

BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

PARKING REVIEW

DECEMBER 2013

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1. INTRODUCTION

Bromsgrove District Council operates 11 charged car parks and 3 free car parks and also manages the enforcement of Alvechurch Sports and Social Club car park. The Council has also taken responsibility for the enforcement of On-Street parking regulations since Civil Parking Enforcement was introduced in May 2013.

The parking management policies and charging regime have been in operation for over 3 years. Since the last review and the Council is keen to ensure that these parking practices support the town centre and wider district economy and continue to be appropriate for residents and car park users.

The Council operate two payment methods in different car parks. 'Pay on Foot' allows the customer to pay for parking at the end of their stay, and 'Pay and Display' requires the customer to predict the length of their stay and pay up front.

The parking service has an operational parking charter which sets out the services objectives. These are:

To:

- Provide an efficient and courteous service
- Provide safe and user friendly areas complying with current parking regulations
- Make customer safety and security a key factor
- Provide 24 hour CCTV coverage on all our town car parking areas
- Provide uniformed staff patrolling during open hours
- Provide designated spaces for disabled drivers set out to current regulations
- Ensure that our car parks are well lit, cleaned, and maintained
- Clearly display information about charges and where to pay
- Repair any equipment as soon as possible, keeping disruption to a minimum
- Seek and listen to customers views and ideas on how we may improve the service
- Monitor and compare ourselves to others

2. THE BRIEF

To review the parking provision in the District covering both On and Off Street parking providing factual information relating to Bromsgrove's car parks and other authorities car parks for comparison. Consider the impacts of future development within and around Bromsgrove town centre.

3. OUR APPROACH TO THE STUDY

Bromsgrove District Council has a range of historic data and information about its existing car parks and the users. The Pay and Display car park machines are networked and can be interrogated to provide user information. The Pay on Foot system also provides a range of data about the use of the two car parks covered by the system. Previous on-site studies have been undertaken in the past. Bromsgrove District Council has also completed a study concerning Disabled Parking provision in

October 2012 which has been formally adopted by the Council. The contents and results of that report have not been included within this review.

In view of the available data sources, at this stage it is not proposed to carry out consultation with users as part of this review. Internal feedback has been obtained from a range of staff, including the parking enforcement team and senior officers.

4. TOWN CENTRE ECONOMY

Bromsgrove District Council has focussed on initiatives to support the town centre including major redevelopment projects such as the proposed schemes listed elsewhere in this report and other schemes such as the Townscape Heritage Initiative and the town centre regeneration improvements. All of these projects are intended to improve the economic vibrancy of the town.

Car park charges and operational parking policies are widely considered to impact considerably on the economy. Traders and politicians are quick to attribute the blame for the downturn of some town centres economies on parking provision and enforcement despite the actual reasons being multi-faceted and complex. It should be noted that rent levels, out of town alternatives and the growth of internet shopping all impact on town centres but these issues are often ignored.

There are any number of different statistics that are used to judge a towns economy such as the number of vacant shops there are in a town

Bromsgrove's 2012 vacancy rate is 10.9% which is considerably lower than other centres in the region. The West Midlands average vacancy rate is 14.6%; and other centres include; Birmingham 23.8%, Walsall 26.6%, Wolverhampton 25.3% and Dudley 29.4%. The national town centre vacancy rate in the UK was 11.1% in April 2012.

Taken from Bromsgrove District Councils Town Centre Health Check December 2012.

Over the last few months there has been a number of parking announcements made by ministers and MPs. In July the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, announced a proposal to allow motorists to park on double yellow lines for 15 minutes. This was followed in September with a further announcement on limiting mobile enforcement with two more in October proposing the introduction of grace and favor period of 5 minutes before parking fines are issued (Bromsgrove has already adopted this) and a suggestion that Councils should offer free parking for 30 minutes near the High Street.

These announcements are not yet backed by legislation but if implemented could have significant repercussions for Bromsgrove in the future.

5 TOWN CENTRE DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS

5.1 Recreation Road North

This car park is to be sold for development. It is anticipated that it will be used for care home or elderly residential facilities and social housing a planning application is expected to be submitted in the New Year. The date of sale is not yet known but is expected to be agreed shortly.

The car park is relatively small with 47 spaces and is used as Long Stay car park. Car park usage information shows that in 2012/2013, 4221 tickets were sold in the morning period between 8.00 and 11.59, 3863 in the afternoon between 12.00 and 17.59 and less than 130 sold in the evening between 18.00 and 20.00 in the course of the year.

Car park users will be displaced onto other car parks such as the multi-storey as this is the closest car park for the all-day users or into another car park such as Recreation Road South or Parkside for the morning or afternoon parkers who are there for 3 hours or less.

There may be a slight loss in income as the daily charge in the multi-storey is lower than that of Recreation Road North. Current income from this car park is £10900 (including vat per year).

5.2 Hanover Street

The whole car park currently forms part of a site that is being marketed to be developed as a mixed retail/leisure development. Discussions with a developer regarding a proposed scheme have reached an advanced stage but the Council is not yet in a position to disclose details. In terms of parking, it is anticipated that any scheme approved would retain car parking spaces at similar levels to those existing currently. The exact arrangements for management of the car park would be subject to legal agreements with the developer.

The existing car park has 130 spaces and produces an income of £135,000 per annum. The car park is also widely used by permit holders.

There may be an impact during the construction phase of the development as the new car parks are not likely to be available for use for around a year which will cause pressure on other car parks. There may well be an on-going impact on other car parks if in site capacity is insufficient.

5.3 School Drive & Dolphin Centre

This site has been identified together with Blackmore House for the possible development of a new leisure centre. There have been two proposals one would be to construct the new leisure facility on the Blackmore House site and create a 200 space car park where the existing leisure centre is currently sited, followed by the sale of the existing car park. The second option would be to close the leisure centre

and rebuild a new facility on the same site. This may impact on the School Drive car park during the build phase to accommodate a site compound and the loss of the Dolphin permit holders only car park.

