

Test Valley Borough Council

Annual Parking Statement 2018 – 2019

1 Introduction

- 1.1 All public car parks and roads in Test Valley, excluding trunk roads, are designated as a Civil Enforcement Area. The Council enforces the on-street traffic regulation orders (TROs) within this Civil Enforcement Area under an agency agreement with Hampshire County Council.¹ It manages its own public off-street car parks. The Council's Civil Enforcement Officers (CEOs), under the Traffic Management Act 2004, have the authority to enforce on-street restrictions in addition to enforcing parking restrictions in Council car parks.
- 1.2 This is the eleventh Annual Report published by the Council in respect of its management of on and off-street parking in accordance with the guidance published by the Department of Transport. It is intended to provide the public with information about its policies, procedures and key statistics relating to its parking activities.

Policy Aims and Objectives

- 1.3 The Council, in carrying out its management of the Borough's road network and car parks, has identified a number of objectives. A summary of those objectives is set out below where the Council seeks to:
- assist in allowing the free flow of traffic by minimising the use of vehicles in the busiest and most congested areas;
 - improve traffic conditions and reduce the risk of accidents;
 - provide sufficient shopper and visitors parking facilities to support shops/commercial organisations and leisure activities; thereby underpinning the Borough's social and economic life, to manage the use of spaces by price to encourage retail vitality and match long term provision to the availability of long term spaces;
 - to safeguard the needs and requirements of residents and, where appropriate, to give them priority over commuter parking in residential streets close to the town centres of Andover and Romsey;
 - safeguard the needs and requirements of businesses/organisations and visitors;
 - control the supply of off-street spaces by taking a long term view of transport and transport strategies as they relate to the settlements within Test Valley;
 - regularly review parking tariffs which provide revenue to sustain the Council's integrated transport aims;

¹ The agency agreement with Hampshire County Council for the enforcement of on-street parking restrictions terminates on 31st March 2020 after which Hampshire County Council will be responsible for the enforcement of on-street restrictions.

- ensure that parking controls are observed and enforced in a fair, accurate and consistent manner;
- provide a high standard of customer care; provide well maintained car parks that are easy for customers to use with particular regard to disabled customers;
- improve transport infrastructure and the general environment and to ensure that design standards accord with community safety, operational safety and visual amenity.

2 Parking Policy

- 2.1 The Council believes that the making and enforcing of parking regulations should be carried out in a transparent, legal and comprehensive manner. It considers that the preparation and implementation is all about being fair to all users of the highway and the public car parks, to ensure the safety of the public and manage the use of road network by minimising the impact of inappropriate parking.
- 2.2 The parking service website www.testvalley.gov.uk/parking contains details of the Council's enforcement policy and the appeal process. It explains our procedures for handling appeals both on the statutory grounds and the exercise of discretion in the case of mitigating circumstances.
- 2.3 The enforcement procedure for parking contraventions is outlined and this forms the framework for maintaining compliance with traffic regulations in a consistent manner.
- 2.4 The Engineering and Transport web pages are regularly reviewed and updated to provide easy access to information on car park locations and charges together with information for residents regarding permits and traffic regulation orders.
- 2.5 The Council periodically review on-street traffic regulation orders and restrictions across the Borough taking into account concerns raised by the public since the last review of that area. The objective of reviews is to:
- maintain the vitality and viability of town centres
 - manage the traffic network to ensure expeditious movement of traffic (including pedestrians and cyclists);
 - improve road safety;
 - improve the local environment;
 - promote the use of and improve the quality and accessibility of public transport;
 - meet the needs of people with disabilities, some of whom will be unable to use public transport and are dependant entirely on the use of a car; and
 - manage and reconcile the competing demands for kerb space.

- 2.6 The Civil Enforcement Officers who apply the Council's enforcement policies whilst on patrol, and the office staff who administer the policies including the appeal process, are in a good position to inform the day to day implementation of restrictions and provide input to future reviews.
- 2.7 Reviews of the current traffic regulation orders and policies will take account of:
- existing and predicted levels of demand for parking;
 - the availability and pricing of on and off-street parking places;
 - the justification for, and accuracy of, existing traffic orders;
 - the adequacy, accuracy and quality of traffic signing and road markings, including signing for Controlled Parking Zones;
 - the level of enforcement necessary for compliance;
 - the levels of penalty charges;
 - the need to resource the operation effectively and ensure that all parking staff are appropriately trained; and
 - impact on traffic flow, i.e. traffic or congestion outcomes.

