

TWENTY QUESTIONS

- Q.1 Why have the parking charges been introduced or increased?
- A. Chippenham have had charges for many years and from time to time these need revising. The Council does not have a statutory duty to provide car parking but if it continues to do so then it needs to ensure that it does not become a burden on Council Tax payers. Charges have now been introduced into other towns to avoid substantial increases in Council Tax and charges in Chippenham have been revised.
- Q.2 What are the new parking charges?
- A. The Council has decided to allow free parking for the first hour or two in certain shoppers car parks. A full schedule of the new charges can be found on our website
http://www.northwilts.gov.uk/index/transport/ts_motor_vehicles/ts_motor_vehicle_roads_parking-index.htm
- Q.3 What times do the charges for parking apply?
- A. 8am - 6pm in most places with a few exceptions in Chippenham
- Q.4 Can I buy an annual parking permit (season ticket)?
- A. Yes contact the Council on 01249 706111 or visit the Council Offices at Monkton Park, Chippenham
- Q.5 What happens if I have a season ticket but cannot find a space in the car park to which it relates, is it transferable?
- A. The terms applicable to season tickets makes it clear that there is no guarantee of a space being available, this has not changed from the previous terms and conditions (parking is on the basis of first come first served). You can park in another car park but would need to pay the appropriate fee for the period concerned. However, we will be looking at transferable tickets in the near future.
- Q.6 Can I get a refund of unused portion of a season ticket if I no longer need the season ticket?
- A. Yes, but only for complete unused months.
- Q.7 Do I have to buy an annual season ticket?
- A. No, we also provide a quarterly ticket. Season tickets can be purchased from the reception area at North Wiltshire District Council, Monkton Park, Chippenham SN15 1ER. Alternatively, you can phone 01249 706111 or obtain an application form from our website. www.northwilts.gov.uk You can pay by debit card.
- Q8 Are there any exceptions to parking charges
- A. Yes. Disabled motorists do not need to pay if a blue badge is displayed.

- Q.9 Did you consult with the public before introducing these fees?
- A. Yes - There was a statutory consultation process and comments received were considered carefully by the Council. The Council allowed for free parking for the first /two hour(s) in 'shoppers' car parks
- Q.10 What is the money collected from parking charges being spent on?
- A. Mainly the running of car parks and to minimise an increase in Council Tax.
- Q.11 How do the parking fees compare to those in other areas?
- A. Few Councils have free parking and charges in nearby areas vary, with higher charges in most areas (see comparison)
- Q.12 What happens if I do not pay the day parking fee?
- A. You will be given a parking ticket and will need to pay a fine currently £60.
- Q.13 I'd like to car share, how can this be arranged?
- A. Wiltshire county Council has introduced a car sharing scheme. Joining the scheme is easy, employees can register on the internet and find possible car share partners on line.: www.carsharewiltshire.com
- Q.14 I am a local resident and normally park overnight in one of the car parks that has been free. How will the changes affect me?
- A. In most car parks the charges are only effective between certain daytime hours so people will still be able to park in most of them for free during the night. However, residents will need to comply with the new Parking Order which will mean in most cases they will need to remove their vehicle in the morning and/or pay the relevant charge.
- Q.15 Where I live there is very limited on-street parking and these new arrangements will make it difficult for residents. Can I apply for a residents parking permit?
- A. North Wiltshire District Council does not presently operate a system of residents parking permits although we are looking at it. In the meantime residents will be required to comply with the new parking regulations.
- Q.16 I would like residents parking in my area. Can I have this?
- A. This may be possible if there is enough demand in your area and it is safe to do so. The Council will be consulting on residents parking in the near future and will have discussions with the County Council as they are the highway authority as this will need to gain their approval.
- Q.17 Will I need to pay for residents parking?
- A. It will cost the Council money to enforce restrictions and administer parking. The Council will therefore be looking at covering the cost but at this stage,

until the extent of demand is established, it is not possible to say what this cost may be.