The school Drive car park has 142 spaces in total and is the Council's second most used car park.

5.4 Parkside

Part of this car park is needed for junction realignment as part of the Sainsbury's development. Although there will be some loss of parking capacity during the works it is expected that the overall capacity will be maintained by altering the layout of the spaces when the junction works are complete.

5.5 Stourbridge Road

A retail scheme is proposed on a neighbouring site which may have an impact on the car park during development stage. There is currently interest in the Stourbridge Road car park site as part of the overall development from a number of parties but it is too early to say what the outcome is likely to be.

5.6 New Road & Windsor Street

No development is planned at this time.

5.7 Churchfields Multi Storey car park

Churchfields car park is BDC's most underused car park. Motorists are known to dislike all multi-storey car parks due to a combination of design issues which can result in tight parking spaces, poor circulation areas, poorly designed and controlled stairs and lift and a fear of crime. When surface car parks are easily accessible they tend to be favoured by motorists, Churchfields car park does not suffer from many of the design related problems and has a Park Mark award for safe parking.

In considering the town centre schemes this car park has capacity to absorb many of the displaced motorists. Following the redevelopment of the new Council Parkside Office and Library complex, one option for staff parking was to utilise the top floor of the multi storey. Consideration should be given to the fact that during freezing conditions the external levels are closed for safety reasons.

5.8 Recreation Road South

No developments are proposed for this car park.

5.9 Bromsgrove Station

The Council's car park has 69 spaces but it is envisaged that the future of this car park will be under review at a later stage following development of the new station and car park.

There is a proposal for a new railway station and a 350 space car park to be constructed as part of the wider redevelopment. There may be the possibility of

enforcement and maintenance contract within the redevelopment. Planning Permission for this project has now been granted to Worcestershire County Council.

5.10 Timetable issues

As a Council we must ensure that sufficient car parking is available within the town during the development program.

6. SUPPORTING CAR PARK USERS

Bromsgrove District Council has a number of mechanisms to make it easier and cheaper for motorists to use the car parks.

Bromsgrove has a low pricing structure when compared to other close authorities and operates a flexible payment tariff which grants additional time when the set rates are overpaid. This is a good concession to motorists who might otherwise expect to lose money if they had incorrect coinage. Our neighbouring authorities do not offer this concession.

The Pay on Foot facility enables users to pay for the length of stay without the need to worry about overstaying a Pay & Display ticket. Users like this facility and it is considered to be a way of supporting the town's economy as it encourages users to have extended stays in the town. The main complaint about these systems is the need to queue at the Pay on Foot stations to pay the charge as they are often very busy. To rectify this Bromsgrove Council has expanded the number of pay stations in the last 2 years.

Bromsgrove also operates a permit system for many of its car parks avoiding the need to use the Pay & Display machines for convenience. Which works out considerably cheaper than buying daily tickets for regular users.

The availability of parking is often cited as the major issue for users. Bromsgrove's car parks currently have spare capacity and can accommodate the overall current demand for spaces. Individual car parks may become full at peak times and there may be an impact if the new town centre developments do not allow for additional parking demand. However it should be noted that The Area Action Plan indicates that there should be no net loss of parking spaces across the town after development.

7. CURRENT SPACE AVAILABILITY

Bromsgrove District Council currently provides 1390 charged car park spaces in 11 car parks within Bromsgrove and 4 "free" car parks in other parts of the district.

The charged spaces account for the majority of charged parking within Bromsgrove town and there is little private sector parking competition. Free parking is however

available at a number of supermarket sites on the edge of the town and on-street close to the town centre..

Bromsgrove District Council has an ambitious town centre regeneration programme which is attracting a number of national retailers to both the town centre and edge of town. Some of the proposed developments are on or partly on sites currently used as car parks which may result in a loss of parking capacity. The impact of these schemes is considered later in this report.

Car park capacity

Car park name	Payment type	Long Short stay	Number of spaces	Designated disabled	Shop Mobility	Mother and child	Park Mark Award *
Recreation Road South	Pay on foot	Short	283	20	0	7	YES
Churchfields Multi storey	Pay on Foot	Long	300	18	3	10	YES
School Drive	Pay and Display	Long	128	10	0	4	NO
Windsor Street	Pay and Display	Short	65	4	0	0	NO
New Road	Pay and Display	Short	58	4	0	0	NO
Hanover Street*	Pay and Display	Long	121	9	0	0	NO
Recreation Road North	Pay and Display	Long	44	3	0	0	NO
Parkside	Pay and Display	Short	94	6	0	0	NO
Stourbridge Road	Pay and Display	Long	71	5	0	0	NO
Bromsgrove Station	Pay and Display	Long	64	5	0	0	NO
Dolphin Centre	Permit Holders only	Long	36	3	0	0	NO
TOTAL			1264	87	3	21	
Alvechurch	No Charge	Long	42	3			
Alvechurch Sports & Social Club	No Charge	2 hours & Permits	45	2			
Catshill	No Charge	Long	14	1			
Sanders Park	No Charge	Long	84	5			
Total spaces			185	11			

*The Park Mark®, is awarded to parking facilities that have met the requirements of a risk assessment conducted by the Police. These requirements mean the parking operator has put in place measures that help to deter criminal activity and anti-social behaviour, thereby doing everything they can to prevent crime and reduce the fear of crime in their parking facility

At the time this review was carried out (Summer/Autumn 2013) the overall parking capacity in the town of Bromsgrove is adequate as parking spaces are almost always available in one or more car parks. Churchfields car park is rarely full despite a low all day parking tariff. The prime car parks such as Windsor Street, Recreation Road South and Parkside do have limited capacity at peak times but overall there is capacity available within the town.

