

Planning, Transport and Environment Policy Development and Scrutiny Panel
10 September 2013
Item 10 - Draft Bath car parking strategy

Note by Circus Area Residents' Association and Vineyards Residents' Association

1. Our two residents' associations cover much of the northern part of the Bath Central Controlled Parking Zone (CPZ). The difficulty of on-street parking for residents is one of our members' main concerns.
2. The northern part of the Central Zone (the area north of Queen Square, George Street and Paragon) is predominantly residential in character. For historical reasons this area is in the Central CPZ, as it was originally created in the 1970s. But as the attached map clearly demonstrates, the north Central Zone (coloured orange) is no closer to the commercial and civic city centre than most of the other Controlled Zones (the so-called 'Outer Zones').
3. Residents in this area are unfairly treated compared with residents in the Outer Zones. Although it is the most densely residential area in the city, there is almost no 'permit-holder only' parking. There are no resident visitor permits. In the Outer Zones there is a minimum of 50% permit-holder only places and residents can buy day permits for their visitors. Similar arrangements should apply in the residential north Central Zone.
4. The Central CPZ is now completely surrounded by the Outer Zones, where parking for non-residents is strictly limited. Visitors therefore head into the centre and drive around looking for a space, adding to the congestion and pollution in the heart of the city. The result is close to 100% occupancy of parking bays in this area, while in the Outer Zones there are empty bays, with occupancy in some Zones as low as 8%. This places enormous pressure on residents of our area when they are trying to find a place to park in the area in which they live. (Many residents here, like most people, need to use a car more or less regularly).
5. The current arrangements have developed without any overall strategy. When the Central CPZ was originally created in the 1970s the aim was to discourage parking in the centre. Parking was available on streets around the edge of the CPZ. This has now been completely reversed, so that the centre is almost the only place where visitors can park. Even here, on-street visitor parking is limited because 75% of the spaces are always occupied by residents.
6. Visitors should be encouraged to use firstly the park-and-ride, and then off-street parking. If some on-street visitor parking is needed, the burden ought to be shared with the other residential areas surrounding the centre.
7. There has been no action on this since the Panel received a paper almost a year ago. That paper included the results of a survey which underlined residents' dissatisfaction with the parking arrangements in the Central Zone. Action A2 of this paper calls for a review of parking provision in the Central Zone. We think that the Council should, as a matter of policy, give priority to residents. We hope the Panel will agree that this should be addressed in the near future.

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