

Parking Management Policy

Foreword

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1 Introduction

- 1.1 Three Rivers District Council is the Local Parking Authority for the District, designated by the Traffic Management Act (2004) to manage parking on 126 kilometres of roads (36 kilometres of residential streets) for a local population of around 93,772^(2021 Census).
- 1.2 The district council (as statutory Local Parking Authority) manages the way people park vehicles, to ensure people who need to park can park easily and reduce unsafe and obstructive parking.
- 1.3 This policy sets out the council's approach to handling parking requests and petitions, the management of parking schemes, the implementation of 'H-Bars', the allowance of vehicle cross-overs and the considerations for verge hardening schemes.
- 1.4 This policy also provides some guidance on the enforcement of parking restrictions and dropped kerbs. The Council's Penalty Charge Notice Cancellation Policy sets out in detail how the council issues and enforces Penalty Charge Notices ('PCNs').

2 Background - Local parking context

- 2.1 Local settlements are characterised as largely suburban and rural, dispersed around the district which itself is largely centred on the M25 motorway, with Watford, Hemel Hempstead and Northwood being the nearest urban centres. Parts of the district are closer spatially and in character to Buckinghamshire, forming part of the Chilterns AONB, while others such as South Oxhey and Northwood are contiguous with the built area of Greater London and resemble its character.
- 2.2 Local demographic factors and the design of local roads that were not intended to support significant vehicle parking give rise to frequent complaints and requests for parking restrictions to be introduced, altered or removed.
- 2.3 The district has high levels of car ownership. At the time of the 2021 census, only 12.5% of households in the district did not have a car, compared to an average of 23.5% throughout England, while 47.7% of households had more than one car compared to an average of 35.2%. Other factors contributing to parking demand include population density, which has increased continually in the Southeast of England the last three decades. The number of people living the district is forecast to rise with increased Government targets for new dwellings.

3 Background - Our Role as Local Parking Authority

- 3.1 Three Rivers District Council is the Local Parking Authority, managing parking on local roads and in off-street car parks on land that it owns. Since 2001, it has been responsible both to enforce all civil parking restrictions on local roads; and to develop parking management schemes on local roads. This role was created by the Secretary of State and functions through an Agency agreement with Hertfordshire County Council.
- 3.2 New parking management schemes are investigated, developed and promoted by the Regulatory Services team. Civil Parking Enforcement (CPE) is currently delivered in partnership with Hertsmeire Borough Council, which manages all enforcement functions including the everyday operation of permit parking schemes, public car parks and enforcement of all restrictions.
- 3.3 Local Authorities are encouraged to operate an efficient Civil Parking Enforcement service to reduce any financial burden on the Council Tax payer. Income (from permits and parking

fees) is expected to contribute to the cost of the service. Whilst income from Penalty Charge Notices (PCNs) does contribute to the cost of the service, the activity of issuing PCNs must aim for complete compliance. Any surplus in income is required by law to be used specifically for local transport and parking purposes.

4 Background - Extent and limitations of the Local Parking Authority Role

- 4.1 Three Rivers District Council has powers to manage parking in relation to “controlled parking zones and other ancillary car parking measures in respect of Secondary Distributor Local Roads Primary and Main Distributor Local Roads”.
- 4.2 This means that Three Rivers District Council may require further approvals to introduce parking schemes which are primarily to improve road safety or which require physical works to the highway, such as installing bollards or changing kerb lines. These are generally considered the responsibility of the county council, as the Local Highway Authority.
- 4.3 All proposed schemes must be approved by the county council before they can be implemented, as the district council are exercising legal powers on their behalf. The district council cannot proceed with proposals if the county council does not give this permission.
- 4.4 The district council cannot enforce restrictions directly through camera or ANPR based systems however this can be used to manage the deployment of Civil Enforcement Officers.
 - 4.4.1 The district council cannot introduce or enforce moving traffic restrictions such as weight or width access restrictions, speed limits or one-way systems. Additionally, the council cannot introduce or enforce any type of restrictions on trunk roads including:
 - 4.4.2 The M25 motorway for the whole of its length in the district including its on and off slip roads
 - 4.4.3 The M1 motorway for the whole of its length in the district including its on and off slip roads
 - 4.4.4 The A41 road for the whole of its length in the district including its on and off slip roads
 - 4.4.5 The A405 road for the whole of its length in the district including its on and off slip roads

5 Parking Management Objectives

- 5.1 The council works towards the following policy objectives delivered by parking management schemes:
 - 5.1.1 Prioritise convenient parking for those who need it most, where they need it
 - 5.1.2 Promote safer, easier, non-obstructive parking provision while improving the local environment and meeting legal requirements
 - 5.1.3 Promote the needs of all users of the public realm, including more vulnerable road users (such as people walking and cycling)
 - 5.1.4 Promote the viability and vitality of retail, business and leisure areas

6 Individual Parking Management Programme Requests

- 6.1 Individual requests for the council to introduce, change or revoke parking restrictions may be sent through a variety of channels. Residents and stakeholders are encouraged to use online channels including the parking restriction request form, which ensures that all required information is provided and reduces administrative workload.