8. CURRENT CHARGES

Car park charges are set using a traditional approach of charging more in prime car parks and less in the underused ones. However due to the geographical distribution of the car parks there is not a significant convenience factor and prices have tended to be set at the same level across most car parks. Maximum length of stay is used in preference to price to manage user behaviour. Prices in Bromsgrove are amongst the lowest in Worcestershire and are considered on a yearly basis but have not increased since 2010.

8.1 Parking tariffs

The table below shows the previous changes in parking tariff rates since 2005

(see next page – Key: a dash (-) indicates that this tariff was not offered).

SERVICE CATEGORY	1st April 2005	0th April 2006	1st April 2007	1st April 2008	1st April 2009	1st January 2010	1st April 2010	1st April 2011	1st April 2012	1st April 2013
-	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
Bromsgrove Station	1.50	2.10	2.50	3.00	3.00	3.00	3.00	3.00	3.00	3.00
Churchfields Multistorey										
Not exceeding 30 minutes	-	-	-	-	-	-	0.40	0.40	0.40	0.40
Not exceeding one hour	-	-	0.70	0.70	0.40	0.40	0.70	0.80	0.80	0.80
Not exceeding two hours	-	-	1.40	1.40	0.70	0.70	1.40	1.60	1.60	1.60
Not exceeding three hours	-	-	-	-	1.40	1.40	2.10	2.40	2.40	2.40
Not exceeding four hours	-	-	-	-	2.10	2.10	-	-	-	-
Not exceeding five hours	-	-	-	-	3.00	3.00	-	-	-	-
	-	-	2.00	3.00	-	-	3.00	3.00	3.00	3.00
Dolphin Centre										
Not exceeding 30 minutes	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Not exceeding one hour	0.70	0.60	0.70	0.70	0.40	0.40	-	-	-	-
Not exceeding two hours	1.00	1.20	1.40	1.40	0.70	0.70	-	-	-	-
Not exceeding three hours	-	-	2.10	-	1.40	1.40	-	-	-	-
Not exceeding four hours	-	-	-	-	2.10	2.10	-	-	-	-
Not exceeding five hours	-	-	-	-	3.00	3.00	-	-	-	-
All day	1.50	2.10	3.00	4.00	-	-	-	-	-	-
Hanover Street										
Not exceeding 30 minutes	-	-	-	-	0.40	0.40	0.40	0.40	0.40	0.40
Not exceeding one hour	-	-	0.70	0.80	0.70	0.70	0.70	0.80	0.80	0.80
Not exceeding two hours	-	-	1.40	1.60	1.40	1.40	1.40	1.60	1.60	1.60
Not exceeding three hours	-	-	2.10	2.40	2.10	2.10	2.10	2.40	2.40	2.40
All day	1.50	2.10	3.00	4.00	3.00	3.00	3.00	5.00	5.00	5.00
New Road										
Not exceeding 30 minutes	-	-	0.40	0.40	0.40	0.40	0.40	0.40	0.40	0.40
Not exceeding one hour	0.50	0.60	0.70	0.70	0.70	0.70	0.70	0.80	0.80	0.80
Not exceeding two hours	0.70	1.20	1.40	1.40	1.40	1.40	1.40	1.60	1.60	1.60
Not exceeding three hours	-	-	2.10	2.10	2.10	2.10	2.10	2.40	2.40	2.40
Not exceeding four hours	-	-	2.80	2.80	2.80	2.80	2.80	3.20	3.20	3.20
Not exceeding five hours	-	-	3.50	3.50	3.50	3.50	3.50	4.00	4.00	4.00
All day	1.00	2.10	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Parkside										
Not exceeding 30 minutes	-	-	0.40	0.40	0.40	0.40	0.40	0.40	0.40	0.40
Not exceeding one hour	0.50	0.60	0.70	0.70	0.70	0.70	0.70	0.80	0.80	0.80
Not exceeding two hours	0.70	1.20	1.40	1.40	1.40	1.40	1.40	1.60	1.60	1.60
Not exceeding three hours	-	-	2.10	2.10	2.10	2.10	2.10	2.40	2.40	2.40
Not exceeding four hours	-	-	2.80	2.80	2.80	2.80	2.80	3.20	3.20	3.20
Not exceeding five hours	-	-	3.50	3.50	3.50	3.50	3.50	4.00	4.00	4.00
All day	1.00	2.10	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Recreation Road North										
Not exceeding 30 minutes	-	-	-	-	0.40	0.40	0.40	0.40	0.40	0.40
Not exceeding one hour	0.70	0.60	0.70	0.70	0.70	0.70	0.70	0.80	0.80	0.80
Not exceeding two hours	1.00	1.20	1.40	1.40	1.40	1.40	1.40	1.60	1.60	1.60
Not exceeding three hours	-	-	2.10	2.10	2.10	2.10	2.10	2.40	2.40	2.40
All day	1.50	2.10	3.00	4.00	3.00	3.00	3.00	5.00	5.00	5.00
Recreation Road South										
Not exceeding 30 minutes	-	-	0.40	0.40	0.40	0.40	0.40	0.40	0.40	0.40
Not exceeding one hour	0.50	0.60	0.70	0.70	0.70	0.70	0.70	0.80	0.80	0.80
Not exceeding two hours	0.70	1.20	1.40	1.40	1.40	1.40	1.40	1.60	1.60	1.60
Not exceeding three hours	-	-	2.10	2.10	2.10	2.10	2.10	2.40	2.40	2.40
Not exceeding four hours	-	-	2.80	2.80	2.80	2.80	2.80	3.20	3.20	3.20
Not exceeding five hours	-	-	3.50	2.50	3.50	3.50	3.50	4.00	4.00	4.00
All day	1.00	2.10	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
School Drive										
Not exceeding 30 minutes	-	-	-	-	0.40	0.40	0.40	0.40	0.40	0.40
Not exceeding one hour	0.70	0.60	0.70	0.70	0.70	0.70	0.70	0.80	0.80	0.80
Not exceeding two hours	1.00	1.20	1.40	1.40	1.40	1.40	1.40	1.60	1.60	1.60
Not exceeding three hours	-	-	2.10	2.10	2.10	2.10	2.10	2.40	2.40	2.40
All day	1.50	2.10	3.00	3.00	3.00	3.00	3.00	5.00	5.00	5.00
Stourbridge Road										
Not exceeding 30 minutes	-	-	-	-	0.40	0.40	0.40	0.40	0.40	0.40
Not exceeding one hour	0.50	0.60	0.70	0.70	0.70	0.70	0.70	0.80	0.80	0.80
Not exceeding two hours	0.70	1.20	1.40	1.40	1.40	1.40	1.40	1.60	1.60	1.60
Not exceeding three hours	-	-	-	-	2.10	2.10	2.10	2.40	2.40	2.40
All day	1.00	2.10	2.00	3.00	3.00	3.00	3.00	5.00	5.00	5.00
Windsor Street										
Not exceeding 30 minutes	0.40	0.30	0.40	0.40	0.40	0.40	0.40	0.50	0.50	0.50
Not exceeding one hour	0.70	0.60	0.70	0.80	0.80	1.00	0.80	1.00	1.00	1.00
Not exceeding two hours	1.00	1.20	1.40	1.60	2.00	2.00	1.60	2.00	2.00	2.00

