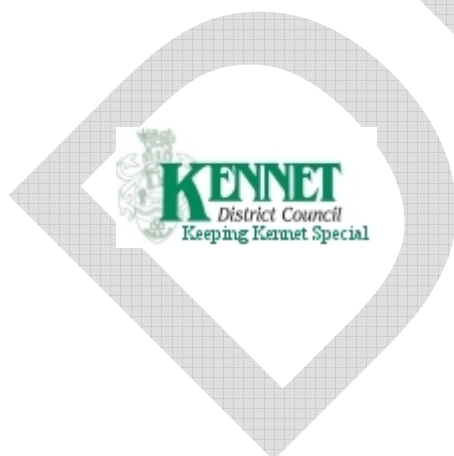




## Wiltshire County Council

### Policy for the Introduction of Residents Parking Schemes in the County of Wiltshire



*North  
Wiltshire  
District  
Council*



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## **Introduction of Residents Parking Schemes in the County of Wiltshire**

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## **General issues.**

This policy has been developed in consultation with North Wiltshire, Kennet, Salisbury and West Wiltshire District Councils. It is designed to encompass the primary objectives of Residents Parking Schemes and to enable a uniform approach towards the introduction, operation and enforcement of the schemes across the County. As Residents Parking Schemes by their very nature vary widely in terms of how the scheme might aim to serve the residents' needs, due in a large part to the existing characteristics of the zone to be considered, in particular use of and availability of kerb space, the guidance document "Guidance on the Introduction of Residents Parking Schemes in the County" should be followed as closely as possible when designing the scheme. Any deviation from guidance should be supported in writing and agreed by both Wiltshire County Council and the enforcing authority.

## **Policy**

### **Section 1 - What is a Residents' Parking Scheme?**

- 1.1** Whilst it must be remembered that there is no right to park on the highway, the primary purpose being for passage and repassage of vehicles, there are a number of residential areas in Wiltshire which might benefit from the introduction of residents parking schemes where such parking would not interfere with the primary purpose of the highway. On-street parking is generally generated by shoppers or commuters. In some of the areas the parking might prevent residents who have no off-street facility (forecourt, drive, garage etc) finding a parking space reasonably close to their home.
- 1.2** Traditional Traffic Regulation Orders (TROs) are used to alleviate any access, road safety or environmental problems associated with high levels of parking but these offer no priority to the residents affected – both residents and non-residents would be equally affected by any such restrictions.
- 1.3** It is however, possible to give priority to residents by introducing residents permit holders only parking schemes and defining various parts of the highway where parking may be permitted only if a valid permit issued by the District Council (acting as agents to the highway authority) is displayed on the vehicle. Permits are normally only issued to resident's living in a street within the zone and are under the control of, and issued at the discretion of the District Council. All existing schemes in the County operate in this way with provision for residents generally being within permit holder only or shared use bays

- 1.4** The advantages and disadvantages of such schemes may be summarised as follows: -

**Advantages**

- a) Residents having no off-street parking facility would have a reasonable opportunity to park close to their homes (residents parking permit schemes do not however offer any guarantees of a parking space and certainly not a parking space in front of the resident's own home).
- b) The amenity of the area would be improved with vehicles being parked in a more orderly fashion.
- c) A scheme may also have benefits from a social, community safety, housing or planning policy aspect.
- d) Shared use bays provide for short term visitors without the need for complex visitor permit administration systems

**Disadvantages**

- a) Does not accord with the primary role of the highway which is its use for moving traffic;
- b) A residents parking scheme in one area might create or worsen parking problems in adjacent areas;
- c) Parking spaces for residents and visitors could at times be inadequate;
- d) Could inhibit activities of commercial and other non-residential activities within the zone.
- e) During restricted hours the street may be lightly parked possibly leading to an accusation that the town centre "parking stock" is being uneconomically under used.
- f) By formalising the parking layout a net loss of spaces may result when turning movements and visibility at junctions are protected by new parking prohibitions.
- g) Potentially limits the residents' freedom to keep unlimited numbers of taxed vehicles on street.
- h) Shared use bays give equal opportunity to park to motorists not visiting residents. Longer stay visits to residents are not catered for unless a visitor permit arrangement is also introduced.
- i) Residents parking schemes will, in some cases, reduce the amount of on-street parking.