- 6.2 Each request will be reviewed by officers prior to inclusion on the parking management programme request list. Requests may be rejected for several reasons to ensure the parking management request list remains focused on achievable and relevant schemes. Reasons for rejection include:
 - 6.2.1 The matter falls outside the council's parking authority (e.g. speed limits, traffic management measures)
 - 6.2.2 The request relates to an area or scheme already under investigation
 - 6.2.3 The request does not concern parking restrictions (e.g. general enforcement queries)
 - 6.2.4 Insufficient information is provided
 - 6.2.5 The proposal is deemed unviable or technically infeasible
- 6.3 If the proposal is rejected the author/applicant will be advised of this with provided justification and redirected if possible.

7 Parking Petitions

- 7.1 This section has been written in accordance with the 'Right to Challenge Parking Policies' national guidance issued under section 18 of the Traffic Management Act and all other relevant legislation.
- 7.2 Petitions are considered an important way residents or other stakeholders can raise an issue which the council could act on. They form part of the council's ongoing commitment to listening to and acting on the views of the public.
- 7.3 Petitions related to parking are handled in line with the council's Constitution which states that any member of the public can ask to present a petition signed by at least 25 residents other than Members of the Council. This is further detail in Part 4 of the Constitution.
- 7.4 To be considered a valid parking petition, it must clearly identify:
 - 7.4.1 The parking issue or restriction being challenged
 - 7.4.2 The location to which the petition relates
 - 7.4.3 The change or action being requested
- 7.5 The council will consider petitions that meet the requirements and will determine the appropriate course of action. The default action will be adding the petition to the parking management request list and initiate a future investigation once it has been prioritised and resources allow.
- 7.6 Local authorities have a responsibility to manage their resources to the best effect in performing all aspects of their duties, and to do this they must balance the resources necessary to review parking petitions with other demands. Repeated or inappropriate petitions from vexatious individuals or groups can impact negatively on this.
- 7.7 In addition to stipulations outlined in the council constitution, the council may decline to accept a parking petition in the following instances:
 - 7.7.1 It does not clearly identify the parking issue or restriction being challenged, the location to which the petition relates and the change or action being requested

- 7.7.2 The petition is considered too broad, for example; calling for a review of many traffic regulation orders or parking restrictions over too wide an area
- 7.7.3 The petition relates to a matter that has recently been considered and there has been no material change in circumstances
- 7.7.4 The request is considered vexatious, abusive or otherwise inappropriate
- 7.8 A petition cannot be rejected on the grounds that the council does not agree with what the petition is requesting.

8 Parking Management Programme Request Scoring System

- 8.1 Accepted parking requests are scored to assess relative priority. Requests are assessed on a road-by-road basis, allowing multiple submissions for the same location to contribute to an overall assessment of the parking issues. The scoring system operates as follows:
 - 8.1.1 Each individual request adds one point to the score up to a maximum of 10 points per road.
 - 8.1.2 Petitions submitted to the council require a minimum of 25 signatures and therefore will increase the score by the maximum of 10 points.
 - 8.1.3 Officers may then apply a discretionary adjustment of +5 to -5 points based on local conditions, safety implications, overall impact and other factors which the officer may consider relevant.
 - 8.1.4 Requests remain on the list for up to six years, after which they will be removed if not progressed. If a request is deleted the score for that road will be adjusted and it may become a lower priority.
- 8.2 A report will be presented every two years to the relevant council committee (with an annual update), seeking delegated authority to progress schemes based on the highest-scoring requests. In addition, the council may initiate other schemes outside of the request list, such as:
 - 8.2.1 Reviews of recently implemented schemes
 - 8.2.2 Schemes requested by the Lead Member
 - 8.2.3 Officer-identified areas requiring intervention
- 8.3 These schemes will progress alongside non-programmed work which is essential to maintaining satisfactory parking operations.