Car Park charges only apply between 8.00am to 10.00pm everyday

In 2010 the Council decided to amend its parking policy so that the Pay and Display ticket machines would take overpayments which would allow the user to accrue or buy additional time. This was seen as a customer friendly initiative and a way of increasing flexibility for motorists who wished to stay for a part of an hour. This also recognised the fact that the ticket machines do not give change.

For example if a user had only £1 instead of the correct change it allow them to have a further additional amount of time rather than simply over paying. Or a motorist may want to park for an hour and a quarter and would not need to pay for additional unused time.

Car Park	Up to 30 minutes	1 hour	2 hours	3 hours	4 hours	5 hours	All day
Recreation Road South	40p	80p	£1.60	£2.40	£3.20	£4.00	n/a
Churchfields Multi-storey	40p	80p	£1.60	£2.40	-	-	£3.00
Recreation Road North	40p	80p	£1.60	£2.40	-	-	£5.00
Parkside	40p	80p	£1.60	£2.40	£3.20	£4.00	n/a
Stourbridge Road	40p	80p	£1.60	£2.40	-	-	£5.00
School Drive	40p	80p	£1.60	£2.40	-	-	£5.00
Hanover Street	40p	80p	£1.60	£2.40	-	-	£5.00
New Road	40p	80p	£1.60	£2.40	£3.20	£4.00	-
Windsor Street	50p	£1.00	£2.00	-	-	-	-
Bromsgrove Railway Station	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	£3.00
Dolphin Centre (Permits only)	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a

8.2 Recreation Road South

Situated adjacent to the Asda Store although designed as a 5 hour maximum stay being a Pay on Exit system does allow the user to stay longer as they have to pay on leaving the car park. However there is a maximum 5 hour tariff of £4 and the overstay charge is £25.

By having this charge some customers may feel that they are being penalised unfairly and that the Council is profiteering out of them being only a few minutes late. Prior to the introduction of Civil Parking Enforcement this charge was £35 and has been reduced to £25 in line with the penalty charge for overstaying.

8.3 Short stay car parks

The only true short stay car park run by the Council is Windsor Street which has a maximum stay of 2 hours. This is the prime car park for the town and is predominately used for short stays i.e. visiting the banks and building societies.

As stated earlier the car parks do not have the geographical separation to allow a pricing structure to be introduced based on convenience of use. The Council has chosen to use length of stay as a way of influencing use rather than solely on price.

8.4 Pre – paid cards

The Council offers a facility to purchase a prepaid card for the Pay on Foot car parks. These are available from the Dolphin Centre or Shop mobility this involves the purchase of the card for a fee of £3 with an initial amount of 1p being loaded onto it, then the user can add a monetary amount by topping up at the Pay Station.

9. CAR PARK USAGE

Details of the current car park usage and income is provided below. Car park usage and income figures change constantly and there needs to be a degree of caution exercised in drawing conclusions from any data obtained as it is by its nature a reflection of the past and is not always a good guide to the future. For instance the past does not take into account future changes due to development in the town.

9.1 Overall Income

As with many Council's across the UK income has declined over the last 3 years, which may be due to the impact of the downturn in the economy and changes in shopping habits such as online shopping. Bromsgrove has a significant out of town shopping sector which offer free car parking on their own land namely Co-Op, Morrison's and Aldi. Also there a number of major retail centres within a short driving distance of the town such as Redditch, Kidderminster, Birmingham and Worcester. In addition there is competition from larger retail complexes such as Merry Hill, Dudley and the May Bird Centre, Stratford-upon-Avon, Redditch and Solihull who have broader retail outlets such as Debenhams, Next, Mark & Spencer etc. who also offer free parking again on their own land.

Wyre Forest District Council has seen a loss in their parking income over the last three years from £1,286,364 in 2010/11 to £1,192,006 in 2012/13. The Forest of Dean's parking income has also dropped, in the month of July 2012 income was £16,489 in June this year it was £9,510. Swindon Borough Council experienced a loss of £169,000 against their expected income in 2012/13 this was attributed to fewer cars parking in the town.