## Section 2 - Types of Resident Parking Schemes (RPS)

2.1 There are three possible types of RPS

- (i) exclusive permit spaces
- (ii) shared spaces
- (iii) exemption from on street parking charges

2.2 Exclusive permit spaces – this is the most traditional form of RPS. Basically a street would be divided into prohibited and permitted parking areas. In order to park in the permitted parking areas a vehicle would be required to display a valid permit. Permits would be issued to residents, visitors and other such persons as the Issuing Authority sees fit (e.g. carers) in accordance with the rules and criteria set out in writing by the Issuing Authority.

2.3 This system provides optimum benefit for residents and their visitors but low levels of resident vehicle parking may produce a layout which looks comparatively empty.

2.4 Shared spaces – in order to overcome what may be viewed in 2.3 as a disadvantage the whole of the area designated for permitted parking could be controlled as dual use i.e. time limited which may or may not be charged for and residents parking. Any vehicle displaying a valid residents parking permit would be exempt from any charge or time restriction. It is essential that the balance between the needs of residents and other vehicles is carefully considered.

2.5 This may, on the face of it, appear to be an attractive option but it is more time consuming and therefore difficult for the Parking Attendants to enforce. It does, however, reduce the need for the costly administration of a complicated permit scheme to accommodate the needs of numerous visitors, trades people, carers, district nurses etc. Combinations of exclusive and shared use bays may, if carefully designed, produce a satisfactory compromise.

2.6 Exemption from on street parking charges – Such an approach to RPS would require careful economic modelling. The method of operation is similar to 2.4 above with the exception that the non residents pay for their short term stay with a maximum stay defined by the Order. Permit holders would be exempt from any charges.

2.7 In addition to the above three approaches it would be possible to give residents an amenity benefit and some degree of priority by introducing a waiting prohibition for a short period each day. Used in areas subjected to long stay commuter parking this approach has been successfully implemented in some Districts with restrictions between say 9.00am and 10.00am used around areas such as railway stations. These orders are generally easy to enforce by Parking Attendants. However, this may also be inconvenient to some residents and would be unlikely to deter short term shoppers using local facilities. This type of order is probably best suited to

areas with severe commuter problems (e.g. around railway stations) and in areas where the majority of properties have off street parking places.

- 2.8** A system for dealing with visitors will also need to be considered. The charges for such permits must aim to recover the administrative cost and be restricted in the numbers available to each property.

### **Section 3 - Layout of RPS (including times of operation)**

- 3.1** When considering the needs of the residents and determining the layout of a RPS the following must be considered;

- (i) Maintaining traffic flow & visibility at junctions
- (ii) vehicle accesses
- (iii) loading/unloading requirements
- (iv) bus stops
- (v) the needs of blue badge holders
- (vi) limited waiting areas for local business
- (vii) visitors and other categories of drivers who need to park within the zone
- (viii) the use of the area (residential/commercial)
- (ix) safety of the public within the zone

- 3.2** The objective would be to maximise the number of residents' spaces and to reduce the amount of commuter parking in residential areas.

- 3.3** In determining the amount of available space for permitted parking and to ensure that all schemes are treated in a similar way it is considered appropriate to adopt a set of criteria for maintaining available widths of highway for traffic movements. This criterion has been based upon guidance set out by the Institution of Highways and Transportation in "Transport in the Urban Environment".

- a) One-way residential roads shall maintain a free carriageway width of 3.3 metres between marked bays.
- b) One-way traffic with parking on both sides of the road requires a minimum width of 6.9m
- c) One-way traffic with parking on one side of the road requires a minimum width of 5.2m.
- d) Carriageways carrying two way traffic must retain a width commensurate with its function. E.g. a through route may need to allow sufficient width for two HGV's to pass, whilst a small cul-de-sac may be able to function safely with a much reduced carriageway width.

- 3.4** The schemes will be introduced on a zonal basis. The introduction of RPS across a zone provides greater flexibility by using spare capacity in one street to supplement another. Zone boundaries should remain logical and easily defined and not large enough to provide a benefit in vehicles 'commuting' whilst remaining in their zone. Consideration must also be given to the effect of displacement parking.

