

**BATH AND NORTH EAST SOMERSET COUNCIL
PLANNING, TRANSPORT AND ENVIRONMENT PANEL
13th SEPTEMBER 2011**

DRAFT BATH PARKING STRATEGY CONSULTATION

1. INTRODUCTION

The Bath Parking Strategy sets out Bath and North East Somerset Council's approach to parking issues in Bath, providing a framework for managing car parking spaces for the period 2011 to 2026. The plan covers all aspects of parking including:

- on and off-street parking;
- Park and Ride;
- future parking demand;
- residential parking standards and enforcement;
- management issues.

2. AIMS

The aim of the strategy is to help improve the quality of life of the people of Bath by establishing a balance between the social, economic, cultural and environmental needs of the whole community. The Plan aims to reduce the need for drivers to travel to and from the city centre reflecting concerns about the impact of traffic congestion on the environment and historic fabric of the World Heritage city, while providing parking provisions that meet a sustainable demand.

Parking cannot be considered in isolation and the objectives need to reflect the council's overall aims. The principles need to be consistent with other key documents and policies including the Sustainable Community Strategy, Core Strategy, Local Plan, Joint Local Transport Plan 3 and Equalities Act. It is also important that parking policies are compatible with the council's economic objectives for the city.

3. OBJECTIVES

The strategy aims to complement policies to reduce traffic growth by controlling the availability of parking spaces, both on and off street, and by managing the overall supply to meet priority uses. In this way, the management of parking can support policies to promote economic development and support town and city centres by assisting with the reduction in the levels of congestion.

The objectives of the policy are to

:

- Manage travel demand by introducing restraint-based car parking standards to avoid the over provision of car parking spaces and provide disable 'blue badge' parking spaces
- Sustain and enhance the vitality and viability Bath by the introduction of transport policies which support the prosperity of the city and provide a balance of good public transport and short stay parking;
- Effectively manage the total parking supply which include all types of parking and consider short stay priorities, regulation, charges and enforcement.

4 POLICY CONTEXT

4.1 Legislation

4.1.1 Legal Background

It is the duty of the local traffic authority to exercise the powers conferred by the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 as amended (RTRA) to secure the expeditious, convenient and safe movement of traffic and the provision of suitable and adequate parking facilities so far as this is practicable. In recognition of the demand to park and the need to control that parking, legislation exists to prohibit parking (waiting) and to provide spaces where vehicles can be legally parked.

RTRA empowers the Council to control waiting and loading and to provide parking places. Parking can be provided free of charge, or a charge may be made.

4.1.2 The Traffic Management Act 2004

The main objective of the TMA is to reduce congestion and disruption on the road network. The TMA enshrines the Network Management Duty, to help and encourage local traffic authorities to achieve its traffic aims including allowing certain contraventions of the law, such as parking offences, to be dealt with by civil means by Civil Enforcement Officers, rather than through the criminal process.

4.1.3 The Equality Act 2010

Local authorities must have regard to the desirability of exercising functions which are of a strategic nature in a way that is designed to reduce the inequalities of outcome which result from socio-economic disadvantage.

In the context of the parking strategy, the Equalities Act particularly applies to disabled people and the provision of disabled car parking places outside or reasonably close to places of residence and destinations. The security of parking places to reduce the fear of crime is also an important consideration across all equality groups.

4.2 National Guidance

4.2.1 Government White Paper: Creating Growth, Cutting Carbon

The Government's vision is for a transport system that is also an engine for economic growth, but one that is also greener and safer and improves quality of life.

Effective sustainable transport is delivered through solutions developed for the places they serve, tailored for the specific needs and behaviour patterns of individual communities and letting the local authorities decide what is best.

4.2.2 Planning Policy Guidance

Recently announced changes to Planning Policy Guidance give greater freedom to local authorities to adopt the right policies for their area. Local authorities will consider how their parking strategy should best fit with their overall strategy for promoting sustainable transport choices and the efficient use of land, enabling schemes to fit into central urban sites, promoting linked-trips and tackling congestion.

Local authorities set their own parking policies and charges to meet the needs of the local area. The need for parking in city centres may be reduced through well placed and well used Park and Ride schemes. For new residential developments, a parking strategy can include setting minimum or maximum levels of parking places, depending on what is right for the area.

To create the parking provision for electric vehicles, local authorities are encouraged to provide electric vehicle charging infrastructure in new developments, where this does not affect the development's overall viability. Local authorities may also wish to set aside some residential car parking spaces solely for car club vehicles.