Parking Ticket sales (Pay & Display and Pay on Foot)

Year	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13
Pay on Foot	663490	704360	746309	709212	705385	694417
Pay and Display	732232	742953	781460	794350	727133	698490
Tickets sales	1395722	1447313	1527769	1503562	1432518	1392907
Income	£1,060,968	£1,285,841	£1,354,139	£1,192,015	£1,184,033	£1,125,779

9.2 Excess Charge Notice Income

Excess charge notice income has reduced since 2012/13 due to a change in enforcement policy following the transfer of the service to Wychavon. At the Members request the enforcement staff were given more discretion to deal with

parking contraventions by giving advice and warnings rather than issuing ECN's or PCN's. Although this has reduced income there has been a sizeable reduction in complaints about parking enforcement and as a consequence an improvement in the Council's reputation as users see a more reasonable enforcement policy being implemented.

Year	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13
Income	£167,106	£193,422	£152,494	£150,174	£29,001

The income from ECNs and Off Street PCNs for first 7 months of this financial year is £19,856

9.3 Car Park Permit income

Annual and Quarterly Parking Permits are available in a number of the car parks and are priced as follows.

Cost of Permit

Year	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/2013
Annual (All Long Stay)	£300	£300	£300	£300	£300	£320	£320
Quarterly (All Long Stay)	£75	£75	£75	£75	£75	£80	£80
Annual (Sourbridge Rd & Multi)	£200	£200	£200	£200	£200	£215	£215
Quarterly (Stourbridge Rd & Multi)	£50	£50	£50	£50	£50	£53.75	£53.75
Alvechurch Annual	n/a		n/a	n/a	n/a	£250	£250
Alvechurch Quarterly	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	£62.50	£62.50

Number of Permits Purchased

Year	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/2013
Annual (All Long Stay)	19	32	35	33	28	26	31
Quarterly (All Long Stay)	119	191	263	241	270	250	231
Annual (Sourbridge Rd & Multi)	2	7	9	10	14	14	18
Quarterly (Stourbridge Rd & Multi)	24	58	190	201	200	217	185
Alvechurch Annual	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
Alvechurch Quarterly	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Revenue including vat	£16,225	£28,225	£41,525	£40,025	£41,450	£43,239	£43,244

Permit sales have seen a slight decline since its peak in 2010/11. The trend is similar to that seen in Wychavon and other adjoining authorities during the same period. We offer the ability to pay quarterly to make this a more affordable option for customers.

Wychavon District Council has recently introduced a Monthly Direct Debit (April 2013) option to encourage users to purchase a Season Ticket facility and allow them to spread the cost, to date it has not shown any increase of users.

10. LENGTH OF STAY – Ticket Analysis

The 2010 Parking Survey highlighted that the average stay in the Short Stay car parks was one hour or less. The Long Stay car parks such as Hanover Street had an average length of stay of 2 hours or less. Longer stays were made by Permit holders but data for these vehicles is difficult to obtain without detailed and time consuming physical monitoring.

In 2012/13 32% of motorist using Recreation Rd South car park paid a 40p charge for a 1/2 hour stay. However there are currently 1527 disabled users registered to use the car park which would entitle them to an additional 1 hour of parking at no additional charge. In 2012/13 there were 589010 ticket sales in total and 402701 of those were for one hour or less. Of those 402701 tickets 189597 ticket sales were for 30 mins.

In respect of the multi-storey car park (Churchfields) 57% of ticket sales are for one hour or less with 87% of stays being for 2 hours or less. Only 6.5% of stays are all-days stay. 18 annual permits and 185 quarterly permits are sold for use in this car park and Stourbridge Road to long stay users.

10.1 Daily use Pay & Display

Daily tickets sale patterns vary across each car park but overall tickets sales are 40% in the morning (8am to noon), 49% in the afternoon (noon to 6pm) and 11% in the evening 6pm to 10pm.

2012/2013	Morning Tickets sold	8.00-11.59 % of total tickets	Afternoon Tickets sold	12.00- 17.59 % of total tickets	Evening tickets sold	18.00- 22.00 % of total tickets	Total tickets
Hanover Street	32087	31.66	49176	48.52	20081	19.82	101344
New Road	31482	32.1	50249	51.26	16322	16.64	98085
Parkside	60718	38.2	94680	59.62	3409	2.18	158807
Rec Road North	4221	51.39	3863	47.03	129	1.58	8213
School Drive	57532	37.71	72615	48.00	21795	14.29	152550
Station cp	9200	87.2	1189	11.20	154	14.6	10543
Stourbridge Road	3941	45.6	4488	51.90	214	2.5	8643
Windsor Street	62033	38.3	95091	59.62	2348	14.72	159472

As the morning period is only 4 hours compared to 6 in the afternoon ticket sales are broadly similar in each period. It is difficult to draw any conclusion from the summarised information. It was not possible to produce similar data from the pay on foot system as payment is made at the end of the stay not on arrival.

10.2 Weekdays

Parking usage is highest on Fridays & Saturday. See table below for a typical September week.

Day	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
Date	16/9/13	17/9/13	18/9/13	19/9/13	20/9/13	21/9/13	22/9/13
Tickets Sold	3266	3718	3702	3741	4638	5020	1928

10.3 Evenings

Evening charges in Pay & Display car parks extend to 10 pm every day. The evening charging period from 6pm to 10pm accounts for 11% of total Pay & Display income – £86,000 per annum. This ranges from 1.5% in Recreation Road north to 19% in Hanover Street. As per the daily use table above.

10.4 Sunday Trading and Usage

Ticket data regarding Sunday use is detailed below.

Car park usage is traditionally lowest on Sunday; the 2010 report identified that only 6% of ticket sales and 5% of income is obtained on Sundays. These figures have not changed significantly. In 2012/13 the car park income was £82,272, which is 6 % of total income.

A survey of shops in the High Street undertaken in September 2013 revealed that in addition to a number of Public Houses and restaurants the following properties currently trade on a Sunday in Bromsgrove.