## **Section 4 - Prioritising potential areas for RPS**

- 4.1** There are few residential streets anywhere that at some time or another do not suffer from non-residential parking. It is appropriate therefore to establish a priority system, which discriminates in favour of areas experiencing high levels of non-residential parking to the exclusion of residents and where there are few opportunities for residents to park off street. Problems due purely to the number of residents' vehicles, for example during the evening, when few or no non residents vehicles are present will not be solved by such a scheme unless strict rules upon the hours of operation and permit issue are applied which restrict the residents themselves.
- 4.2** It is proposed that a prioritisation system is used to determine the priority for residents parking schemes in the Districts. The survey method should aim to help determine the extent of parking problems and the demand for residents parking. An example prioritisation system is detailed in the guidance document "Guidance on the Introduction of Residents Parking Schemes in the County of Wiltshire."
- 4.3** A minimum level of positive responses from residents must be agreed for a scheme to be considered viable to proceed to the next stage. Details of the suggested response thresholds and guidance on consultation techniques is detailed in the guidance document appended to this policy.
- 4.4** It is essential that residents are clearly informed of the scheme rules that are not negotiable (e.g. if permit costs are applicable, the charge and if applicable the restriction of the number of permit per property or residents etc.) during the consultation process. It is therefore essential that the terms and conditions as agreed and defined within appendix A of the "Guidance on the introduction of Residents Parking Schemes in the county of Wiltshire" are distributed with the consultation documents..

## **Section 5 - Permit types and criteria for issue.**

### Residents Permits

- 5.1** Residents permits will only be issued to residents owning or keeping vehicles that live within the RPS. It may be necessary to limit permits to one or two per property or similar type of restriction aimed to control the issue of permits. A resident is defined as a person living in a property which has a frontage or vehicle access to a street named in the traffic regulation order for the RPS. Flats are treated as separate addresses if they are separate for Council tax rating, but houses in multiple occupancy, as one address.
- 5.2** Residents' permits will be issued on an annual basis for a fixed cost. Permits do not have a surrender value. All Residents Parking Schemes must be self financing and the cost of the permits should cover the administration, management and enforcement of the scheme. Proof of residency and proof of vehicle ownership or vehicle responsibility will be required.

- 5.3** Residents' permits will be valid for a year from the date of issue and are not transferable. In the event of a change of vehicle, the permit should be surrendered in exchange for a new permit for the new vehicle at a charge set by the Council and published within the Terms and Conditions of the RPS. The costs are for administration and on-going management of the scheme and are non-refundable and subject to annual review.

#### Business Permit

- 5.4** Businesses operating within a RPS may, at the discretion of the Councils, be considered eligible for a permit. Should the District consider such permits to be appropriate the charge applied will reflect the benefit based on the costs of enforcing the scheme and will be considerably higher than the charges applied to residents' permits. The costs are for administration and on-going management of the scheme and are non-refundable and subject to annual review.

#### Visitors' Permits

- 5.5** Appropriate methods of accommodating visitors parking will be considered. However such a system requires an increase in administration of the schemes and will therefore result in an increase in administrative costs.
- 5.6** If visitors' permits are made available they should be available to all properties whether or not they are in receipt of a residents permit. Proof of residency should be required for applicants.

#### Renewal of Permits

- 5.7** It is the permit holder's responsibility to renew their permits before expiry. PCNs issued for displaying an expired Residents Permit will not be cancelled.

#### Mis-use and withdrawal of Permits

- 5.8** The enforcing Authority reserves the right to withdraw any permit that is mis-used.

### **Section 6 – Charging for Permits and Enforcement Costs**

- 6.1** It is essential that all Residents Parking Schemes operate on a cost neutral basis. The on street parking account must not be used to subsidise the cost of schemes.
- 6.2** The issuing Authority must determine a level of charge that reflects the enforcement and administrative costs of the scheme. All such charges will be clearly set out and published in the consultation literature as the Terms and Conditions of Residents Parking Schemes.



- 6.3** A charge will be levied for each permit, with permits being valid for a period of 12 months. Additional permits, when available, shall be issued on a first come first served basis until all available permits are issued (to a maximum of 125% of the zones parking capacity).
- 6.4** There may also be a charge for Visitors permits, where available.
- 6.5** An administration fee will be payable for replacement of lost or damaged permits and for owners who have changed their vehicles (the new permit will be valid only until the expiry date of the old permit). All such charges will be clearly set out and published in the consultation literature as the Terms and Conditions of Residents Parking Schemes.

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