4.3 West of England Joint Local Transport Plan (LTP3) 2011-2026

The supply and management of car parking is closely linked with the demand for car use and this in turn affects traffic levels, especially in peak periods and, ultimately, congestion. It is a key part of our range of demand management measures for tackling congestion and traffic growth in some areas.

Parking controls can be used, where appropriate, as part of an integrated strategy to contribute to:

- Reduce vehicle trips to central areas during the peak providing congestion, local air quality, health and carbon reduction benefits;
- Improving the financial viability of bus, Park and Ride and rail services;
- Encouraging shorter trips within the urban areas to transfer to walking, cycling and public transport;
- Lock in the benefits of reduced traffic by reallocating road space to people through public realm enhancements;
- Improving quality of life in both residential areas as well as the city centres through greater opportunities for active travel, less motorised travel movements and emissions.

4.4 B&NES Local Plan Parking Policies

POLICY T.26 Development will only be permitted if an appropriate level of on-site servicing and parking is provided having regard to:
i. the maximum parking standards and the suggested provision for drivers with disabilities and cycle parking set out in the schedules attached to this policy and any additional standards which may be adopted by the Council;
ii. the proposed use, any need for on-site provision to ensure its efficient operation, and the likely extent of movement to and from the site;
iii. the environmental capacity of both the site and its surroundings to accept parking;
v. the capacity of the local highway network and the need to control any increase in traffic levels;
v. the need to ensure highway safety;
vi. the accessibility of the site by public transport, including Park and Ride;
vii. the ease of access by cycle or on foot;
viii. the availability of public car parking in the vicinity of the site;
ix. the provisions of any travel plan which may be submitted by or on behalf of the proposed occupier of the premises.

5. ON-STREET PARKING

5.1 Policy Objectives

The on-street parking policy objectives are:

- To provide improved parking facilities for city residents and short stay parking for visitors to local shops and businesses.
- That the Controlled Parking Zone scheme should provide enough income to enable sufficient levels of enforcement to cover the additional restrictions and residents parking facilities.

5.2 Controlled Parking Zone (CPZ)

Bath city centre is divided into a Central Zone and 14 Inner Zones with on-street parking control containing 1635 and 6115 and respectively– this is called the Controlled Parking Zone (CPZ).

The Central Zone is subdivided into two areas to control the duration of stay for pay and display customers, with either a 1 hour limit or 2 hr limit.

Six streets in Zone 1 provide pay and display parking for 2 or 4 hrs maximum stay: Henrietta Street; Grove Street; Laura Place; Great Pulteney St; William St (all 2 hr max) and Henrietta Road (4 hrs max).

In zone 6, Royal Avenue (4 hrs max) and Marlborough Lane (10 hrs max) also have pay and display.

In the remainder of Zones 1-9, 10-14 there is no pay and display and spaces are designated for residents and short stay free parking bays to support commercial activities. Some sections of unrestricted parking remain, including a section of Weston Road on the north side of Royal Victoria Park.

Resident permit holders can park within their designated zone at all times. The only exception in the CPZ is disabled blue badge holders who are entitled to park in these bays for an unlimited period.

In the 6 Outer Areas, the 10078 parking spaces are generally unrestricted with some pocket of limited waiting and residents' parking to address specific parking issues. Individual residents' parking orders exist in Bathwick and in streets around Royal United Hospital.

5.3. Residents' permits

Residents' permits

All residents living within controlled parking zones are entitled to apply for on-street parking permits.

In the Central Zone residents' permits currently cost £90 per annum restricted to one per household. In Zones 1-16, permits are restricted to 2 per household with the first permit costing £93 pa and the second permit costing £140 pa.

There is free overnight parking for Central Zone permit holders in Charlotte Street and Avon Street car parks.

Visitor permits

Residents within the Controlled Parking Zone may purchase up to 1000 parking hours per household using an electronic permit or a maximum of 100 paper permits valid for one day. Visitor permits enable their visitors to park in on-street bays without time restriction.

5.4 Parking surveys

Parking surveys

In order to ascertain whether the current parking policies and objectives are being met or need to be modified, a comprehensive on-street parking survey was carried out in June and July 2009.

The first part of this process involved collecting data to establish the baseline for the current on-street parking usage. Manual parking counts were carried out in the existing Controlled Parking Zones on a weekday and Saturday (see Fig 1 for extent of zones).

These times were chosen to represent a typical weekday peak, evening peak and weekend peak, and to assess any seasonable differences.

On-street parking occupancy results

The average occupancy surveyed in Zones 1-14 is fairly constant at around 45% on both weekdays and Saturdays. Car park occupancy is significantly higher in the Central Zone at between 71% and 100% with all on street parking spaces fully occupied on Saturday from 7pm onwards.

