

Parking Permit Charges

Summary of Statutory Consultation

July 2022

CUSTOMER
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SURREY

On Street Resident and Visitor Parking Permits

Review of fees and charges – Summary of statutory public consultation held between 25th March and 8th July 2022.

Background

1. The Cabinet agreed a number of changes to on street parking fees and charges at their meeting in January 2020. The implementation process for these was delayed by Covid until March 2022.
2. As part of the legal process to make the necessary amendments to the relevant traffic orders, we had to formally advertise our intention to make the changes, which we did by way of public notices in local newspapers across the county during the week beginning 21 March. Guildford area was subject to a separate statutory consultation which started on 9 June, with a closed on the 8 July).
3. We wrote to all existing permit holders and used social media to highlight a web page with the relevant information and to collect feedback and objections.
4. The changes that we are proposing to make are as follows:
 - An increase in the cost of the first permit issued to a household to £80
 - An increase in the cost of a second permit issued to the household to £100
 - An increase in the cost of any more permits issued to the household to £130
 - An annual increase for all residents' permits of £4 every two years from April 2024 to April 2028
 - The introduction of a child care permit in all permit schemes, which will allow people that provide regular care for the children of residents to park in the permit spaces during the hours of operation. These permits will be available at the same rate as residents' permits and the cost will therefore depend on the number of permits that have already been issued to the household who are applying
 - An increase in the cost of daily resident visitor permits to £3 where considered appropriate (eg busier town centres) but remaining at £2 elsewhere, and an increase in the number that a household can apply for in a year to 150
 - The introduction of new 2-hour visitor permits, costing £1, with a maximum allowance of 250 per household per year
 - The removal of the charge for Carers' permits (currently £10) for the use of carers visiting housebound residents

Why we want to make the changes

5. Residents parking schemes are normally introduced where there is local support and a real demand on parking. Often they are located near to town centres, or areas where commuters park. Such a scheme effectively reserves part of the public highway for the use of residents during the hours it is in operation. In order to be part of a scheme a resident has to buy a permit and display it in their vehicle.
6. In order to ensure they work effectively, residents parking schemes are enforced by the county council through civil parking enforcement (CPE).
7. The fees for residents' and visitors' permit were last reviewed and standardised across the county in 2011 and there have been no increases since then. At that time the fee for residents' permits was set at a level to recover administration costs, but it does not now fully recover the true administration, maintenance and enforcement costs of these schemes. It is a recognised principle that the costs of a permit parking scheme should be borne by those that derive a benefit from it and should not be subsidised by the general taxpayer.
8. The cost breakdown for a permit in a typical scheme of say 50 properties would be:
 - Setting up permit scheme and ongoing administration £25 (about 30 minutes officer time per application)
 - Enforcement £45 (approximately 1.5 hours per week of civil enforcement officer time)
 - Repayment of implementation costs and ongoing maintenance £10
9. This gives a total of £80 per permit.
10. The charge for subsequent permits is proposed to be higher to encourage fewer multi permit applications from a single household (while allowing for this eventuality), and to discourage excessive on street parking (and encourage off street parking). Also to encourage less reliance on cars and more use of alternative, more sustainable means of transport.
11. Many residents rely on full time assistance to help with child care, which can sometimes be difficult to accommodate within the constraints of our current permit scheme rules. We are therefore proposing to introduce child care permits in all permit schemes in order to make it easier for those providing child care to be able to park. As mentioned above, the fee for these permits will depend on the number of residents' permits issued to the household.
12. In order to allow residents to have more visitors, we propose to increase the limit on the number of daily visitors' permits issued to a household each year to 150.
13. In order to reduce the cost to residents for short-term visits, we propose to introduce 2-hour visitors permits at a cost of £1 each. Each household will be allowed to apply for up to 250 of these each year.

14. There will be no change to the administrative fee of £15, charged for the alteration to or replacement of a permit, and residents will still be able to obtain a refund should they no longer need their permit.
15. Subject to the Traffic Regulation Orders being amended, the revised charges will be applicable from when residents next renew their permits.
16. The cost of processing the advertisement of the council's intention to make changes to fees for permit parking schemes is significant and therefore it is not financially realistic to carry out the exercise on a regular short-term basis. Therefore, in order to ensure that the residents permit charge is maintained roughly in line with inflation for the next few years, the fees for permits will be increased by £4 every 2 years, starting in April 2024 and continuing until April 2028.