3 Organisation, Roles and Responsibilities

- 3.1 The provision of parking enforcement in Test Valley is delivered by an in- house team; the only external element is cash collection from ticket machines, the operation of cashless parking via the RingGo mobile system and enforcement agents (bailiffs) for the recovery of outstanding debts.
- 3.2 The Council operate 15 Pay and Display car parks in Andover and 8 Pay and Display car parks in Romsey plus Season ticket car parks and limited stay recreation car parks. The total capacity this equates to is 2080 parking spaces in Andover and 982 spaces in Romsey. In addition to this, most of our car parks contain motorcycle parking bays where single motorcycles can be parked for free when parked in a marked motorcycle bay.
- 3.3 CEOs are the public face of civil parking enforcement and the way they perform their functions is crucial to the success, and public perception, of the Council's Civil Parking Enforcement operation. CEOs are expected to perform their duties in a professional and efficient manner at all times. They should apply consistency, firmness, sensitivity and tact coupled with common sense and patience, and be able to think clearly and react sensibly under pressure.
- 3.4 The success of civil parking enforcement depends on the dedication and quality of the staff that deliver it. It is essential to give staff at all levels the skills and training to do their jobs effectively, in order that the Council can command public confidence and respect. This should also improve the self-esteem and job satisfaction of staff, resulting in higher retention rates. Training is seen as an important aspect of civil parking enforcement running costs.

- 3.5 The main objective of CEOs is to ensure that parking controls are observed and enforced in a fair, accurate and consistent manner.
- 3.6 CEOs duties also include related activities such as:
- inspecting parking equipment;
 - checking and reporting defective signs and road markings;
 - issuing information leaflets or warning notices;
 - providing witness statements;
 - where appropriate, appearing before a parking adjudicator;
 - informing the police of criminal parking activity;
 - reporting suspected abandoned vehicles;
 - putting in place and removing notices about the suspension of parking places;
 - reporting on changes in parking patterns; and
 - assisting with on-street enforcement surveys;
- 3.7 CEOs are allocated daily rounds to enforce; the rounds are made up of a mixture of off-street car parks and on-street parking restrictions. These rounds are covered in rotation by the available staff. The rounds are regularly reviewed to ensure that all restrictions are covered, with extra attention given to problem or high risk areas. Any requests for enforcement or reports of parking in contravention of restrictions are logged and where appropriate extra enforcement is organised.
- 3.8 The office processes involved in civil parking enforcement are an integral part of the enforcement regime and staff carrying them out need similar levels of skill, training and professionalism as CEOs. It is important to ensure that staff have the skills, training, authority and resources to give the public a high quality, professional, efficient, timely and user-friendly service. Time and quality targets are set for dealing with queries.

4 Performance Monitoring

Car Park Occupancy

- 4.1 Government guidance highlights that the availability of car parking has a major influence on the choice of means of transport. It is therefore important that the parking stock in the Borough is managed to provide a balance between encouraging use of alternative modes of transport whilst ensuring that the vitality of both Andover and Romsey is not compromised.
- 4.2 The Council monitors parking demand through ticket sales data and all car parks are surveyed for occupancy three times a year (May, August and October). The results, published in the Annual Parking Report, are reviewed annually and consideration is given to reallocating spaces from one category of stay to another to maintain optimum occupancy levels.

- 4.3 Applying the reallocation policy over the last ten years has resulted in the reallocation of spaces in both towns to ensure that sufficient parking spaces are available for shoppers in the car parks closest to the town centres. The reallocation has meant that spaces for long stay parking have been located further out from the town centre.