Zone	Total Spaces	Max/ Min Occupancy Weekday (%)	Max/Min Occupancy Saturday (%)
Central Zone	936	87/71	82/100
Zone 1	629	60/52	63/55
Zone 2	470	55/42	55/47
Zone 3	564	47/44	45/40
Zone 4	234	62/45	48/60
Zone 5	584	47/33	38/30
Zone 6	338	63/54	68/57
Zone 7	695	63/54	59/56
Zone 8	278	45/39	33/30
Zone 9	-	-	-
Zone 10	699	19/16	23/19
Zone 11	388	44/35	36/29
Zone 12	150	59/42	63/55
Zone 13	-	-	-
Zone 14	211	11/5	8/7

In the Outer Zones the occupancy is fairly constant varying between 30% and 38%.

6. OFF-STREET PARKING

6.1 Introduction

This section considers off-street parking in terms of public car parks that can be used by any motorist. A separate section considers private non residential parking and business user parking in the city. There are currently 11 public car parks serving the city centre and three Park and Ride car parks, providing a total capacity of 5273 spaces.

This total includes the Bath Spa Station, Broad Street, Cattle Market, Cricket Ground, Kingsmead Square, Manvers St, Podium, Saw Close, Sports Centre, Charlotte St, Avon Street car parks and Lansdown, Newbridge and Odd Down Park and Ride Sites.

6.2 Current policy

The current off-street parking strategy for Bath is a balanced parking strategy that provides high quality Park and Ride car parks for long stay parking, while maintaining some city centre car parks for medium and short stay use and allowing some controlled on-street parking for short stay.

The strategy is aimed at reducing the need for traffic to enter the city to seek car parking spaces, which left unchecked would threaten both the historic fabric and quality of the environment in the city.

The off-street parking objectives are to:

- To provide for the future parking demand using Park and Ride sites situated on the edge of the city.
- To implement a charging structure that allows mainly short and medium stay parking in city centre car parks.

6.3 Parking surveys

In order to confidently make decisions regarding the future strategy for the city's off-street parking and to establish whether the current principles are still valid, baseline data in the form of parking counts and survey information has been gathered.

Manual parking counts were carried out in June 2009, on a weekday and a Saturday at all 11 car parks serving the city centre, excluding the Southgate car park which was under construction at the time. The counts were taken between 6am and 9 pm.

These times and dates were chosen to represent typical peak usage figures on a weekday and at weekends.

6.4 Analysis of Data

Weekday

On the weekday peak, there were 880 and 420 empty car parking spaces in city centre car parks and park and ride sites respectively.

The city centre car parks having the most spare capacity were Avon Street Car Park (150 spaces) and Charlotte Street Car Park (256 spaces).

Evening

At 8.30pm on Saturday evening, there were 1161 empty car parking spaces.

Saturday

On the Saturday peak, in the city centre and park and ride sites there were 652 and 745 empty parking spaces respectively.

6.5 Setting the demand baseline for future parking provision

Where to set the demand baseline on which future parking provision should be based is a key question. If set too high, then the consequence of many empty parking spaces represents an inefficient use of assets. If set too low the following consequences are likely:

- increased congestion as drivers search for spaces;
- constrained economic growth for business/employment opportunities;
- Bath's position a major retail hub threatened; and
- reduced economic benefits brought by tourism and culture.

The Institution of Highways and Transportation report 'Parking Strategies and Management 2005' states that peak demand should not exceed 85 percent of supply at any parking location. The 2009 survey data shows that city centre car parks to be at 80% capacity.

Changes since June 2009

In November 2009, Multi Developments opened the new Southgate underground car park with 876 spaces (including 53 for disabled and 140 for rail customers). This replaced the former Ham Gardens multi storey car park (654 spaces demolished in 2007) and the former Euro Car Park in Dorchester St (59 spaces).

During 2011, a further 130 spaces will be removed from Bath Spa railway station during Phase 3 of the Southgate Development. In summary, the Southgate development, which includes an additional 20,000m² of retail spaces over and above the previous level, provides an additional 33 parking spaces. Therefore since the 2009 survey was undertaken there have been significant changes in both the demand for car parking and level of car parking provision.

Action A1: An occupancy survey of all city centre off street car parks and park and rides sites be undertaken annually to monitor changes in parking demand and provision.

As stated in the Parking Aims (2.0), the parking strategy must be compatible with the council's other objectives, in particular enhancing the economic viability of the city.

It is evident that the highest demand for parking is on the lead up to Christmas when all available car parks are full. As the Christmas season is economically the most important period of the year for the retail sector, it is proposed to set the baseline for future parking provision at existing car parking levels.

