

Gloucestershire County Council

Permit Parking Feasibility Policy

1 Introduction

1.1 Policy context

The Local Transport Plan highlights residents parking schemes as one method which could be used to address the problems associated with on-street commuter parking in residential areas. This policy expands on this, setting out the conditions where a residents parking scheme may be considered as well as setting out the operational details of a scheme. This policy sets out an approach that can be consistently applied across the whole of the Gloucestershire County area.

1.2 It is intended that this policy will also set an approach to business, commercial and visitor parking within residential areas and the use of permits and other controls to achieve the objectives detailed below.

1.3 This document should be read as a whole and no single point should be relied upon for guidance in a scheme.

1.4 Purpose of permit parking schemes

- Give priority in the use of available road space to residents
- Remove or control commuter or other parking
- Improve environmental conditions in residential areas
- Encourage the use of alternative modes of transport
- Deliver the County's Transport Policy

1.5 Existing permit parking schemes

Existing permit parking schemes, which were implemented on an ad hoc basis, without the guidance of policy, will be revised in accordance with this policy;

- as new adjoining schemes are introduced
- where many existing schemes already exist in the wider area

1.6 Where appropriate, and predominantly in highly restricted or pressured areas, a "zonal" approach will be adopted in the design of schemes. Where the impact of a scheme on a road or street has displacement implications or other impact on a neighbouring road the scheme should be extended to cover that road, or a separate scheme considered for the neighbouring area – even where no requests for such a scheme have been received . In such areas a Controlled Parking Zone (CPZ) should always be considered (see 2.9 and 5.5 below).

2 The introduction of a permit parking schemes

2.1 Advantages

- Discourage commuter/shopper parking in residential streets;
- Enhanced environment in residential areas;
- Residents find their on-street parking is easier and more convenient;
- Improve parking and traffic management;
- Improve the management of parking from new development; and Produce road safety benefits.

2.2 Disadvantages

- Possible knock-on effect of re-located commuter / shopper parking;
- Costs of introduction and management and payment for permits;
- Permits do not guarantee a parking space;
- Schemes may only manage an under-supply of spaces;
- Can lead to inefficient use of on-street parking space; and
- Reduces levels of on-street parking - problems for visitors/businesses. Can reduce traffic flow/safety as vehicle drivers search for fewer permitted spaces.

2.3 Criteria

2.3.1 The following criteria must be met in order for a permit parking schemes to be considered:

2.3.2 All requests for a permit parking schemes must be put forward by and fully supported by at least one County Councillor in the Division affected.

2.3.3 A high proportion of residents surveyed within the scheme boundary (at least 70% of respondents) must support the introduction of permit controls for the scheme to go ahead with a minimum response of 50% of households within the area.

2.3.4 Permit parking schemes will not be introduced where the majority of residents have off-street parking or where there is sufficient on-street space to accommodate both residents and non-residents parking; it is notable that a DfT survey (2008) reported that 48% of households have access to a garage (only 28% used the garage to park a vehicle overnight) and 57% have access to other off-street parking.

2.3.5 It may be inefficient to introduce a permit parking scheme in small isolated areas remote from other areas of parking enforcement. Such schemes would have a disproportionate cost in terms of enforcement, may create expectations that the Council is unable to meet and have limited traffic or parking management value for the surrounding area.

2.3.6 For permit parking to be introduced or any other scheme to be considered there should be an observable and persistent problem. It may be inefficient to introduce permit parking schemes to manage minor sporting events or other occasional community events. In the case of major events, they must be frequent and cause significant disturbance, as judged by all parties involved.

2.3.7 Within a permit parking scheme, individual properties on roads which are part of the scheme can be excluded from eligibility for parking permits if that exclusion was a specific part of the planning consent for that property, such as part of a section 106 agreement.

2.3.8 There must be a demonstrable need which is defined by all of the points below:

- At least 50% of the properties affected have no off-street parking provision.
- Residents are unable to park because at least 40% of available kerb space is occupied by non-residents during the normal working day, for example commuters near a town centre or office premises.
- The administration and enforcement of the scheme must be able to operate with no financial burden on the council.

2.3.9 Controlled Parking Zones are;

- areas where all of the kerb space is subject to regulation.
- entrance and exit of the zone is indicated by suitable signage at all points.
- within the zone reminders of the restrictions are indicated by “repeater signs” and other signs and lines are not used.

2.3.10 Controlled Parking Zones should be introduced where;

- Several linking streets in one area meet the criteria for a permit parking scheme (this may result in the creation of more than one adjacent CPZ to limit inter-zonal travel).
- More than 85% of kerb space within a defined area is subject to parking restrictions.

3 Operational details of a permit parking scheme

3.1 Please see Gloucestershire Parking Terms and Conditions. This document sets out Gloucestershire County Council's (GCCs) Terms and Conditions relating to parking permits, waivers, suspensions and voucher along with the services/products offered relating to permitted parking.

3.2 Guesthouses, Hotels, Bed and Breakfast establishments will be consulted with through the design process where necessary, to establish if possible alternate off-street arrangements should be investigated with the local District or Borough Council.

3.3 Cost of permits

Cost of permits can be found in the Gloucestershire Parking Terms and Conditions.