Response to the consultation

17. There were 609 responses to the consultation.

- 506 (83%) responses made an objection to the proposals
- 42 (7%) supported the proposal
- 61 (10%) commented (some objecting or supporting different aspects)

18. Respondents were asked to comment, these are the main themes:

Comments	Response
<p>52% of the objections referred to the timing of the rise being inappropriate because of the recent rises in the cost of living (fuel, heating, council tax etc) and the squeeze on household budgets. 52% said that the amount of the increase for permits was excessive / unacceptable. These were by far the most common reasons for objecting to the proposals.</p> <p>Other reasons were:</p>	<p>The price of resident permits has remained the same since 2011, over 10 years. The cost of carrying out a countywide statutory consultation (including contacting permit holders) means it is not economic for us to do this every year for a small inflationary increase.</p> <p>The increase from £50 to £80 for an annual resident permit represents an average increase of under £3 per year over an 11 year period.</p> <p>The cost of a £2 all day visitor permit is not changing however we are introducing a 2 hr permit for £1 in all areas. An all day visitor permit for £3 is not specifically being introduced in any location, however this will be available for future use (subject to further consultation) in some larger towns if needed.</p> <p>We have reviewed the cost of providing a single annual resident permit based on the approximate administration and enforcement required. Permit schemes across the county are varied, some in town centres and others in smaller communities that involve greater travelling time for enforcement purposes.</p>

<p>There are not enough parking spaces (mentioned by 12%)</p> <p>There is not enough enforcement of existing permit schemes (9%)</p> <p>That it is just a stealth tax / money grabbing / greed (11%)</p> <p>That it is unfair on less well off who cannot afford a drive / those that have no choice but to park on street (7%)</p> <p>That the first permit should be cheaper and the second or more even more expensive (7%)</p> <p>5% also specifically mentioned that the visitor permits should not go up to £3.</p> <p>There was quite a lot of support for the 2 hour visitor permits and childcare permits.</p> <p>There was support for the removal of the £10 charge for carers permits.</p> <p>There were other comments, such as a need for changes</p>	<p>An annual cost of £80 for a resident permit still represents good value (around £1.50 per week) for the benefit of more convenient parking nearer to home. Resident permit bays exclude non residents (commuters, shoppers etc) from using them during the busiest times of the day and so prioritise residents. £80 is a relatively small amount in the overall cost of running a car (about the same as a new tyre).</p> <p>Although there were many comments about specific issues associated with the various resident parking schemes around the county (operating times, permit allowances etc), they remain popular and there were very few requesting that resident permit schemes be removed. In some cases, residents consider they can increase property values, although we have no evidence to support this.</p> <p>In some permit scheme areas, there are more resident vehicles than available parking spaces due to the constraints of road space availability around town centres. We have proposed an escalating cost for the 2nd and subsequent permits provided to a household to deter uptake and contain demand, although in some permit schemes we only allow a maximum of 2 (or 1) permits per household.</p> <p>Although the charge for resident and visitor permits is set at the same level across the whole county for consistency, each permit scheme will have its own specific rules to suit local circumstances. For example, operating times and permit allocation may vary from area to area. These will have been agreed following consultation with residents at the time the scheme was set up. We do not propose to allow 2nd, 3rd or subsequent permits in existing schemes where they are currently not allowed.</p> <p>Changes to existing schemes can be requested by following a different process, the information provided on our parking review pages linked here explains how this works.</p>
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<p>to the times of operation of the permit scheme or not allowing more than 2 permits per household, which were not related directly to the proposals.</p>	
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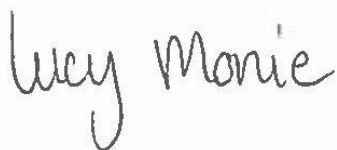
Summary

19. Although increasing the cost of a resident permit is understandably unpopular, we propose to do this now after 11 years of static prices. The new price of resident permit (£80) is aimed at only recovering the costs associated with implementing, managing, maintaining and enforcing resident permit schemes. There are many varied permit schemes around the county with differing enforcement and maintenance needs, however a consistent countywide charge is easier to understand and administer.
20. Permit schemes specifically benefit the residents in the areas where they exist, so it is reasonable for the costs to be met by them rather than the wider tax payer.

Recommendation

21. It is proposed we go ahead with the changes to permit fees and charges as advertised and described above in all Surrey Districts and Boroughs.
22. Authorised by:

Director for Highways and Transport:



In consultation with Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport
Matt Furniss.

Date: 19/07/2022