9 Consultation Principles

- 9.1 This section has been written in accordance with the 'The Local Authorities' Traffic Orders (Procedure) (England and Wales) Regulations 1996' and all other relevant legislation.
- 9.2 There is a legal requirement to conduct a statutory consultation process on parking schemes which introduce, reduce or change parking restrictions. Additionally, involving people to help develop schemes, and decide on options, leads to not only better schemes but a greater likelihood that the local community will embrace the proposal and enjoy the changes when implemented.

- 9.3 Approaches to consultations will differ between schemes dependent on the scale and complexity of the proposals. The council will conduct parking consultations in accordance with the following key principles:
- 9.3.1 The council will be transparent by providing coherent and relevant information
 - 9.3.2 The council will aim to reduce the complexity of the consultation period
 - 9.3.3 The council will provide meaningful opportunities for engagement
- 9.4 When calculating the number of supporters, objectors and other representations, the council will generally base this on refining the responses to one per address. Aside from exceptional circumstances, respondents who do not provide their full address will not be considered in the response analysis. However, this does not affect the council's duty to equally consider all objections.
- 9.5 Aside from exceptional circumstances, an informal period of consultation will be held on all schemes. This provides residents and other stakeholders with a greater opportunity to steer the development of parking schemes. Informal consultation is intended to assist with the development and refinement of proposals. It does not replace the statutory consultation and objection process required for a Traffic Regulation Order.
- 9.6 Most consultations will be held on our dedicated engagement platform 'Have Your Say' and respondents are encouraged to use this online platform. Alternative ways of responding will be made available to those with no online access.
- 9.7 The council may in the instance of smaller schemes which do not require a Traffic Regulation Order, execute the scheme without consultation. This could be the case, for example, for a small section of Verge Hardening or allowance of a Vehicle Cross Over.

10 Permit Parking Restrictions

- 10.1 Permit parking restrictions prioritises parking for a defined eligible group. The council publishes information about permit parking and responses to frequent questions here: <https://www.threerivers.gov.uk/services/parking/parking-permits>
- 10.2 The application of these should be carefully considered and the council will generally only implement permit parking restrictions where:
- 10.2.1 It is considered that there is clear need to prioritise the parking for the defined eligible group
 - 10.2.2 There is majority support from the defined eligible group in consultations
 - 10.2.3 There is a sufficient response rate from the defined eligible group in consultations which is generally considered to be a majority of households/ businesses responding
 - 10.2.4 It is considered that the needs of the defined eligible group outweigh the needs of other road users
- 10.3 It should be noted that a scheme could be redesigned to only include parking areas where the above requirements are satisfied and this should be considered before abandonment of proposals for permit parking restrictions.
- 10.4 Permit prices are reviewed separately under the fees and charges process. The cost contributes to the on-going costs associated with permit parking controls, in issuing parking permits and visitor vouchers and addressing enquiries, in addition to maintaining the signs and road markings and enforcement.

- 10.5 The council reserves the right to decide the defined eligible group based on several factors including off-street parking provision, parking demand, age of development and location.

11 Decision Making on Parking Schemes

- 11.1 The decision on parking schemes is delegated to the relevant Lead Member. Following the statutory consultation (Notice of Proposal) a report will be produced outlining any objections and other representations and the officer's recommendation(s). The Lead Member will sign and indicate their preferred approach.
- 11.2 The council can only use the results from their own consultation in the decision-making process due to ability to validate the responses.
- 11.3 Decisions will generally be made in consultation with local ward councillors.

12 Design Principles

- 12.1 Parking schemes will be designed with consideration of relevant guidance including Manual for Streets, Manual for Streets 2 and Traffic Signs Manual.
- 12.2 Under the Road Traffic Regulations Act 1984, the council may make an order where it appears expedient for:
- 12.2.1 Avoiding danger to road users
 - 12.2.2 Preventing damage to a road or building
 - 12.2.3 Facilitating the passage of any class of traffic
 - 12.2.4 Preventing use by unsuitable traffic
 - 12.2.5 Preserving the character of the road for horse-riders or pedestrians
 - 12.2.6 Preserving / improving amenities in the area
 - 12.2.7 Preserving air quality
- 12.3 The council will design parking schemes in accordance with the following key principles:
- 12.3.1 Be easy to understand and comply with.
 - 12.3.2 Maximise parking availability wherever possible.
 - 12.3.3 Prevent parking which is considered obstructive and/or dangerous.
 - 12.3.4 Prioritise the available parking for purposes considered important in the locality, such as resident parking, high-street visitors or blue-badge holders.
 - 12.3.5 Have a neutral or positive impact on sustainable transport. This includes any impact on provisions for pedestrians, cyclists and public transport users.
- 12.4 Private roads will not be included in any parking scheme due to being legally too difficult to get permanent agreement with landowners. Private roads addresses will not be eligible for parking permits on public roads.
- 12.5 Measures considered necessary to secure the safe and expeditious movement of traffic will be implemented in line with the stated design principles.

