

**Bath & North East
Somerset Council**

Purpose of Residents Parking Schemes



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Introduction of Residents Parking Schemes

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General issues

This policy is designed to encompass the primary objectives of Residents Parking Schemes and to enable a uniform approach towards the introduction, operation and enforcement of the schemes.

Local Councillors are always involved in the development of any proposals to ensure that views of residents are central to any scheme proposed. Schemes are designed and implemented by the Traffic and Network Management Team which forms part of the Highways Department. Parking Services are a stakeholder within the processes to ensure that operational issues are considered at an early stage and before implementation.

As Residents Parking Schemes by their very nature vary widely in terms of how the scheme might aim to serve the residents' needs, due in a large part to the existing characteristics of the zone to be considered, in particular use of and availability of kerb space, the guidance document "Guidance on the Introduction of Residents Parking Schemes in Bath & North East Somerset" should be followed as closely as possible when designing the scheme. Any deviation from guidance should be supported in writing and agreed by the Council as the enforcing authority.

Policy

Section 1 - What is a Residents' Parking Scheme?

1.1 Whilst it must be remembered that there is no right to park on the highway, the primary purpose being for passage and re-passage of vehicles, there are a number of residential areas which might benefit from the introduction of residents parking schemes where such parking would not interfere with the primary purpose of the highway. On-street parking is generally generated by shoppers or commuters. In some of the areas the parking might prevent residents who have no off-street facility (forecourt, drive, garage etc.) finding a parking space reasonably close to their home.

1.2 Traditional Traffic Regulation Orders (TROs) are used to alleviate any access, road safety or environmental problems associated with high levels of parking but these offer no priority to the residents affected – both residents and non-residents would be equally affected by any such restrictions.

1.3 It is however possible to give priority to residents by introducing residents permit holders only parking schemes and defining various parts of the highway where parking may be permitted only if a valid permit issued by the Council is displayed by the vehicle. Permits are normally only issued to resident's living in a street within the zone and are under the control of, and issued at, the discretion of the Council. All existing schemes operate in this way with provision for residents generally being within permit holder only or shared use bays

1.4 The advantages and disadvantages of such schemes may be summarised as follows: -

Advantages

- a)** Residents having no off-street parking facility would have a reasonable opportunity to park close to their homes (residents parking permit schemes do not however offer any guarantees of a parking space and certainly not a parking space in front of the resident's own home).
- b)** The amenity of the area would be improved with vehicles being parked in a more orderly fashion.

- c)** A scheme may also have benefits from a social, community safety, housing or planning policy aspect.
- d)** Shared use bays provide for short term visitors without the need for complex visitor permit administration systems.
- e)** **Encourages use of alternative modes of transport.**
- f)** **Reduces traffic flows on residential streets.**
- g)** **Improves local air quality.**

Disadvantages

- a)** Does not accord with the primary role of the highway which is to ensure passage and re-passage;
- b)** A residents parking scheme in one area might create or worsen parking problems in adjacent areas;
- c)** Parking spaces for residents and visitors could at times be inadequate;
- d)** Could inhibit activities of commercial and other non-residential activities within the zone, especially retail areas.
- e)** During restricted hours the street may be lightly parked possibly leading to an accusation that the "parking stock" is being under used.
- f)** By formalising the parking layout a net loss of spaces may result when turning movements and visibility at junctions are protected by new parking prohibitions.
- g)** Limits the residents' freedom to keep unlimited numbers of taxed vehicles on street.
- h)** Shared use bays give equal opportunity to park to motorists not visiting residents. Longer stay visits to residents are not catered for unless a visitor permit arrangement is also introduced.
- i)** Residents parking schemes will, in some cases, reduce the amount of on street parking which may or may not be of benefit depending on location.
- j)** Permits to park in the area are charged for to the residents within the zone area.
- k)** Numbers of permits per household can be restricted if a property has off street parking or if the property is redeveloped.

- I) Residents are restricted to parking within their own zone and cannot use adjacent zones when capacity is exceeded.

