

DRAFT PARKING SERVICES

Launch of new online Medical Parking Permit service from [date]

We recognise that Medical/Healthcare and Care professionals provide essential community services and understand that some residents/patients require home visits (including emergency visits) to meet their health and personal care needs.

We want to let you know about the following changes to the Medical Permit Service with effect from [Date].

- A new online Medical Permit service provided by MiPermit will replace the current paper based service to provide a more modern, flexible and responsive service
- 'Virtual' parking stays activated via the MiPermit service will replace the requirement to display a paper Medical Parking Permit, with parking stays limited to 2 hours
- The cost of a Medical Parking Permit will rise to £100 per annum in line with the cost of other permits such as Resident and GP permits

These changes follow careful consideration of the feedback provided by Medical permit holders/administrators in response to the consultation exercise about proposals undertaken in March 2017, the aims and objectives of the new Parking Strategy adopted by the Council in 2018 and in support of the Council's ongoing commitment to introduce digital services.

Parking Strategy

The Parking Strategy was developed to provide a long term plan for the management of parking across Bath & North East Somerset to help balance the often conflicting needs of residents, business and visitors for the very limited parking available. The strategy forms part of a package of transport improvement plans to reduce the impact of traffic for local people, business and visitors by helping to improve Air Quality levels, reduce congestion and protect the historic fabric of Bath as a UNESCO World Heritage.

More information about the Parking Strategy can be found at <http://www.bathnes.gov.uk/parkingstrategy>

The changes for Medical Permits align with the Parking Strategy commitment to deliver a review of available permit types:

- **PSA 03** - *The Council should undertake a review of the available permit types and remove those that do not comply with the objectives and policies of this strategy*

And the objectives within the strategy, including:-

- **PSO 06** Where it is deemed safe, on street parking will be allocated using a balance approach to meet demands in accordance with the hierarchy of kerb space. Parking restrictions will be introduced or parking prevented altogether, in order to reduce traffic and to maintain free flow of the highway network
- **PSO 07** - Within the centre of Bath priority for on-street parking will be given to disabled users, then residents parking zones and then short stay parking (maximum 2 hours) at the expense of long stay parking

New online service to apply for and manage Medical parking permits

A new online service will be available through MiPermit at [URL] from [Date] to enable you to apply for and manage your Medical Parking Permit account(s). This will replace the current paper based application and renewal service and provision of paper parking permits. Existing paper permits will remain valid until their expiry date.

Benefits of the online medical permit service includes:-

- Increased flexibility to register and manage your account at your convenience 24 hours a day
- make new applications (the virtual permit being available to activate as soon as approved)
- view permit details
- renew existing permits straight away (eliminating delay and problems with lost permits)
- pay for permits on line
- make immediate changes to permit details (for example to change the vehicle registration details linked to the permit)
- access information about permit usage
- access the MiPermit telephone helpline Monday to Friday 8am – 8pm and Saturdays 8am – 4pm and Sundays 10am to 4pm.
- prevent the need to display a paper permit giving increased privacy and security (for example if carrying medical supplies or equipment)
- nominate a 'primary' vehicle by adding the vehicle registration mark and link this to the live permit.

(Whilst only the nominated vehicle will be able to use the permit, you will have the flexibility to add other vehicle registrations to the account and change the 'nominated' vehicle registration details to meet your own service needs as you wish. You may find this helpful to manage the number of permits you require and potentially reduce the number needed).

Activating a parking stay (maximum stay duration 2 hours):-

Permit users will need to 'activate' their stay at the time they park. This can be done quickly and simply using the MiPermit phone app free of charge, by text at the standard rate of your mobile phone provider (texts are usually included in telephone packages), or by calling the MiPermit Helpline on 0333 123 8008

Medical parking permit stays will be limited to 2 hours. This is consistent with the results of the consultation exercise where respondents indicated the majority of visits last up to 2 hours long. Limiting parking durations will also help deter permit misuse as we are aware from previous monitoring exercises that paper Medical permits have been used for longer stays as a form of commuter parking in breach of the permit Terms & Conditions.

We understand that some visits can take longer, or you may need to make a number of visits in the same locality so it is possible to activate additional 2 hour stays at a parking location.

In the event a Penalty Charge Notice is issued, the vehicle owner can submit a 'challenge' at <https://parking.bathnes.gov.uk/pages/home.aspx> and provide information to explain the reason for parking for longer than 2 hours at a particular parking location with any available supporting evidence. The challenge will then be given full consideration and a decision made to cancel the PCN where information supports the permits use for supporting visits to someone at their home.

The cost of a medical permit will increase to £100 per annum

This will bring the permit cost in line with cost of resident parking permits and GP parking permits providing a fair and consistent approach.

The additional flexibility of the new online medical permit service may assist you to manage the number of permits required and potentially reduce the number needed.

The xxxx Guide explains how to activate a stay via MiPermit (enclosed)

Medical Permit Consultation 2017- results

A consultation exercise was undertaken in March 2017 to seek the views of Medical permit holders/administrators about planned proposals. The overall results and responses to other main comments are shown below:-

a) Proposal to introduce a new online medical permit service (to replace the current paper based system)

- 60% of respondents felt there were some or good potential benefits. This included - speeding up the application/renewal process, increased flexibility in use of permits and increased privacy and security from not displaying a paper permit

b) Limit medical permit parking stays to 2 hours

- 80% of respondents advised the majority of visits made to a patient/residents home takes no more than 2 hours

- 72% of respondents said they felt a time limit would or may help ensure permits are only used for home visits

c) Increase the cost of Medical parking permits to £100

- 64% of respondents indicated the proposed increase in costs would influence their future purchase of permits

Q & A

1) **We use multiple numbers of medical permits. Will the online permit account be able to have more than 1 permit attached to it?**

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2) **Is there a limit on the number of vehicles which can be added to an account**

No. However only 1 vehicle (shown in the account as the 'primary' vehicle) can use/activate the permit at any given time)

3) **How will Civil Enforcement Officers know we have a valid Medical permit**

Civil Enforcement officers will use their hand held devices to verify vehicle registration details against our permit records

4) **Some staff/GP's don't have smart phones or can't afford mobile text charges**

Medical parking permit stays can be activated via the MiPermit smart phone app or by telephoning the MiPermit helpline at xxxxx? The use of text messaging is generally included in telephone packages

The provision of equipment provided to medical workers is a matter for the employer not the Council.

The move to online services is in line with Councils commitment to introducing digital services and self-service to help increase service efficiency, flexibility and accessibility for service users as well as for more efficient and economic ways of working for the council.

- 5) We have multiple people using a number of paper permits which get picked up on the way out or as needed. The need to check permit accounts to allocate permits to people, remember user names and passwords, activate stays is going to be confusing and much more time consuming when we are already extremely pressured for time. This is time wasting.**

The new online service is intended to give greater flexibility to service users and strengthen the security of the service to ensure permits are used for the appropriate purpose. We appreciate you may need to review ways of working depending on your operational needs, however we expect the benefits of the service depending

- 6) Why can't permits be used for parking at health centres. We can see more people and we sometime need to carry heavy equipment**
- 7) What about GP permits – online account – activating stays**

This document about parking permits can be made available in different formats (e.g. in another language, as large print etc) from Parking Services - Telephone 01225 477133 or email Parking@bathnes.gov.uk.