13 Advisory Disabled Bays

- 13.1 Residents with a disability struggle to park close to their home can apply for an 'advisory' disabled bay to be provided outside of or close to their property. Although these 'advisory' road markings are not enforceable, we anticipate they would be respected by the majority of considerate road users. The bay is not for exclusive use by the applicant.
- 13.2 The application process is currently administered by Watford Borough Council and this eligibility criteria replicates that existing working practice of both councils.
- 13.3 The eligibility criteria for applicants applying for an advisory disabled parking bay includes:
 - 13.3.1 You hold a valid Blue Badge
 - 13.3.2 You receive Disability Living Allowance or Personal Independence Payment, with mobility component at the higher rate or Attendance Allowance at the higher rate
 - 13.3.3 You live in the Three Rivers District for at least six months of the year
 - 13.3.4 Your vehicle is registered at the address where you are applying for the bay, and you also live at the address
 - 13.3.5 You hold a valid driving licence
 - 13.3.6 Your vehicle is taxed and insured
 - 13.3.7 There is nowhere else for you to park, such as a driveway, car park or garage
- 13.4 When we receive an application, we will check that:
 - 13.4.1 The eligibility criteria above have been met.
 - 13.4.2 It is safe to mark a bay near the property i.e. it does not adversely affect free pedestrian or vehicle movement or restrict visibility.
 - 13.4.3 No more than 10% of the available parking in the street is for disabled parking.
 - 13.4.4 There is a significant demand for parking in the road.
 - 13.4.5 There are no Traffic Regulation Orders required to be changed to enable to the marking of the bay.
 - 13.4.6 The bay is in a location which forms part of the adopted highway.
 - 13.4.7 There are no objections to the bay which cannot be overcome.

14 Vehicle Cross-Overs

- 14.1 Vehicle cross-overs are the areas between a private parking area and the carriageway. In most instances, this area is adopted highway and therefore is only subject to the Hertfordshire County Council Residential Dropped Kerbs Policy and applicable planning requirements. However, in some instances Three Rivers District Council owns an area of land between the private parking area and the adopted highway.
- 14.2 The council can permit a licence to the resident to allow them to cross this area of land and making changes to the land to allow this to safely take place. Aside from exception

circumstances, the council will only allow vehicle cross-overs where they are considered to demonstrate:

- 14.2.1 Safe and practical vehicle access.
- 14.2.2 Acceptable ongoing maintenance implications.
- 14.2.3 No adverse impact on the highway, footways, or drainage.
- 14.2.4 Minimal detriment to the appearance or environmental value of the area.
- 14.2.5 A neutral or positive impact on sustainable transport. This includes any impact on provisions for pedestrians, cyclists and public transport users.
- 14.2.6 No overall loss of safe parking capacity.

15 H-Bar Markings

- 15.1 H-bar markings are white lines painted on the carriageway adjacent to dropped kerbs to encourage drivers to keep the access clear. These lines cannot be directly enforced through Civil Enforcement Powers.
- 15.2 The council does not routinely install H-bar markings. However, within Controlled Parking Zones or other managed parking areas, H-bars may be installed where they are deemed beneficial to accessibility, enforcement, or scheme clarity.
- 15.3 Some H-bar markings have been installed by Hertfordshire County Council and in this instance, they would need to be contacted regarding any maintenance of the markings.

16 Verge Hardening

- 16.1 Requests can be received for the council to create additional parking capacity by converting areas of verge, footway, or public green space which is owned by the council. This is colloquially known as 'verge hardening'. Aside from exception circumstances, the council will only progress verge hardening proposals where they are considered to demonstrate:
 - 16.1.1 Safe and practical vehicle access.
 - 16.1.2 Acceptable ongoing maintenance implications.
 - 16.1.3 No adverse impact on the highway, footways, or drainage.
 - 16.1.4 Minimal detriment to the appearance or environmental value of the area.
 - 16.1.5 A neutral or positive impact on sustainable transport. This includes any impact on provisions for pedestrians, cyclists and public transport users.
 - 16.1.6 That the works extend no more than five metres in depth from the highway edge.
 - 16.1.7 That the land is owned by Three Rivers District Council and is not adopted highway.
- 16.2 The stated criteria mean that successive encroachment into grassed areas or other amenity verges is not permitted. Replacement of amenity areas beyond the allowance within this policy with car parking facilities would need consideration separately through the council's planning process.