Section 2 - Types of Resident Parking Schemes (RPS)

- 2.1** There are three possible types of RPS
- (i) exclusive permit spaces
 - (ii) shared spaces
 - (iii) exemption from on street parking charges
- 2.2** Exclusive permit spaces is the most traditional form of RPS. Basically a street would be divided into prohibited and permitted parking areas. In order to park in the permitted parking areas a vehicle would be required to hold a valid permit. Permits would be issued to residents, visitors and other such persons as the Issuing Authority sees fit (e.g. carers) in accordance with the rules and criteria set out in writing by the Issuing Authority.
- 2.3** This system provides optimum benefit for residents and their visitors but low levels of resident vehicle parking may produce a layout which looks comparatively empty.
- 2.4** Shared spaces – in order to overcome what may be viewed in 2.3 as a disadvantage the whole of the area designated for permitted parking could be controlled as dual use i.e. time limited which may or may not be charged for and residents parking. Any vehicle displaying a valid residents parking permit would be exempt from any charge or time restriction. It is essential that the balance between the needs of residents and other vehicles is carefully considered.
- 2.5** This may, on the face of it, appear to be an attractive option but it is more time consuming and therefore difficult for the Civil Enforcement Officers to enforce. It does, however, reduce the need for the costly administration of a complicated permit scheme to accommodate the needs of numerous visitors, trades people, carers, district nurses etc. Combinations of exclusive and shared use bays may, if carefully designed, produce a satisfactory compromise.
- 2.6** Exemption from on street parking charges – Such an approach to RPS would require careful economic modelling. The method of operation is similar to 2.4 above with the

exception that the non-residents pay for their short term stay with a maximum stay defined by the Order. Permit holders would be exempt from any charges.

- 2.7** In addition to the above three approaches it would be possible to give residents an amenity benefit and some degree of priority by introducing a waiting prohibition for a short period each day. Used in areas subjected to long stay commuter parking this approach has been successfully implemented in some Local authorities with restrictions between say 10.00am and 11.00am used around areas such as railway stations.

These orders are generally easy to enforce by Civil Enforcement Officers. However, this may also be inconvenient to some residents and would be unlikely to deter short term shoppers using local facilities. This type of order is probably best suited to areas with severe commuter problems (e.g. around railway stations) and in areas where the majority of properties have off street parking places.

- 2.8** A system for dealing with visitors will also need to be considered. The charges for such permits must aim to recover the administrative cost and be restricted in the numbers available to each property. This may be virtual permits, scratch cards or additional permits.

Section 3 - Layout of RPS (including times of operation)

- 3.1** When considering the needs of the residents and determining the layout of a RPS the following must be considered;
- (i) Maintaining traffic flow & visibility at junctions
 - (ii) vehicle accesses
 - (iii) loading/unloading requirements
 - (iv) bus stops and routes
 - (v) the needs of blue badge holders
 - (vi) limited waiting areas for local business
 - (vii) visitors and other categories of drivers who need to park within the zone
 - (viii) the use of the area (residential/commercial)
 - (ix) safety of the public within the zone
 - (x) the needs of the wider community
- 3.2** The objective would be to maximise the number of residents' spaces and to reduce



the amount of commuter parking in residential areas.

3.3 In determining the amount of available space for permitted parking and to ensure that all schemes are treated in a similar way it is considered appropriate to adopt a set of criteria for maintaining available widths of highway for traffic movements. This criterion has been based upon guidance set out by the Institution of Highways and Transportation in “Transport in the Urban Environment”.

- a) One-way residential roads shall maintain a free carriageway width of 3.3 metres between marked bays.
- b) One-way traffic with parking on both sides of the road requires a minimum width of 6.9m
- c) One-way traffic with parking on one side of the road requires a minimum width of 5.2m.
- d) Carriageways carrying two way traffic must retain a width commensurate with its function. E.g. a through route may need to allow sufficient width for two HGV’s to pass, whilst a small cul-de-sac may be able to function safely with a much reduced carriageway width.

3.4 The schemes will be introduced on a zonal basis. The introduction of RPS across a zone provides 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 in vehicles ‘commuting’ whilst remaining in their zone. Some benefits, such as the ability to use off street car parks outside of controlled hours are not affected by zones and are provided on a discretionary basis by the Council.

3.5 Consideration must also be given to the effect of displacement parking as moving the problem to another location may cause other significant issues for residents.

Section 4 - Prioritising potential areas for RPS

4.1 There are few residential streets anywhere that at some time or another do not suffer from non-residential parking. It is appropriate therefore to establish a priority system, which discriminates in favour of areas experiencing high levels of non-residential parking to the exclusion of residents and where there are few opportunities for residents to park off



street. Problems due purely to the number of residents' vehicles, for example during the evening, when few or no non-residents vehicles are present will not be solved by such a scheme unless strict rules upon the hours of operation and permit issue are applied which restrict the residents themselves.