Q.18 When will decriminalisation of parking enforcement start?

A. It is planned to start in September 2006 when the responsibility will transfer from the Police to the Council. The Council have referred to this as Phase 1 as it will only cover existing restrictions on the highway.

The Council will be looking at how the second phase may be introduced which is intended to include residents parking.

Q.19 Will the Council have total responsibility for enforcement on the highway?

A. No. The Police will still have responsibility for traffic offences which, if found proven, may lead to endorsements on your driving license.

Q.20 Why is the Council considering a parking strategy and what is it?

A. There are competing demands for parking between shoppers, tourists, visitors, workers and businesses and we are being told that each town has different problems.

We are also being told that there is insufficient parking in most of the towns. A strategy for parking should not only look at parking as this may potentially conflict with transportation and planning policy. The strategy will therefore cover the following matters, to find possible solutions.

- Future capacity of parking provision and transportation policy
- Local needs of businesses
- Short term and long stay parking
- Charging policy
- Introduction of residents parking in central areas
- The possible extension or contraction of parking enforcement beyond current limits
- The effects of nearby larger towns on retailers and businesses within the market towns.

Season tickets can be purchased from the reception area at North Wiltshire District Council, Monkton Park, Chippenham SN15 1ER. Alternatively, you can phone 01249 706111 or obtain an application form from our website. www.northwilts.gov.uk

If you have any further questions or would require more information please email us at parking@northwilts.gov.uk

Dated: 28th September 2005

WHAT IS DECRIMILISATION OF PARKING ENFORCEMENT (DPE)

At present in North Wiltshire, car-parking enforcement on the roads is the responsibility of the police. If you obtain a parking ticket you are actually committing a criminal offence.

There are provisions within the Road Traffic Act 1991 for the responsibility of parking enforcement to be transferred to local authorities. At present this is voluntary, but it is possible that the Government will be considering transferring this function away from the police in the near future. Nevertheless, the Wiltshire Police have expressed the desire to transfer this function to local authorities.

Already in Wiltshire, Salisbury District Council and more recently, Swindon Borough Council have taken on this responsibility and the remaining 3 District Councils in Wiltshire and the County Council have been asked to consider this.

The County Council are involved as they are the highway authority and have responsibility for Traffic Regulation Orders which are an essential part of Decriminalisation of Parking Enforcement (DPE), as it is correctly referred to.

The County Council has an opportunity to undertake DPE themselves but have expressed a willingness for the District Council's to take on this responsibility through an agency agreement. This will enable the district Council's to integrate on street parking enforcement with off-street parking enforcement (car parks) for which they are currently responsible.

An application has to be made to the Department for Transport (DfT) to create what is known as a Special Parking Area (SPA). If approved parking enforcement powers will be transferred from the police and a parking offence will no longer be classified as a criminal offence, hence the term "decriminalisation". Police will still retain powers for endorsable traffic offences though.

WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF DECRIMINALISATION

The Traffic Warden Service will be replaced by Parking Attendants managed by North Wiltshire District Council and not the Police. It will be good for North Wiltshire because:

- Car parking issues can be easier linked to Council Transportation policies/issues etc.
- It enables integrated on-street and off-street parking management and enforcement.
- The Council will be able to introduce new restrictions (e.g. residents parking schemes) and be able to enforce them, subject to approval by Wiltshire County Council.
- New focus to enforcement means clearer roads and pavements - traffic regulations will have greater significance.

- The income comes to the Council to help pay for the service.
- Increased permitted parking enforcement leads to an increase in parking place turnover and a better and fairer use of the available parking places.
- Money from fines obtained by the Police go to the treasury not the Police.
- Changes in enforcement will allow the money to go to the Enforcement Authority.
- Improved safety and reduced pollution from reduction in vehicle circulation
- A single responsibility for parking means greater clarity and simpler perception to the general public.
- Scope for Parking Attendants (Wardens) to develop a broader role to enhance customer relations.
- The actual restrictions are not changing, only the means of enforcement.