Principle P1: The existing number of public car parking spaces will be used as the baseline to monitor and predict changes in demand as a result of future economic growth.

6.6 Predicting parking growth

One of the key aims of the Bath Public Realm and Movement Strategy is to reduce travel demand and to encourage more journeys by sustainable means. One of the main ways this can be achieved is by managing demand through parking controls. It is notable that since the current parking strategy was adopted, car trips into the city centre have reduced.

6.7 Parking strategy to reduce congestion

As discussed in the sections above, we will be setting the baseline for future parking provision on the demand during the Christmas period when all car parks are full and assessing the parking growth based on current trends towards sustainable transport.

However we are not adopting an unsustainable 'predict and provide' approach. The parking strategy is a key component in a balanced traffic management plan aimed at reducing car usage and dependency and easing congestion.

This has been the fundamental principle of the current parking strategy and needs to continue if the traffic reduction and congestion objectives in the Bath Public Realm and Movement Strategy are to be realised. The principle is not only to provide for future sustainable growth at Park and Ride sites, but at the same time achieve a modal shift towards walking, cycling and public transport. It is this modal shift towards increasing sustainable transport modes that produces the traffic reduction and congestion benefits.

To meet regeneration objectives, the Core Strategy has allocated a number of city centre car parks for mainly for employment use to 2026. An allocation does not necessarily mean the loss in the number of overall car parking spaces, as options for building over and retaining all or some of the spaces or decking over existing car parks will be considered.

This policy meets two key objectives:

- To continue the shift in parking from the city centre to Park and Ride car parks situated at the edge of the city.
- To maximise housing and economic development on land that has been previously developed within the urban areas.

The car parks which are currently allocated for economic regeneration are as follows:

- Saw Close
- Cattle Market
- Manvers Street
- Avon Street Car Park

Principle P2: To maintain public car parking provision in the city centre at existing levels

6.8 Parking demand and provision table 2016 to 2026

This table shows the Core Strategy growth predicted car parking demand based on Census 2001 travel to work data.

	2016	2021	2026
Provision	870	870	870
Demand	680	1355	2030
Surplus/deficit	+190	-485	- 1160

This shows that by 2021 there will be a predicted shortfall of 485 spaces and by 2026 a predicted shortfall of 1160 spaces.

However with current trends in sustainable transport use expected continue, supported by further investment in sustainable transport, the demand for car parking spaces in Bath city centre may be

expected to reduce in the future by at least 12% by 2026. This is equivalent to a reduction in parking demand of about 1150 spaces, which will be sufficient to ensure provision meets demand.

However the future demand for parking will need to be closely monitored to ensure modal shift is taking place and investment in sustainable modes of transport is sufficient to support behavioural change.

Principle P3 :To meet any increases in parking demand by extending Park and Ride provision at Odd Down, Lansdown and Newbridge

6.9 Other factors affecting parking demand

There are a number of other factors which will affect off-street parking demand and capacity in the future:

- (a) New residential developments that provide a low level of car parking in line with planning policy.
- (b) New business that provide a low level of car parking in line with planning policy.
- (c) Use of Park and Ride sites as transport interchanges to provide links to schools, colleges and for large employers.
- (d) Extending on-street parking controls in favour of residents.
- (e) Impact on Bath from growth of Bristol and West Wiltshire towns.
- (f) Increased use of internet shopping.
- (g) Investment in Bristol and West Wiltshire towns which may increase retail 'leakage' to Bath
- (h) Parking restrictions in Royal Victoria Park

The objective of modal shift from the private car to other forms of transport is taken into account in the proposed increase in park and ride spaces

With the exception of points (f) and (g), all the other factors are likely to increase the demand for off-street parking within the period of this strategy. However the parking demand implication of many of these factors is difficult to predict and further studies will be required in the future.

6.10 Park and Ride

Bath is currently served by three purpose built full time Park and Ride sites covering three of the main approaches to the city - from the north, east and west (M4/M5/A420), south (A367) and west (A4/A39). In addition a Saturday only service operates from the University of Bath. Over 1.7 million people have used these Park and Ride services in the 12 months, representing a saving of around 1.5 million car journeys into and out of the city centre.

Increasing the number of Park and Ride spaces can be achieved by either constructing new sites or extending sites.

New sites

The main route into the city currently not served by a Park and Ride site is the A4 which serves an area of Wiltshire between Chippenham and Trowbridge. However, this corridor is served by regular bus and rail services and further rail improvements, such as main line electrification, are proposed. Therefore a site situated on this route is not considered appropriate at this time.