- 4.2** It is proposed that a prioritisation system is used to determine the priority for residents parking schemes in Bath & North East Somerset. The survey method should aim to help determine the extent of parking problems and the demand for residents parking. Details of the prioritisation system are appended in the guidance document appended to this policy.
- 4.3** A minimum level of positive responses from residents must be agreed for a scheme to be considered viable to proceed to the next stage. Details of the suggested response thresholds and guidance on consultation techniques is detailed in the guidance document appended to this policy.
- 4.4** It is essential that residents are clearly informed of the scheme rules that are

not negotiable (e.g. if permit costs are applicable, the charge and if applicable the restriction of the number of permit per property or residents etc.) during the consultation process. It is therefore essential that the terms and conditions as agreed and defined within appendix A of the "Guidance on the introduction of Residents Parking Schemes" are distributed with the consultation documents..

Section 5 - Permit types and criteria for issue.

Residents Permits

- 5.1** Residents permits will only be issued to residents owning or keeping vehicles that live within the RPS. It may be necessary to limit permits to one or two per property or similar type of restriction aimed to control the issue of permits. A resident is defined as a person living in a property which has a frontage or vehicle access to a street named in the traffic regulation order for the RPS. Flats are treated as separate addresses if they are separate for Council tax rating, but houses in multiple occupancy, as one address. New developments may be prevented from applying

for permits as part of the planning process.

- 5.2** Residents' permits will be issued for a period of 6 months or 12 months for a fixed cost. Permits do not have a surrender value. All Residents Parking Schemes must be self-financing and the cost of the permits should cover the administration, management and enforcement of the scheme. Proof of residency and proof of vehicle ownership or vehicle responsibility will be required where requested.
- 5.3** Residents' permits will be valid for a period of 6 months or 1 year from the date of issue and are not transferable. In the event of a change of vehicle a charge set by the Council and published within the Terms and Conditions of the RPS may be applicable depending on system in place. The costs are for administration and on-going management of the scheme and are non-refundable and subject to annual review. Online updates of permits may be available at a lower cost to the user for self administration.

Business Permit

- 5.4** Businesses operating within a RPS may, at the discretion of the Council, be considered eligible for a permit/s. Should the Council consider such permits to be appropriate the charge applied will reflect the benefit based on the costs of enforcing the scheme and will be considerably higher than the charges applied to residents' permits. The costs are for administration and on-going management of the scheme and are non-refundable and subject to annual review.

Visitors' Permits

- 5.5** Appropriate methods of accommodating visitors parking will be considered. However such a system requires an increase in administration of the schemes and will therefore result in an increase in administrative costs.
- 5.6** If visitors' permits are made available they should be available to all properties whether or not they are in receipt of a residents permit. Proof of residency should be required for applicants.

Renewal of Permits

- 5.7** It is the permit holder's responsibility to renew their permits before expiry. PCNs issued for displaying an expired Residents Permit may not be cancelled.

Mis-use and withdrawal of Permits

- 5.8** The enforcing Authority reserves the right to withdraw any permit that is miss-used

Section 6 – Charging for Permits and Enforcement Costs

- 6.1** It is essential that all Residents Parking Schemes operate on a cost neutral basis. The on street parking account must not be used to subsidise the cost of schemes. Different charges may apply in different areas at the discretion of the Council but all schemes must be self-financing.
- 6.2** The Council must determine a level of charge that reflects the enforcement and administrative costs of the scheme. All such charges will be clearly set out and published in the consultation literature as the Terms and Conditions of Residents Parking Schemes.
- 6.3** A charge will be levied for each permit, with permits being valid for a period of 6 or 12 months. Additional permits, when available, shall be issued on a first come first served basis until all available permits are issued (to a maximum of 125% of the zones parking capacity). The cost of each permit is for administration of the scheme and not for parking and therefore is non-refundable.
- 6.4** There will also be a charge for Visitors permits, where available. All such charges will be clearly set out and published in the consultation literature as the Terms and Conditions of Residents Parking Schemes.
- 6.5** An administration fee will be payable for replacement of lost or damaged permits and for owners who have changed their vehicles (the new permit will be valid only until the expiry date of the old permit). Online updates of permits may be available at a lower cost to the user for self administration. All such charges will be clearly set out and published in the consultation literature as the Terms and Conditions of Residents Parking Schemes.



Contacts and Further information

Parking Services, PO Box 122, Bristol BS31 9AE
Email parking@bathnes.gov.uk Telephone: 01225 477133/4