Argos	Sports Direct
Subway	Specsavers
Peacocks	Bet Fred
Iceland	Ryman Stationary
Martins (8am – 2pm)	The Works
Claire's	Phones 4U
Ladbrokes	Bodycare
Poundland	Pizza Express

10.5 Bromsgrove Station

The station car park is a long stay car park which has a set charge of £3 per day. This offers good value for money compared with other areas although there is no consistent charge for all stations. See below.

STATION/TOWN	DAILY	OFF PEAK	WEEKLY	MONTHLY
BROMSGROVE	£3	n/a	n/a	n/a
DROITWICH Station	FOC	n/a	n/a	n/a
DROITWICH (Union Lane)	£4.50	n/a	n/a	n/a
PERSHORE	FOC	n/a	n/a	n/a
EVESHAM	£3.80	n/a	£19.00	£67.00
WORCESTER (Shrub Hill)	£5.50	£5.50	£18.50	£45.00
BARNT GREEN	£2	£1	£6	£20
REDDITCH	£4.40	£2.60	£18.00	£45.00
KIDDERMINSTER	£3.50	£2.10	£14.00	£37.00

Bromsgrove station Car Park is full to capacity most of the working week – hence new car park being proposed as part of the new station project.

10.6 School Drive

This car park is used predominantly by users of the leisure centre. A refund is made to users on production of a Pay and Display ticket (tickets from these machines are double issue).

The money is reimbursed to the leisure centre by Bromsgrove Council which in the year 2012/2013 was approximately £54K resulting from approximately 5000 refunds per month of varying amounts.

10.7 Free car parks

Bromsgrove District Council currently has 3 free car parks Sanders Park Bromsgrove, Tanyard Lane Alvechurch and Golden Cross Lane Catshill it also manages the Alvechurch Sports and Social Club car park.

11. ON STREET PARKING – CIVIL PARKING ENFORCEMENT

Civil Parking Enforcement was introduced in the District of Bromsgrove on 30th May 2013. This has allowed a more consistent approach to traffic enforcement as staff are able to enforce both On-Street Traffic regulation orders and Off-Street parking areas owned by the District Council.

Since the introduction of CPE on 30th May 2013 the following numbers of tickets have been issued to vehicles (Penalty Charge Notices have replaced Excess Charge Notices Off Street)*.

During the warning period 30th May to 12th June 2013

On-Street	121 warning notices
Off-Street	16 warning notices

From 13th June 2013 until 30th September 2013

On-Street	757 Penalty Charge Notices
Off-Street	791 Penalty Charge Notices

*An Excess Charge Notice was £70 (£35 if paid within 14 days) and the Penalty Charge Notice is £50 (£25 if paid within 14 days)

A comment on the new enforcement has been obtained from Inspector Sharron Canning, Bromsgrove Safer Neighbourhood Inspector.

“Since the civil enforcement officers have taken over dealing with parking issues from the police and traffic wardens, they have been a positive addition for the community of Bromsgrove. Illegally parked vehicles often cause difficulties and road safety issues for other road users and members of the community and the civil enforcement officers have provided both information and enforcement where appropriate”.

*Inspector Sharron Cannings
Bromsgrove Safer Neighbourhood Inspector
Bromsgrove Police Station*

11.1 New Traffic Regulation Orders

Worcestershire County Council review existing Traffic Regulation Orders in relation to changes in legislation reviewing both usage and appropriateness of Orders. New Traffic Regulation Orders are introduced to meet traffic management needs due to more vehicular movements.

11.1.1 On-street disabled parking spaces within residential areas.

In addition to normal disabled bays located in the town Worcestershire County Council have introduced a policy that allows the provision of dedicated on-street parking spaces for disabled people outside their homes. Full information on this is set out within their Policy on ‘The provision of disabled parking spaces within residential areas. Whilst this policy does enable a designated space to be introduced outside an individual’s house use of the bay is not restricted to that individual which may cause some conflict.

Enforcement of these bays would be the responsibility of the Civil Enforcement Officers as above however these bays will be predominantly situated in residential areas which may have an impact on patrol times.

12. PRICE COMPARISONS

Please see table below (next page).

	Bromsgrove Long Stay	Bromsgrove Windsor St.	Redditch Kingfisher	Broadway	Evesham	Pershore	Droitwich	Worcester City	Solihull Touchwood	Halesowen	Stourbridge	Dudley	West Bromwich	Malvern Hills	Stratford Upon Avon DC	Coventry	Kidderminster	Stourport on Severn	Bewdley
30 mins	40p	50p		50p	50p	50p	50p	40p-60p						50p					
1 hour	80p	£1.00		£1	£1	£1	£1	60p/90p / £1.20		50p-60p	50p	50p-60p	80p	£1	Free-£1	0.30p - £1	90p	90p	90p
2 hours	£1.60	£2.00	£1.20	£2	£2	£2	£2	£1.20/£1.40/£1.60	£2.30	£1.20	£1	£1.20	£1.60		£2	0.70p - £1.80	£1.30	£1.30	£1.30
3 hours	£2.40		£2.50	£3	£3	£3	£3	£1.80/£2.70/£3.60	£3.10	£1.80	£1.50	£1.80	£2.40		£3	£1 - £2 - £2.30	£2.10 - £2.30	£2.10 - £2.30	£2.10 - £2.30
4 hours	£3.20		£2.50					£2.40/£3.60/£5.00	£4.00				£3.20 - £4	£2	£4	£2 - £2.50 - £3			
5 hours	£4/£5		£2.50						£5.60					£3		£3 - £5			
6 hours			£3					£3.00/£5.00/£7.50	£9.00							£6 - £8			
6-7 hours			£5.00																
9 hours															£6				
12 hours																			
Day Charge	£3/£5		£10	£4	£4	£4	£4		£11.00		£2.50								
Up to 24 hours								£3.50/£6.00/£10.00							£10		£3.60 - £4.60	£3.60 - £4.60	£3.60 - £4.60
Evenings	Normal Rate	Normal Rate	No Charge	No Charge	No Charge	No Charge	No Charge	Normal Rate	£1.50	£1	80p	£1	Normal Rate	£2	£2	50p	Normal Rate	Normal Rate	Normal Rate

13. CAR PARK DIRECTIONAL SIGNAGE

In the course of the inspection of the car parks consideration has been given to the direction signage to the car parks. This is thought to be unsatisfactory at the present time changes no doubt will occur within the town centre and the surrounding area as part of the redevelopment plans. Signage off the public highway is the responsibility of the highways authority.

