be calculated at 200 days of the long stay tariff. The permit is valid for one vehicle only and would not guarantee that a space will be available for use. Should the car park be full or the permit holder used a different car park, the conditions of that car park would have to be adhered to and the appropriate fee paid.

Only 20% of bays in each long stay car park will be available for the issuing of permits; permits will be issued on a first come, first served basis. All other requests will be held on a waiting list.

Specified Permits – will be offered in permit holders only car parks. This permit purchases a bay, and is only valid for that specific bay, it would not be acceptable to park in an alternative bay and vehicles observed doing so would be subject to a Penalty Charge Notice if observed.

Off Street Residential Permits – will be offered to residents living within the immediate vicinity of the car park; who do not have adequate on street parking provision. The cost of this permit will be the same as the cost of the on street residential permit. All permit

requests must provide proof of residency at the address and that of the vehicle; utility bill and log book.

Only 20% of bays in each long stay car park will be available for the issuing of permits; permits will be issued on a first come, first served basis. All other requests will be held on a waiting list.

Workplace Permits – will be offered to all staff and Councillors working or regularly visiting specific sites where associated staff and visitor parking forms part of the local strategy. These permits will be chargeable per year pro rata per vehicle. The permit is valid for one vehicle only and would not guarantee that a space will be available for use.

The cost of a parking permit will be equivalent to that provided to non Council staff at the public commuter car parks with a zero permit charge applying to those staff employed on salaries at or below the nationally recognised living wage and to any modern apprentices employed by the Council. Senior staff would continue to be offered designated spaces at a premium rate and in line with current arrangements.

Misuse of any of the aforementioned permits could result in the permit being recalled (non refundable).

All users parking if observed parked in contravention of the permit or car park would be subject to Penalty Charge Notice.