Increasing capacity

As part of the Bath Transportation Package it is proposed to expand car parking provision at each of the three existing park and ride sites to accommodate future parking demand.

Lansdown

Action A2: To implement a 390 space expansion at Lansdown Park and Ride.

Newbridge

Action A3: To implement a 250 space expansion at the current Newbridge Park and Ride site

Odd Down

Action A4: To implement a 230 space expansion at the current Odd Down Park and Ride site.

Hours of operation

The current hours of operation at the Park and Ride sites are 6:15am to 20:30 pm Monday to Saturday. During the Christmas shopping season services also operate on Sundays. Services may also run on Sundays to support special events such as the Bath Half Marathon and Bath Rugby fixtures.

However, future increases in demand for Sunday shopping may support an extension to the service to include Sunday operation at all three sites.

Action A5: To continually review the hours of operation of Park and Ride in consultation with local employers and retailers.

Increasing bus capacity/frequency at peak times

A new bus contract will be let in 2012 and this provides the opportunity to increase capacity and frequency of buses at the peak times.

Action A6: To investigate ways of increasing passenger capacity on Park and Ride buses at peak times.

Improve Park and Ride bus journey times

It is important that Park and Ride bus frequencies are reliable and journey times into the city centre are less than for other motorists, particularly in the congested peak hours.

Principle P4: To continue to support the introduction of bus priority measures that improve journey times for Park and Ride buses.

Tariffs

All day parking and unlimited travel is currently £3 per passenger on weekdays and £2.50 per passenger on Saturdays with accompanied children travelling free. This compares with all day parking in city centre car parks of £8.50 for upto 11 hours. Concessionary bus pass users can use the service free of charge.

A ten ticket journey card is also available to regular users for £12, which provides up to 20% discount. The cost of on and off-street parking charges are considered annually.

Principle P5: The tariff structure will continue to encourage long stay parking at Park and Ride sites.

Publicity

Bath has been very successful at promoting Park and Ride through advertising, leaflets, and bus livery. Park and Ride will be promoted as part of the Local Sustainable Transport Fund measures to potential users.

Park and Rides as transport interchanges

There is potential to use the Park and Ride sites as transport interchanges for network buses linking major employers in the city and also linking rural services. This provides significant traffic reduction benefits in the city. For example a demand responsive bus service to the Royal United Hospital and a bus service to Wessex Water headquarters operates from the Odd Down Park and Ride site. Wellow Parish Council also run a minibus to the Odd Down Park and Ride site. It is worth considering the possibility of extending the transport facilities offered at Park and Ride sites further, such as camper van parking and coach overflow parking facilities.

Park and Ride is now seen by large employers as a convenient way of addressing their travel plan objectives of reducing on-site parking for staff or visitors. The success of these planning policies is one of the reasons that park and ride facilities require expansion.

Information signage

It is vital that drivers are provided with reliable and up to date information regarding parking spaces in the city.

A car park management system consisting of variable message signs displaying the number of car park spaces is proposed to expand the current car park management system.

The system will make use of new technology to provide more targeted and effective traffic and parking information; for instance, by linking with the Urban Traffic Management Centre (UTMC), traffic and congestion reports could be displayed as well as real-time information on parking and journey times into the city centre.

Currently only 2 car parks are covered by the variable message signs: Avon Street and Southgate.

The coverage will be extended to include all of the main city centre car parks and Park and Ride sites.

It is particularly important to advise motorists before they reach our Park and Ride sites if city centre car parks are full or if there is city centre congestion to enable them to make informed decisions on where to park.

Previous studies have shown that up to 30 per cent of urban traffic can be accounted for by drivers driving to, or searching for, car parking spaces. The information that will be provided will allow drivers to decide at a much earlier stage of their journey at which car park they are most likely to find a space.

This advanced car park management system, proposed as part of the Bath Transportation Package will reduce the time and frustration spent searching for spaces and consequently ease traffic congestion in Bath.

Action A8 To extend coverage to all main car parks and Park and Ride site and provide variable message signs capable of displaying real-time traffic and parking information.

6.12 Conclusions

This section has assessed the manual parking data and considered the principles on which to base future parking provision. It has predicted what the future parking demand is likely to be and how this should be met.

In conclusion, the strategy is not based on an unsustainable 'predict and provide' approach but is part of a balanced, transport action plan that aims to reduce car dependency and usage, and manage parking demand.

7. BUSINESS USER PARKING

7.1 Permit System

Parking permits are available to business users who need to park close to their place of work in order to undertake regular journeys to and from that place of business throughout the day.

Two permits are available per business with the first permit costing £110 and the second permit costing £165, but may only be used in Zones 1-14.