Summary of Average Peak Demand in Andover and Romsey (public off-street car parks)

Andover					
Percentages are average of three snapshot surveys on Saturdays in May, August and October					
	2014	2015	2016	2017*	2018*
Ultra Short & Short	79%	71%	74%	60%	64%
Medium Stay	55%	59%	63%	55%	55%
Long Stay	43%	41%	44%	63%	59%
TOTAL	64%	62%	64%	58%	58%
Romsey					
Percentages are average of three snapshot surveys on Fridays in May, August and October					
	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Ultra Short & Short	76%	81%	79%	81%	67%
Medium Stay	84%	83%	82%	88%	94%
Long Stay	75%	77%	74%	86%	82%
TOTAL	78%	79%	77%	86%	83%

*Andover 2017/2018 figures are average of three snapshot surveys on Fridays in May, August and October

- 4.4 The Reallocation Policy was reviewed in 2012 as part of the review of the Council's Parking Strategy. The Council aims to operate the short and medium stay car parks within a maximum average occupancy rate of 90% based on peak day surveys. This indicator would mean that on a typical busy shopping day, on average, one in nine spaces or more would be vacant with the exception of Christmas shopping periods.
- 4.5 The peak demand for shopper and visitor parking for Romsey and Andover is usually Friday and Saturday respectively however, in 2018-19 there was more demand for parking in Andover on Friday. The parking patterns for the two centres are monitored on those days and the results inform future reallocation reviews. Where there is a case for additional shoppers and visitors spaces, they would be created by re-allocating existing long stay spaces.

Car Park Charges

- 4.6 Charges are reviewed annually and charges have not increased since April 2016.
- 4.7 The Council has continued to provide free parking after 4pm, all day Sundays and bank holidays.

Customer Satisfaction

- 4.8 The Council is committed to providing a quality level of customer satisfaction in its car parks. To enable us to achieve and maintain its target, a questionnaire regarding car park facilities and environment is handed to car park users in all our car parks during one week in November each year.
- 4.9 In 2018, 993 questionnaires were handed out by the CEOs and 309 replies were received. Customers were asked whether they would agree that the quality of eight key facilities including ticket machines and lighting were satisfactory. The responses provided a customer satisfaction indicator of 86.41%
- 4.10 A questionnaire is also enclosed with all Parking Permit and Parking Appeal correspondence processed during one week each October to provide a random cross sample, requesting feedback regarding the service provided by the Parking Administration staff.
- 4.11 In 2018, 150 questionnaires were sent out by the administration team with correspondence and 21 replies were received. Customers were asked to rate the efficiency and standard of service from poor through to excellent. The responses rating average to excellent provided a customer satisfaction indicator of 96.8%.

Administration Efficiency

- 4.12 To allow for thorough investigation of the circumstances surrounding an appeal, consideration of the merits of the case including an appeals panel meeting and the drafting of a detailed response; the target for issuing a decision is 20 working days after acknowledgement (acknowledgement letters are sent the next working day following receipt of the appeal). In 2018/19 the team processed 2066 appeals and achieved 64.3% compliance against this 20 day target for the year. This reduced performance was as a result of long term sickness and a vacant post within the Parking Administration team.

- 4.13 Time taken to process permit applications and renewals is also monitored. The objective is for the permit application to be processed within 5 working days of a 'complete' application being received in the parking administration office. In 2018/19 the team processed 874 new permit applications (87.9% of these were within 5 working days) and 664 permit renewals (98.2% of these were processed within 5 working days).

5 Key Projects, Challenges and Areas of Improvement during 2018/2019

- 5.1 Recruitment of CEOs continued to be a challenge, and during the first half of 2018/19 there were still a number of unfilled posts in spite of attempts to recruit. However, we successfully recruited two new enforcement officers who commenced employment in September 2018, and this has enabled us to respond more proactively to requests for enforcement.
- 5.2 Following ongoing issues of anti-social behaviour and physical assaults on our CEOs, in 2018/19 the Council completed its review into the use of Body Worn Video Cameras, and implemented a policy and procedure to ensure the use of the cameras and all data that is recorded complies with current legislation, including the new General Data Protection Regulations. Use of the new cameras commenced on 1st April 2019. An annual review of the cameras and associated policy / procedures will be undertaken each year; details of future reviews will be included in our Annual Parking Reports moving forward. Further details on the Council's use of these cameras can be found on the Council's website at: www.testvalley.gov.uk/bwcprivacynotice
- 5.3 With the ever-growing increase in the use of debit / credit cards and other contactless methods of payment, investigations into alternative ways of allowing customers to pay for their car parking have been carried out during 2018/19. It is hoped that new Pay & Display ticket machines capable of accepting payment by debit and credit card as well as contactless payment options will be installed in car parks across the Borough during Autumn 2019. The option to Pay & Display with cash will continue to be offered in our car parks.