- 16.3 Accepted verge hardening requests are scored to assess relative priority against each other and other capital transport schemes. Requests are assessed on a scheme basis, allowing multiple submissions for the same location and type of request to contribute to an overall assessment of the demand. The scoring system operates as follows:
 - 16.3.1 Each individual request adds one point to the score up to a maximum of 5 points per scheme.
 - 16.3.2 Petitions submitted to the council require a minimum of 25 signatures and therefore will increase the score by the maximum of 5 points.
 - 16.3.3 Officers may then apply a discretionary adjustment of +5 to -5 points based on local conditions, safety implications, overall impact and other factors which the officer may consider relevant.
 - 16.3.4 Requests remain on the list for up to six years, after which they will be removed if not progressed. If a request is deleted the score for that scheme will be adjusted and it may become a lower priority.
- 16.4 A report will be presented every two years to the relevant council committee, seeking delegated authority to progress schemes based on the highest-scoring requests. In addition, the council may initiate other schemes outside of the request list, such as:
 - 16.4.1 Schemes requested by the Lead Member
 - 16.4.2 Officer-identified areas requiring intervention
- 16.5 These schemes will progress alongside non-programmed work which is essential to maintaining satisfactory transport operations.

17 Enforcement of Parking Restrictions

- 17.1 The district council can only enforce where specific restrictions exist such as parking bays or yellow lines, or in front of dropped kerbs. Illegal parking in breach of general prohibitions where there are no formal restrictions, such as obstructing the highway or parking dangerously, remain a matter for the Police and the district council does not have the power to take action.
- 17.2 The Council's enforcement service is currently provided in partnership with Hertsmere Borough Council, which is responsible for the management of the enforcement service through a legal agreement between the authorities.
- 17.3 Hertsmere Borough Council publishes an annual report outlining the Council's enforcement policies and detailing relevant operational information. This can be found here: [Annual Parking Reports](#)
- 17.4 The Council also publishes a Penalty Charge Notice Cancellation Policy, this is not a guide to how to successfully challenge penalties but does provide more information on the considerations made at each stage, mitigation, how to avoid penalties and other useful information. This can be found here: [Three Rivers PCN Cancellation Policy](#)

18 Enforcement of Dropped Kerbs

- 18.1 A dropped kerb is one which has been lowered to assist pedestrians crossing the carriageway or vehicles entering or leaving the carriageway.
- 18.2 Vehicles parked in a location so as to prevent access to or from a dropped kerb can be issued a Penalty Charge Notice if the person requiring access reports this to the Parking

Enforcement Team. This enforcement benefits members of the public who have their driveways blocked and ensures that minimum inconvenience is caused to pedestrians, wheelchair and Motability scooter users and those pushing prams and pushchairs on footways.

- 18.3 In line with legislative requirements, dropped kerb enforcement on residential or commercial driveways, can only be conducted with the express consent of the occupier whose access has been obstructed. The CEO will require the occupier to sign a consent form when they visit the property, before issuing a Penalty Charge Notice. If this permission is not given or if the occupier is not present, then no action will be taken.
- 18.4 Equally, vehicles that are parked close to the dropped kerb but not physically preventing a vehicle from coming or going will not fall under the criteria of the contravention and a penalty will not be issued in such circumstances.
- 18.5 There are some exceptions to this enforcement and principally they cover:
 - 18.5.1 Vehicles parked wholly within a designated parking place or any other part of the carriageway where parking is specifically authorised
 - 18.5.2 Vehicles used by the fire, ambulance or police services
 - 18.5.3 Loading and unloading
 - 18.5.4 Vehicles used for waste collection, building works or road works

19 Review and Monitoring

- 19.1 This policy will be reviewed periodically to ensure it remains consistent with national guidance, local priorities, and operational requirements. Minor updates may be approved by the relevant Lead Member, with substantive policy changes subject to committee approval.
- 19.2 The policy shall be adhered to, with any exceptions to the policy be limited to exceptional circumstances requested by the Lead Member to be delegated to the Director of Finance.

20 Background

- 20.1 The Road Traffic (Permitted Parking Area and Special Parking Area) (County of Hertfordshire) (District of Three Rivers) Order 2001
- 20.2 The Local Authorities' Traffic Orders (Procedure) (England and Wales) Regulations 1996
- 20.3 Traffic Management Act 2004
- 20.4 Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984