To apply for a business user permit, applicants need to declare that the need for the permit is for operational reasons, for example as part of a Travel Plan, and not simply for convenience.

Principle P6: To continue to provide an appropriate level of business user parking spaces in the city centre.

7.2 Landlord permits

Landlord permits are available for visitors staying in the city at a cost of £350 pa in Zones 1,2,3 and £1000pa in all zones.

8. PRIVATE NON-RESIDENTIAL (PNR) PARKING

Private non-residential parking is usually defined as off-street parking provided to meet the needs of any non-residential development. It is privately controlled and not available for general public use, and most often described as office parking.

A considerable number of traffic movements occur in the peak hours across the city centre due to the existence of large numbers of PNR car parking areas. It is estimated that some parking spaces 1848 private non-residential parking spaces currently exist within the Central and Zone 1 CPZ. Planning policies restrict the provision of these car parking areas in new developments. For office and shopping developments, private non-residential parking is limited to operational needs only, with the balance provided in shared use car parks as part of the overall parking strategy.

A Travel Plan Forum for the major employers and higher academic establishments in Bath has been established to promote and develop travel plans and investigate partnership working with stakeholders and transport providers.

9. PARKING STANDARDS FOR RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENTS

9.1 Background

The current parking standards for new residential developments are contained in the Local Plan. However the government no longer require maximum car parking standards for residential development to be set and it is for local authorities to determine what local parking standards may be appropriate

For example residential parking standards may be based on car ownership levels obtained from census data. This information can then be used to develop a parking matrix to determine maximum standards for different types of location, for example, city centre, urban, suburban, rural and remote rural. Consideration also needs to be given to the availability of alternative modes of transport and the location of services.

9.2 Policy issues

A policy of low car parking provision in new sustainable developments close to the city centre is a key part of the overall traffic management strategy to reduce travel demand and car usage.

This policy brings into question two main issues: what level of car parking provision is appropriate and whether residents of these developments should be allowed on or off-street parking permits.

Action A10: Review local residential parking standards appropriate to different types of location and levels of accessibility to sustainable transport.

10. PARKING FOR DISABLED PEOPLE

It is recognised that cars are often the only viable form of transport for some residents and it is essential that those drivers with mobility problems have sufficient parking provision. It is also important that a sufficient number of blue badge holder spaces are situated close to the city centre.

The council will seek to increase the amount of disabled spaces where possible and will ensure that if some city centre parking spaces are reduced in line the local plan allocations, then this will not result in an overall reduction in the number of dedicated disabled bays provided.

Principle P7: To ensure that disabled car parking spaces are compliant with the Disability Discrimination Act (2005) and access requirements, and are provided in accordance with Bath and North East Somerset Parking Standards.

Blue Badge holder drivers can park free of charge on street anywhere within the city centre for an unlimited period.

Dedicated Blue Badge holder bays are provided in all car parks, but ,except for the Sports Centre Car Park, users are charged the full parking tariff consequently many Blue Badge holders chose to park on streets. However usage will be periodically monitored in order to assess the demand for additional provision.

Action A11: To provide Blue Badge holder parking spaces in all off-street car parks in accordance with the Bath and North East Somerset Parking Standards.

10.1 Park and Ride

The Park and Ride is operated using low floor buses with kneeling mechanisms and the interior layouts are designed to accommodate wheelchair users.

10.2 Shop Mobility scheme

A Shop Mobility scheme is operated in Bath located in Lower Borough Walls that allows anyone with a mobility problem the ability to move around the city using scooters or wheelchairs (either manual or powered).

They can be used between 9.30am-4.30pm Monday to Friday and 9am – 1pm Saturday. A small charge is made to contribute towards running costs.

11. MANAGEMENT AND ENFORCEMENT

11.1 Introduction

Under Decriminalised Parking Enforcement (DPE) the police handed over some of their on-street parking enforcement responsibilities, until then undertaken by Traffic Wardens, to Bath and North East Somerset Council and is carried out under terms of guidance issued by the Home Office.

Parking enforcement is carried out under the provisions of the Road Traffic Act 1991 and the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984. Penalty charge notices (PCNs) are issued where a parking attendant believes a contravention of the Off Street Parking Places Order (OSPPO) or a Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) has occurred. Home Office guidance provides standard references or codes for contraventions of parking and traffic regulation orders and it is against these that PCNs are cross referenced. Parking attendants undergo rigorous training before they become involved with the enforcement process.

The extent of operations covers on and off-street parking places as well as areas controlled by yellow line restrictions and school keep clear markings.

11.2 Off-street

At present, the off-street parking mix in Bath includes short, medium and long stay options and Park and Ride.