Off-Street Car Parks

- 5.4 West Street car park remained closed throughout 2018/19 as a result of the reconstruction of Andover Leisure Centre. The new Leisure Centre opened in April 2019, enabling the re-opening of the West Street Car Park on 9th April 2019. Whilst the Leisure Centre building works were undertaken, the temporary swimming pool remained in situ on part of Shepherds Spring Lane car park occupying 59 spaces. An additional 5 parking spaces were created in our George Yard Car Park.

- 5.5 The use of the RingGo service continues to grow and for the period 2018-19 we registered 212,720 transactions representing £424,564.67 net car park income; in context this is just over 17% of our total car park income.
- 5.6 Parking at the Woodley Cemetery has been included in the Council's Off Street Parking Places Order to deter all-day use of the car park by motorists who are not visiting the cemetery.

On-Street

- 5.7 During 2018/2019 the Council undertook parking reviews in the following areas:
- Eastern Wards of Andover Town
 - Charlton Parish
 - Tangley Parish
 - Upper Clatford Parish
 - Knapp Lane, Ampfield
 - Nerquis Close, Romsey
 - Premier Way, Romsey
- 5.8 The parking review consists of reviewing any comments received from councillors or members of the public since the area was last reviewed, along with any observations from Council staff. Where the introduction of new restrictions or changes to the existing restrictions are being considered, proposals are subject to informal public consultation. Comments received during the informal consultation are considered before formal proposals are advertised for comment in a second round of public consultation. Prior to making any changes to parking restrictions, comments received during both the informal and formal public consultations are considered.
- 5.9 The outcomes of the Knapp Lane, Nerquis Close and Premier Way reviews have been implemented, along with the outcome of the Andover Eastern Wards, which was subject to review in 2017/18 financial year.
- 5.10 The outcome of the remainder of the reviews will be implemented by 31st July 2019.

6 Enforcement Statistics

- 6.1 In the financial year 1st April 2018 to 31st March 2019, 8639 Penalty Charge Notices (PCNs) were issued. During this period 2066 appeals were processed, of which 998 were upheld on technical or mitigatory grounds. Nine cases were appealed at the Traffic Penalty Tribunal of which two appeals were allowed by the adjudicator, three appeals were dismissed, and four appeals were not contested by the Council due to mitigating circumstances. Further parking statistics can be found on the next page:

Other Parking Statistics

Test Valley Borough Council Summary of Parking 2018/19

	2018/19
Parking Statistics	
Volume of on street car parking spaces (marked bays)	1393
Volume of off street car parking spaces	3062
Total car parking spaces	4,455
Volume of higher level PCNs issued	2,746
Volume of lower level PCNs issued	5893
Total PCNs issued	8639
of which: Attached to windscreen	8625
Served to keeper by post	14
PCN's Paid	
Volume of 2018-19 PCNs paid	6,616
Volume of 2018-19 PCNs paid at the discounted rate	5,305
Volume of 2018-19 PCNs paid before Charge Certificate (within 56 days)	6212
Volume of 2018-19 PCNs paid after a Charge Certificate served	404
Recovery of unpaid PCNs	
Volume of 2018-19 PCNs where Charge Certificates registered at Traffic Enforcement Centre (TEC)	599
Volume of Warrants of Execution issued to an Enforcement Agent during 2018-19	525
Other PCN statistics:	
Volume of 2018-19 PCNs written off	358
Volume of 2018-19 PCNs resulting in an informal challenge	2,057
Volume of 2018-19 PCN informal challenges which resulted in cancellation of the PCN	960
Volume of 2018-19 PCNs resulting in a formal representation	142
Volume of 2018-19 formal representations which resulted in cancellation of the PCN	41

Volume of 2018-19 formal representations which resulted in a Notice of Rejection	72
Volume of vehicles removed	0
Volume of vehicles immobilised	0
Volume of appeals at the Traffic Penalty Tribunal processed during 2018-19	9
Of which were allowed:	2
Of which were dismissed	3
Of which were not contested by the Council	4