3.4 Times of operation

Times of operation for individual Residents Parking Schemes will be designed to reflect local parking and road use; local consultation will help to inform this decision. As a principle, times of operation should as a minimum standard, reflect those of nearby off-street parking, or in the absence of such parking run from 8am to 8pm daily including Sundays and Bank Holidays. Times of operation need to reflect increased Sunday travel and parking pressures and late night use of local facilities.

3.5 Provision for visitors

Residents within the scheme area will have the opportunity to purchase visitors vouchers at a cost identified in the Gloucestershire Parking Terms and Conditions. Each household will be restricted to a maximum number of visitor permits per year.

3.6 Provision for carers

Carers' permits will be issued free of charge. Carer permits should only be used in conjunction with active and ongoing care at the residence of the person in receipt of the care. GCC reserves the right to require evidence that this requirement is being met should the need arise.

Applicants must include in their application a letter from Social Services that specifies who is being cared for. Without this information the application may not be processed.

3.7 Provision for Blue Badge holders

The provision of disabled bays is unaffected by the existence of a residents' parking scheme. Blue Badge holders must apply for and purchase a residents' parking permit if they require one. Disabled residents who own a vehicle and are also Blue Badge holders are able to apply for a permit which allows them to park for an unlimited time period within the disabled bays within their zone. Blue Badge holders who are non-residents are only allowed to park within the disabled bays and on yellow lines where there are no loading restrictions for up to three hours with their "clock" disc displayed.

Please note: Blue Badge holders are not eligible to park in permit holder only bays without a valid permit.

3.8 Provision for motorcycles

The cost of residents' permits for motorcycles under 300cc will be the equivalent of half the cost of a first permit for a household. Permit costs for motorcycles above 300cc are the same as car permits.

4 Enforcement

4.1 Penalty Charge Notices (PCNs) may be issued for the non-display of a valid permit within a residents or permit parking zone. In accordance with the Civil Enforcement of Parking Contraventions (Guidelines of levels of charges) (England) Order 2007.

4.2 All road space within the area of a permit parking scheme will be defined either as permitted parking or by yellow line restrictions, this will be carried out in accordance with the current Traffic Signs Regulations and General Directions 2016.

4.3 In instances that a permit parking scheme is implemented, appropriate signage in accordance with the current Traffic Signs Regulation and General Directions 2016 or other regulations in effect at the time will be erected.

5 Design of Schemes

Residents' parking is a relatively complex process to design and manage and it is inevitable that different locations will require slightly different solutions. Design criteria will have to have some degree of flexibility of interpretation.

Types of Parking Permit Scheme

5.1 There may be considered to be broadly three types of location where residents' parking schemes could be appropriate:

5.2 Demand for parking exceeds supply – exclusive permit schemes

This is the most traditional and common form of scheme, where a street or area is divided into prohibited and permitted parking areas. In order to park in a permitted area, a vehicle would be required to display a valid permit. The permit categories may vary; usually residents, visitors, health care workers serving residents and other users the authority may see fit. The system provides optimum benefit to residents but low levels of residents' parking can lead to an inefficient use of on-street parking where overall parking is limited.

In areas where the demand for on-street spaces from residents alone exceeds the supply, the management and allocation of permits can be problematic; this is particularly the case where the scheme results in the kerbside space being reduced through formalisation of properly permitted parking – eg clearing parking at junctions.

5.3 On-street parking is not restricted to residents – shared use bays

This type of scheme is commonly referred to as a ‘shared use scheme’, where there is a dual use of on-street space, overcoming the under use problem noted above. It commonly enables the time-limited use of on-street space (which may or may not be charged for) to be operated alongside vehicles with residents’ permits that would be exempt from either time or charge restrictions. It does eliminate the need for the administration of permits for visitors, carers etc., with these users being able to use space generally available.

5.4 High demand for on-street parking by both residents and non-residents – exclusive bay schemes

In some instances it may be considered that visitors and staff of local businesses and facilities may need some assured parking provision while leaving residents to compete with this demand in a shared spaces scheme may leave them unreasonable disadvantaged. In these cases designated spaces for residents – displaying permits, and visitors – paying for space through pay-and-display may more effectively protect residents and visitors needs while allowing some control over the mix of use within the area.

5.5 Controlled Parking Zones (CPZs) ; The following points should be read in conjunction with point 2.3.9 and 2.3.10 above.

5.5.1 All kerb space is either designated parking or restricted parking and the zones (and possible sub-zones) are indicated by entry and exit signs.

5.5.2 CPZs may be of use in areas of intense parking use and/or where one permit parking zone adjoins another.

5.5.3 Pay and Display

In some areas visitor parking to local businesses and other facilities may be desirable or considered appropriate for the area. The use of price to control demand should be considered as an integral part of a permit parking scheme. Pay and Display controls should be considered where some control of the demand for non-residential parking is required within a permit parking scheme.

5.6 Times of operation

See 3.4 above.

6 Acceptance of schemes and prioritisation of works

6.1 It is proposed that applications for schemes should only be progressed if they are supported by at least one of the local County Councillors. When dealing with requests this will mean that Councillors must be consulted before a scheme is in progress. Subsequently requests for a permit scheme should be redirected, in the first instance, to a local County Councillor.

7 Finance

7.1 Permit charges can be found in the Gloucestershire Parking Terms and Conditions. Any changes to permit charges will be advertised in line with the correct legal process. Permit charges are consistent countywide.