Some car parks provide a pay on foot management system that is very effective, easy to use and requires minimal staff resources to control. Other car parks use the widely recognised pay and display system of operation that is dependent upon staff patrolling to manage use.

Except where barrier controlled entry/exit systems are used all car parks are patrolled daily by parking attendants who will check for the presence of valid pay and display tickets, as well as the manner in which vehicles are parked.

In the future it is proposed to carry out enforcement using vehicle number plate recognition cameras. This would reduce the need for enforcement patrols by parking attendants at car parks, allowing them concentrate on on-street issues.

Action A12: To install of vehicle number plate recognition cameras to carry out enforcement at public car parks.

11.3 On-street

On-street there are 7750 spaces in the central and inner CPZ with a mix of options for use by residents only, permit parking and on-street pay and display.

11.4 Wider issues

Parking enforcement assists with the proper management of traffic and parking places. Income derived is an important element of the council's budgetary arrangements. It is important that the correct balance between expected levels of enforcement and proper management of parking places is maintained.

It is important to note that parking attendants carry out a range of duties not directly related to their enforcement role. They are, for example, often the first recognisable representatives of authority seen by visitors to our district. They act daily as ambassadors for the council and are often called upon to give help and advice.

11.5 Tariff structure

Parking charges form part of the council's wider transportation and traffic management strategies. The protection of historic fabric, maintenance of urban environments and control of vehicle movements, as parts of various plans, has been council policy for many years.

Income received is of benefit to the council and thereby the wider community, supporting the provision of services to residents and visitors.

The council strives to encourage the maximum use of its car parks and thus economic activity across the district, seeking to make the whole area attractive for residents, workers, visitors and shoppers.

It is important that council parking tariffs are seen to be fair and reasonable.

If the right balance is not maintained, there is a danger of visitors and shoppers choosing to go elsewhere and the consequential impact of this on the local economy has to be considered.

This should be considered as part of the annual review of charges.

There is also the issue of social inclusion. It is recognised that cars may be the only viable form of transport for some residents particularly those in rural areas where public transport systems do not provide a suitable alternative. Care must be taken to ensure that charges are set at a level proportionate with the economic viability of the city and consideration given to those groups identified through the Equalities Impact Assessment process.

Parking charges are important tools that encourage drivers to park in the most appropriate place; they are a mechanism that enables the council to deliver an efficient and responsive service in the context of demand and strategic policy aims. In all cases, tariffs must appear reasonable to those who use our parking places; they also need to be easily understood as complicated tariff structures will deter use and discourage return visits.

In Bath, there is currently a range of options:

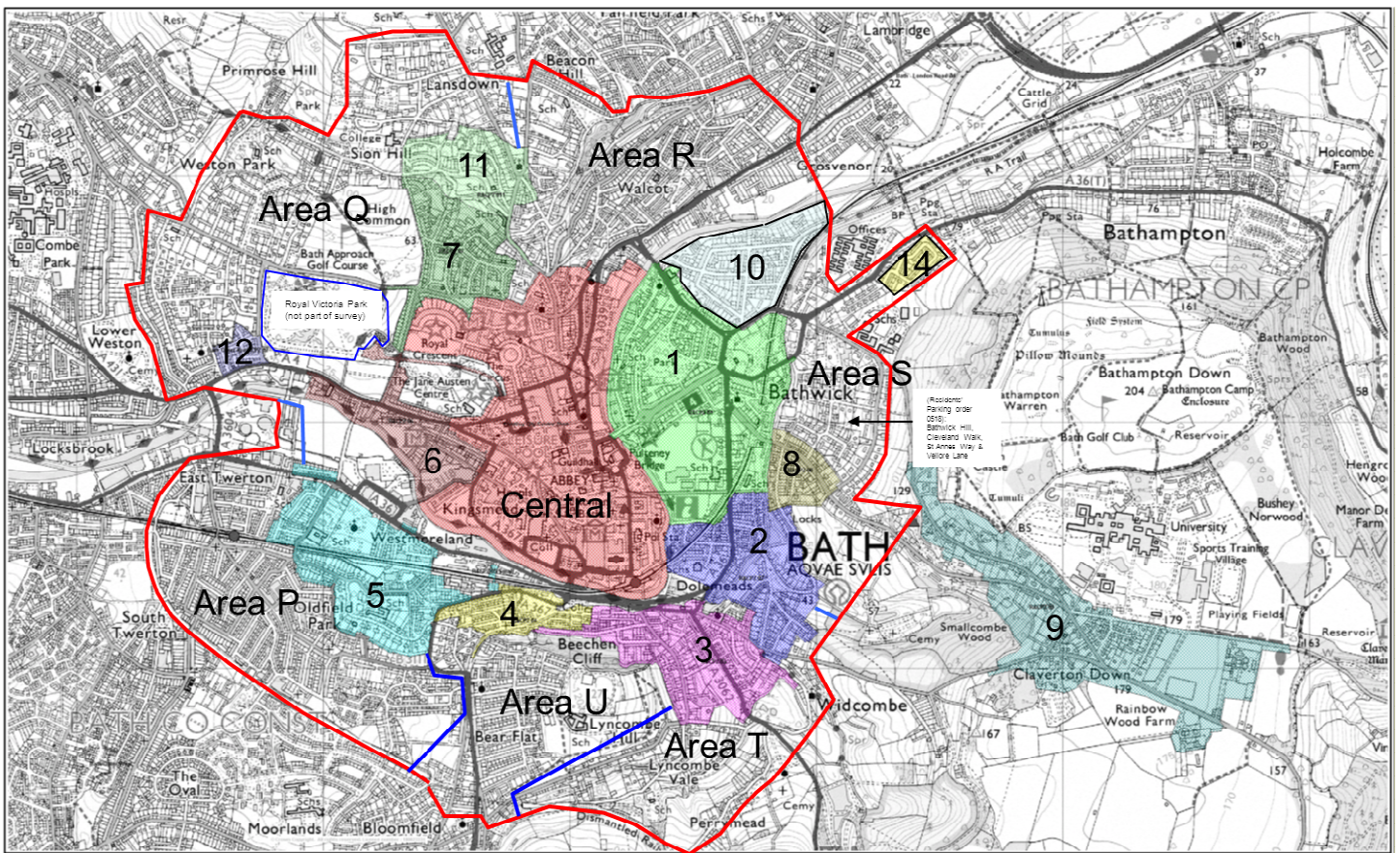
- Short Stay and Short Stay Premium – for shoppers, personal business and visitors
- Medium stay – for shoppers and visitors