8 Financial - Parking Account

Test Valley Borough Council Summary of Parking 2018/19

	2018/19	2017/18
	£	£
On-Street Parking Income		
On-Street parking income		0
On-Street residents permit fees	39,760	38,886
On-street Penalty Charge Notice income	100,076	107,246
Blue Badge application fees	0	0
On-Street parking waivers fees	3,100	3,417
Total on street parking income	142,936	149,549
On Street parking direct costs	145,942	160,151
On Street parking surplus / (deficit)	(£3,006)	(£10,602)
Off Street Parking Income		
Off street parking income	2,174,671	2,264,472
Off street PCN income	151,119	197,691
Other off street parking income	3,850	3,863
Total off street parking income	2,329,640	2,466,026
Off street parking direct costs	1,372,176	1,321,947
Off Street parking surplus / (deficit)	957,464	1,144,080

**The income and expenditure of local authorities in connection with their on-street charging and their on-street and off-street enforcement activities are governed by Section 55 (as amended) of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984.

9 Future Plans 2019/20

Off-Street Car Parks

- 9.1 The Council's Corporate Plan 'Growing our Potential' 2019-2023 identifies key strategic challenges that will be faced over the next four years and beyond. One of these challenges is encouraging inclusive growth within our town centres. To help understand and address this challenge the Council has identified 'Town Centres' as one of its four key priorities. What this means is that we will look to grow the potential of Andover and Romsey town centres to be attractive, vibrant and prosperous places which are capable of adapting to change.
- 9.2 As a result, the Council are bringing forward proposals for the regeneration and re-development of Andover and Romsey town centre. This will include producing a masterplan for each town centre which will help identify and support the future demand for business, leisure, retail and residential opportunities. A crucial element of this is to ensure that sufficient public car parking is provided to meet the needs of the residents of the two growing towns, as well as attracting visitors.
- 9.3 Following the completion of the new Leisure Centre in Andover in April 2019, demolition of the temporary pool which currently occupies part of Shepherds Spring Lane Car Park started in June 2019. These demolition works should be complete by early Autumn 2019, when the area previously occupied by the temporary pool will be converted back to parking spaces.
- 9.4 This autumn, the Council's pay and display cash only ticket machines will be replaced with **new ticket machines** capable of accepting payment by debit and credit card and contactless payment methods, including Apple Pay and Android Pay. The two check-in check-out machines at the Chantry Centre car park will be retained. While the check-in check-out system is popular with those that use it, the system has been prone to breakdowns and was therefore not considered suitable at this time to be rolled out to other car parks. The new ticket machines will continue to accept payment by cash.
- 9.6 The Council is planning to install 18 **Electric Vehicle Charging Points** (EVCPs) in the Councils car parks. These are expected to be installed this autumn. The EVCPs will be 22kw fast chargers with type 2 connections suitable for connecting to most electric vehicles.

On-Street

- 9.7 The agency agreements between Test Valley Borough Council and Hampshire County Council whereby the Borough Council review and implement changes to on-street parking restrictions and enforce on-street parking restrictions on behalf of the County Council are ending.
- 9.8 From 1st August 2019 the Council's authority to implement changes to on-street parking restrictions will transfer back to Hampshire County Council, who are the Highway Authority for publicly maintained highway other than motorways and trunk roads.
- 9.9 The Borough Council's involvement in the enforcement of on-street parking restrictions and the administering of resident parking permits will terminate on 31st March 2020. From 1st April 2020, all new or replacement resident permits will be issued by Hampshire County Council. From 1st April 2020 the County Council will be setting the charges for new and replacement permits. Permits issued by Test Valley Borough Council will continue to be valid up until their expiry date.
- 9.10 The Borough Council will continue to be responsible for the management and enforcement of its off-street car parks.
- 9.11 Prior to 1st August 2019, the Council will be implementing the outcomes of the parking reviews at:
- Western Wards of Andover
 - Charlton Parish
 - Tangley Parish
 - Upper Clatford Parish
- 9.12 Parking reviews will also be undertaken for the following streets and the outcomes implemented prior to 1st August 2019:
- Town Mill, Andover – prohibition of motor vehicles as part of Town Mill enhancement works.
 - Waterloo Court, Andover – introduction of two short stay parking spaces
 - West Street, Andover – introduction of length of no loading outside Andover Leisure Centre, except for tankers delivering chemicals to the leisure centre.

For more information, please contact:

Mrs Askew

Senior Parking Officer, Property and Asset Management Service

Telephone: 01264 368725 **Email:** carparks@testvalley.gov.uk