While most of the car park users are “locals” and know where the car parks are they are not easy to find for new visitors to the town. Signage of the car parks and the opportunity to implement automated availability signage could be considered as part of town centre redevelopment work programme.

14. TARIFF BOARDS

These have been updated in May 2013 as part of the CPE process. They show clearly the tariffs, conditions of use and parking contravention details in accordance with the requirements of the Traffic Management Act 2004.

15. AVAILABLE PAYMENT OPTIONS

Bromsgrove operates two payment methods in different car parks these are Pay on Foot and Pay and Display In recent years a number of additional means of payment have emerged onto the market they are listed below.

15.1 - Pay on Foot –Recreation Road South and Churchfields Multi storey

This form of payment is particularly suited to larger car parks; it enables the motorist to pay on return to the car parks for the actual period of parking rather than to have to estimate the time required. It also provides additional security by the use of a barrier control at both the entrance and the exit to the car park. It eliminates the need for ticket checking element of enforcement but still needs patrol staff to deal with vehicles parked incorrectly in restricted bays and cases of obstruction.

However it is expensive to install and is generally only associated with very large car parks and shopping centres where staff are available during all the charging hours. Staff are required to be at hand to deal with barrier and machine problems as well as lost tickets.

15.2 - Pay and Display – Remainder of car parks

Pay and Display car parks have been the preferred method of paying for parking for many years and is well established in Britain. The payment machines are supplied by Metric based in Swindon. The machines are coin operated and have the alpha numeric keypad which requires the vehicle registration details to be entered this helps identify the purchaser to the vehicle and prevents passing of unexpired tickets onto other users.

15.3 - Chip and PIN

Chip and Pin is a standard credit and debit card payment facility, as is widely used in shops and restaurants. Customers would need to select and confirm the tariff that they require and then pay by inserting their credit or debit card into the machine and entering their PIN number.

To use this method of payment there would need to be upgrades undertaken on all Pay and Display machines with associated costs.

15.4 - Phone payments

An increasing number of Local Authorities and Train Operating Companies have installed payment by mobile phone technology in their car parks. It has a number of advantages to the operators of the car parks.

- Reduced cash collection
- Reduced machine maintenance
- No need for additional machines
- Enforcement is done with handhelds that are GPRS enabled.
- Eliminates ticket transfer.

However the customer is first required to register the vehicle with the company and provide payment details either debit or credit card.

Each car park will have a unique reference number provided on the signage and when calling the supplier the customer will provide that number and state the length of stay they wish to park – this will determine the fee payable.

In addition to the parking charge there is an additional fee payable to the operator which is normally 20p.

However this method of payment is not ideally suited to Bromsgrove as it is more appropriate in long stay car parks where the charges are greater.

16. COMPARISONS

A number of councils across the UK have implemented changes to their parking offer in an attempt to support the local economy.

Wychavon:

The Wychavon Council has introduced at various times cost cutting initiatives in the short stay car parks that correspond with various traffic schemes. These have been run in Pershore whilst the High Street was being redesigned along with the Evesham High Street development and now due to the Evesham Bridge Closure. The reduction in the rate from £1 per hour to 20p for 3 hours has not resulted in an increase in car park use and has therefore resulted in a considerable loss to the

authority. Fortunately as this is as a result of Bridge works undertaken by the county they will be reimbursing the council for monies lost.

Wychavon's reduction in long stay charges from £6 to £4 – increased use slightly but only just enough to offset the target income.

Trafford Metropolitan Borough Council:

This authority has been cited as one authority which has made significant changes to its parking policy. Trafford Council covers a number of towns to the south of Manchester including Altrincham, Hale and Stretford. Officers have visited Altrincham to gain a better understanding of the changes they adopted.

The Council recognised that its economy was struggling in the downturn and that its parking policies may be contributing to a loss of footfall to competing areas including out of town shopping centres and much larger urban areas. The Council decided to carry out a survey of local resident and businesses to seek their views on parking charges, capacity and enforcement.

The survey results suggested to the Council that parking charges were perceived to have a major impact on visitors so it decided to reduce charges for a trial period in an attempt to generate more footfall into the towns. Car parking prices varied in most car parks and there was a strong wish for consist charges to be made across all of the Councils car parks.