- Long Stay – for commuters and all-day visitors
- Park and Ride – for shoppers, commuters and visitors
- Residents' parking
- Business parking

Principle P8: To retain the current range of off-street and on-street tariff options and to assess charges annually to ensure they are set at levels to encourage usage in the most appropriate places.

Principle P9: To ensure that the Controlled Parking Zone scheme provides enough income to enable sufficient levels of enforcement to cover additional restrictions and residents' parking facilities.

Fig 1: On street parking survey zones



Questions that the Panel are invited to consider:

Principle P1: The existing number of public car parking spaces will be used as the baseline to monitor and predict changes in demand as a result of future economic growth.

Q1. Is the existing number of public car parking spaces about right to accommodate existing needs?

Principle P2: To maintain public car parking provision in the city centre at existing levels

Q2. Is the existing level of public car parking an appropriate baseline from which to establish future parking demand and provision?

Principle P3: To meet any increases in parking demand by extending Park and Ride provision at Odd Down, Lansdown and Newbridge.

Q3. The Bath Package Transportation proposals include 870 additional park and ride spaces. This is less than predicted to meet future economic growth. A modal shift of about 12% towards sustainable transport modes is needed by 2026 to ensure demand for parking spaces does not exceed supply taking into account economic growth. Is this level of modal shift reasonable?

Principle P4: To continue to support the introduction of bus priority measures that improve journey times for Park and Ride buses.

Q4. Does more need to be done to improve journey times for Park and Ride buses by, for example, restricting on-street car parking to create bus lanes?

Principle P5: The tariff structure will continue to encourage long stay parking at Park and Ride sites.

Q5. Is the current differential in tariffs between park and ride and city centre car parking about right.

Principle P6: To continue to provide an appropriate level of business user parking spaces in the city centre.

Q6. Are current arrangements for providing for the operational needs of business about right?

Principle P7: To ensure that disabled car parking spaces are compliant with the Disability Discrimination Act (2005) and access requirements, and are provided in accordance with Bath and North East Somerset Parking Standards.

Q7. Can more be done to assist disabled parking, or is the provision of free unlimited on-street parking too generous?

Q8. Does more need to be done to reduce abuse of Blue Badge parking?

Principle P8: To retain the current range of off-street and on-street tariff options and to assess charges annually to ensure they are set at levels to encourage usage in the most appropriate places.

Q9. Are the current range of tariffs about right?

Principle P9: To ensure that the Controlled Parking Zone scheme provides enough income to enable sufficient levels of enforcement to cover additional restrictions and residents' parking facilities.

Q10. Does the CPZ meet the needs of residents, visitors and businesses?