

NWDC DECRIMINALISED PARKING ENFORCEMENT

Decriminalised Parking Enforcement (DPE) is considered a key element in the drive to encourage more sustainable trips into the Town Centres. Experience from the London Boroughs and the many other authorities across the country that have introduced DPE show a significant change in compliance with regard to the existing parking regulations.

The integration of enforcement and parking policy responsibilities should provide better monitoring of the effectiveness and value of parking controls, so that parking provision becomes more responsive to the public's needs.

This new legislation will allow the County and District Councils to provide more effective traffic enforcement to meet the needs of local communities, something that local communities have requested. North Wiltshire District will become a Special Parking Area on 4 September 2006.

DPE is a key element of the strategy, as it assists

- by allowing the District Council to prioritise where enforcement resources should be deployed;
- the movement of traffic by discouraging unauthorised parking;
- In reducing road traffic accidents;
- in managing more effectively the overall level of traffic especially in the Town Centre;
- in the reduction of serious traffic congestion;
- by encouraging long term commuter parking in the appropriate car parks;
- by improving the environment and air quality by reducing the number of vehicles circling the Town Centres in the search of parking;

ENFORCEMENT

Reliable enforcement is fundamental to the success of any parking policy. The Council has committed to adopting Decriminalised Parking Enforcement as of 4th September 2006. Before this date, the majority of on-street parking restrictions were enforced by Wiltshire Police through its Traffic Wardens and Police Community Support Officers. All fines were passed to the Government and the number of Traffic Wardens were not necessarily related to the number of offences being committed or prosecuted. The Council previously employed its own Parking Attendants to enforce restrictions in its car parks only.

The 1991 Road Traffic Act allows Councils to take over responsibility for enforcing on-street restrictions in Special Parking Areas (SPAs) following decriminalisation of the contraventions and to keep the money raised from enforcement. The primary responsibility for on-street enforcement is the County Council, as Highway Authority; it was agreed that these powers shall be delegated to the District Council by means of an Agency Agreement.

The Government specifies that funds generated by parking enforcement in SPAs should be used to cover enforcement costs and can be used to fund alternative transport initiatives including public transport enhancements and car parking improvements. Provision for this has been made within the agency agreement.

Enforcement Policy

The Council is committed to implementing the powers to carry out the enforcement of on-street waiting restrictions within the District as from 4th September 2006.

Enforcement is carried out in order to achieve a level of compliance with the regulations which is sustainable.

Procedures have been determined for the issuing and processing of parking tickets. The objective is to provide fair and firm enforcement in a manner intended to discourage illegal parking.

The Council has become members of the National Parking Adjudication Service in order that appellants against the issue of parking tickets can have an independent and fair opportunity for an external review of the correctness of any parking ticket.

Enforcement will be made at any time; the resource is concentrated at peak times with a lower level of resource available outside of peak time.

The majority of the resource will be utilised in the main Towns, large villages and other problem areas, but all Traffic Regulation Orders throughout the District will be enforced at an appropriate level, recognising the incidence of illegal parking, and the significance of that activity.