

Proposed Blue Badge Car Park Charging Policy

Bridport Town Council

General Comment

Bridport Town Council welcomes the principle of a unified policy on parking provision for motorists with disabilities, and the idea of a permit that recognises the particular challenges they face. The Council also agrees with the provision of additional parking time at no cost for those who do not qualify for the permit.

Specific Issues

The Town Council asks that the following be considered when finalising the scheme:

1. Extension of the three-hour permit to four hours. Three hours may not be sufficient for those with the most significantly restricted mobility.
2. The deterrent effect of charging for parking for those Blue Badge holders that do not qualify for the permit, and the consequent impact on on-street parking. In Bridport our experience is that a minority of these will choose to park in often narrow side streets with narrow pavements, and in some cases in obvious dangerous places on main shopping streets. We do not support charges for on-street parking in Bridport, as this will not solve this concern. However, Dorset Council as highway authority should consider, alongside the introduction of a revised scheme, whether current on-street restrictions where Blue Badge parking is allowed are sufficient to ensure the safety of other road users – be they pedestrians, cyclists, motorists etc.
3. Whilst we recognise the benefit of a uniform general policy, consideration should be given to a more nuanced approach that caters for different types of area – as is the case with other Dorset Council car parking charges, which take account of the differing needs of urban, visitor, and rural areas. In Bridport and West Bay for example, motorists with disabilities can currently be issued with a visitor permit allowing up to three hours free parking per day, for a two-week period. The loss of this facility will be detrimental to the visitor economy.
4. It is unclear whether the RMPP will be available to any applicant, or solely to those in the Dorset Council area. Our preference would be for the former.
5. The RMPP should be available for purchase by means other than online application. Bridport Town Council, via its Tourist Information Centre, currently offers ‘over the counter’ services for parking permits and is happy to continue this arrangement.
6. Consideration should be given to the most effective means of informing motorists of the changes, particularly those visitors who may not be aware until they arrive on holiday.