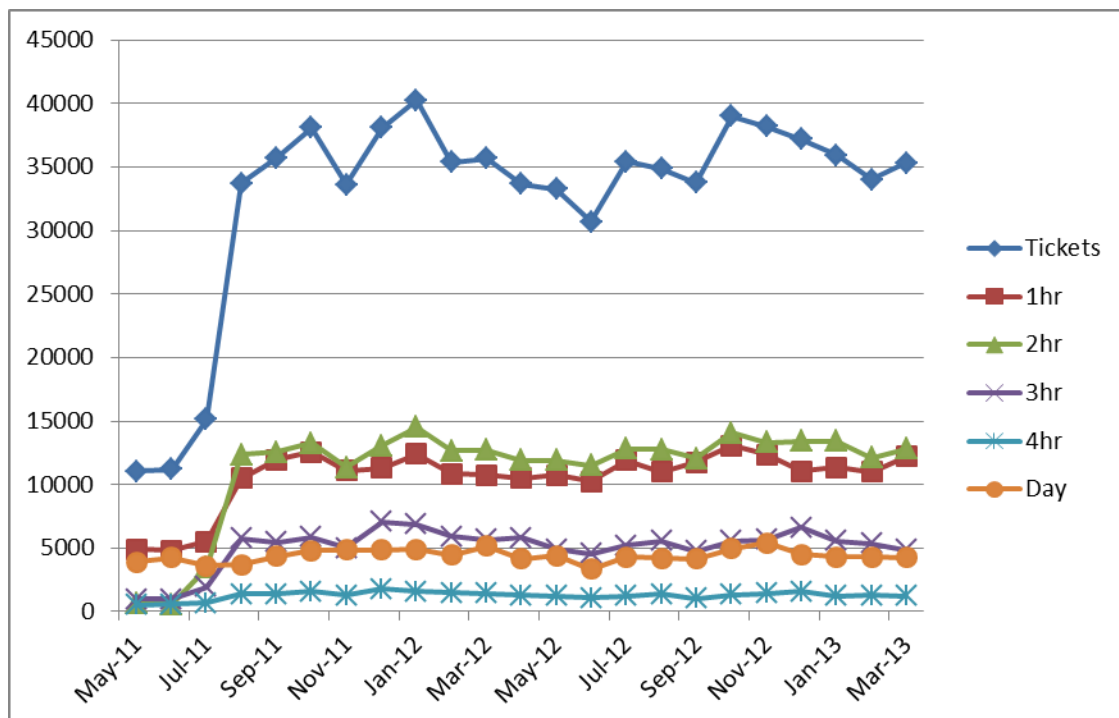
The Council reduced its parking charges on a number of occasions and has currently settled on 10p for 1 hour, 30p for 2 hours and 70p for 3 hours in all of its towns 6 days per week. Parking is free on Sundays. In 2009 the prices varied across the district but were £1.50 for 1hour, £2 for 2 hours and £3 for 3 hours in Altrincham, the largest town within the borough.

Altrincham's retail offer is significantly larger than Bromsgrove's and has a number of major retailers including House of Fraser, Debenhams, Next and Marks and Spencer, a large number of independent shops and a range of mid-range retailers. The town benefits from a large shopping centre in addition to the High Street and secondary retail areas and has a number of private sector operated car parks including a 700 space car park connected to the shopping centre. Unlike Bromsgrove where the Council is the dominant parking provider in Altrincham the Council provides less than a quarter of the off street parking.

The Councils Parking Manager and Town Centre Manager very kindly provided some further information about the impact of the revised parking charges including the car park usage figures set out below:

Altrincham Car Park usage figures

	Tickets	1hr	2hr	3hr	4hr	Day
May-11	11045	4926	683	993	549	3894
Jun-11	11202	4806	591	979	555	4271
Jul-11	15114	5495	3470	1917	652	3580
Aug-11	33704	10481	12337	5784	1386	3716
Sep-11	35699	11957	12541	5457	1384	4360
Oct-11	38074	12547	13280	5873	1568	4806
Nov-11	33589	11104	11375	4996	1265	4849
Dec-11	38108	11294	13072	7090	1776	4876
Jan-12	40260	12413	14524	6861	1561	4901
Feb-12	35392	10855	12673	5921	1474	4469
Mar-12	35678	10738	12701	5647	1456	5136
Apr-12	33636	10503	11889	5793	1282	4169
May-12	33241	10767	11927	4888	1236	4423
Jun-12	30694	10225	11504	4545	1063	3357
Jul-12	35427	11881	12817	5198	1242	4289
Aug-12	34860	11018	12760	5548	1357	4177
Sep-12	33745	11735	12032	4766	1044	4168
Oct-12	38988	13078	14084	5564	1314	4948
Nov-12	38183	12366	13315	5650	1433	5419
Dec-12	37168	11050	13421	6595	1607	4495
Jan-13	35901	11363	13434	5538	1249	4317
Feb-13	33997	10981	12089	5354	1284	4289
Mar-13	35315	12185	12804	4877	1209	4240



The impact of reducing the parking charges is clear to see with monthly P&D ticket sales rising from 11000 per month to an average of 35500 per month. The Council clearly obtained an increase in use of its car parks but the success of the scheme cannot be judged by this measure alone.

Reducing parking charges has resulted in a loss of income of between £250,000 and £500,000 per year for the Council (higher in the first year due to reduction in enforcement staff and start-up costs) and will have a 3 year cost of up to approximately £900,000.

The Council has had to fund this cost through other spending choices and use of other resources. The scheme is subject to review as part of this year's budget round as the initial funding was time limited.

Apart from the cost to the Council the impact of the scheme on the town is interesting. There is very little hard evidence of any increased spend in the towns businesses and they are unable to evidence that footfall has grown since the reduced rates were introduced. Officers were told that retailers were not prepared to comment on any increase in retail sales following the reduction in parking charges. However the economy has declined over that period so the reduced charges may have helped limit the decline to some degree. Other car park providers within the town have seen benefits to their income and usage over the same period as shoppers and visitors often find the Council car parks at a capacity and have to park elsewhere.

While Altrincham has clearly secured increased car park usage it must be questioned if the scheme has secured a return to the town or the Council to justify the expenditure. Sufficient information to carry out an assessment is not available and the cost of such a scheme will be too great for many authorities to consider.

If Bromsgrove were to adopt the Altrincham model on Recreation Road South car park based on the same car park usage rates obtained for 2012/13 the income would have been £153,207.00 compared with the actual figure that was £550,750.00 that would equate to a 72% reduction in car parking income. Transposing this percentage to the total income from parking for last year of £1,125,779.00 the authority could expect a loss of parking income in the region of £810,560.00. It is difficult to predict the increase in usage that a reduction in price might give however if we were to use the same percentage increase that Altrincham experienced then our income on Recreation Road South would have been reduced by £305,231.00 this is a 55% reduction which again transposed to all car parks would give an overall reduction of income of £619,178.00.