

Parking Management Plan – Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

What are the main parking problems facing East Lothian?

East Lothian Council will experience significant growth in the coming years through housing and economic development. East Lothian faces substantial challenges in managing population growth of 33% to 2035 and projected private car ownership increases of 25%. East Lothian towns and villages have grown over many decades but the main town centres provide for a traditional west-east axis with limited scope to meaningfully effect parking provision. Parking supply is limited and consequently needs to be managed effectively. With the predicted increases in car ownership, longer shopping hours and Sunday trading, parking availability will become under increased pressure.

In certain housing area, many residents find it difficult to park close to their homes because there is overspill parking for education buildings, shopping and leisure areas. Survey data shows that, demand for off street parking is high throughout all of East Lothian Councils car parks and turnover low affecting the supply.

Where parking enforcement is not managed or controlled effectively, indiscriminate parking behavior caused road safety concerns, pedestrians experience difficulty crossing the road safely, children are affected walking and cycling to school; traffic flows as impeded; public transport movement disrupted and delayed, junction sightlines are impaired, as well as having an environmental impact. It also reduces accessibility for those with mobility impairments for whom the ability to park is a necessity.

What research has been carried out?

Detailed surveys and analysis was carried out throughout East Lothian to ensure the Strategy is well informed by robust evidence and baseline data. Public consultation was undertaken and included Workshops with community groups and the feedback was recorded. The surveys monitored all on street and off street parking all day and recorded the movement of vehicles, the registration of the vehicle and for how long they were parking.

What does the Parking Management Strategy hope to achieve?

The aim of the Parking Management Strategy is to;

- improve parking management in East Lothian;
- to support access to our towns and villages,
- to support the economic vibrancy and vitality of local businesses,
- to enhance road safety and encourage public transport and active travel use
- controlling the availability and flexibility of parking spaces.

Why is the Council undertaking this consultation?

East Lothian Council want to know what you think of the proposals before we recommend a final course of action. Listening to and understanding your views on the proposed changes is a vital part of the decision making process. At this stage, we have an outline of what we think the strategy should recommend, but this is your chance to influence the proposal and ensure we make the right choices for the County.

Is the Council prepared to modify its proposals?

Yes. None of the proposals outlined in the draft parking management strategy are final. If it becomes evident that there is no support for a particular policy, or if there is a better alternative that could be implemented, then the proposals can be modified. The consultation process allows us to make sure that the right decisions are made.

What are the proposals for parking in our towns and villages?

The demand for parking spaces is high across East Lothian and is predicted to increase over time. Without adequate controls, road safety, accessibility and the economic vitality of our towns will suffer and affect people's lives.

The proposal for our town and villages is to introduce short, medium and long stay parking provision by re-designating off street parking and managing length of stay.

How do you propose to manage the time car parking spaces are in use?

The draft Parking Management Strategy makes provision for several policies that can help in this regard. East Lothian Council introduced decriminalised parking enforcement in January 2017 and an increase in the number of parking attendants could be used to monitor the length of stay, however, this must be cost neutral were the cost of running the service is offset by the income generated. The Council is also considering the introduction of charges to control length of stay and balance the cost of running the service.

Why are you considering the introduction of parking charges?

Parking charges are a means of managing vehicle turnover where demand out strips supply. Parking charges encourage the use of public transport and active travel options. Parking charges encourage the use of public transport and active travel options. Parking charges can improve the economic viability of businesses by introducing charges that are appropriate to the area.

Why do East Lothian Council not build more car parking spaces?

The provision of additional car parking spaces is considered the last option available to the Council to manage parking. The old adage predict and supply no longer is appropriate to meet transport aims and objective and is detrimental to communities in many ways. To increase parking supply can add to congestion, air quality concerns, road safety issues, and inhibit public transport and active travel choices. Generally, new parking supply is appropriate where a town's supply is deficient and cannot be effectively managed within the range of customary parking interventions.

Would parking charges be introduced in all car parking locations over the whole of East Lothian?

No. East Lothian Council will consider parking demand in each of the towns and/or area of a town and review whether there is adequate enforcement of on and off street parking provision and that turnover is adequate. If parking problems cannot be resolved by existing levels of enforcement, the Council will consider and apply parking management strategies to alter the balance of parking supply in the area. The outcome of this assessment may lead to the introduction of charges, if appropriate.

What is the current charges at Coastal Car Park?

If you are planning a visit to one of East Lothian's popular beaches or coastal sites, there is an excellent choice of coastal parks, many of which also have public toilet facilities. Most car parks along our coast are subject to traffic regulations orders and require users to pay a charge to support the ongoing maintenance of facilities and management.

Parking costs just £2 per day and you can use your ticket to visit any of the coastal car parks throughout the day. Tickets can either be purchased from the on-site "pay and display" ticket machines or with cashless payments using RingGo.

If you are a regular visitor to East Lothian's beaches, you may wish to apply for or renew an annual parking season ticket, which costs £40

Will Coastal Car Park Charges be reviewed?

On 18th December 2012, the Council approved parking charges at coastal car parks.

The maintenance and upkeep of coastal car parks is important in providing a quality environment and visitor experience at the 13 countryside sites. To date, improvements have included car park surfacing, directional signage, fencing, pedestrian access, road markings, toilet block and shower facilities. The installation and maintenance of the parking ticket machines and other associated apparatus has also been funded by the parking charges.

The Council's decision to introduce parking charges took into consideration a public consultation process undertaken in October 2008. Details of this are contained in the committee report found in this link.

https://eastlothianconsultations.co.uk/policy-partnerships/coastal-car-parking/supporting_documents/Report%20to%20Council%20%20Coastal%20Car%20Parking.pdf

A key policy under the Parking Management Strategy is to review the use of our coastal car parks and consider the introduction of new sites, expanding sites or removal and reviewing the charge.

Are the proposals likely to affect me in my day-to-day activities?

Public Transport patronage has been declining nationally and the private car accounts for the vast majority of journeys within East Lothian. However, this was not always the case. Until 1981 car borne journeys were second to public transport and active travel for journeys to work. Walking to school and to the shops was an everyday event. Today car journeys make up over 50% of trips that are less than 2 miles in distance. Many of these could be undertaken on foot or cycled. The draft Local Transport Strategy is intended to make it easier for people to access their town and travel more sustainably, improving their health and wellbeing. The Parking Management Strategy aids in the management of car parking and supports these overarching aims and objectives.

The introduction of parking management measure will help public transport and may encourage some users who currently travel by car to change their mode of travel. The introduction of parking charges if agreed can be used to support local bus services that could be improved as part of the proposals. Together, these measures should help maintain our communities as places that people want to visit, that are accessible for all ,

that are economically viable with an efficient public transport system and a safe road network.

The proposals will not affect your day-to-day activities but are designed to encourage you to use other forms of transport rather than the reliance on the private car.

[Is this simply a cash-raising venture for the Council?](#)

No, however, it is likely that the Council will collect more money if charges are introduced, and additional revenue will be used to pay for work related to the draft parking management strategy, for the additional enforcement required and possibly to fund improvements to transport services and additional parking supply if deemed necessary.

[Will penalty charge notices increase if the parking management strategy is approved?](#)

No. Parking fines are set nationally at £60 and reduced to £30 if paid within 14 days.

[Will residents parking permits be considered in my area?](#)

Resident parking schemes are provided where residents have difficulty parking in their street, where there is pressure on the on-street parking from other users and restrictions have been put in place to ensure turnover. Currently there are three schemes in place in East Lothian. It is proposed to consider the introduction of further schemes where public support exists and these will be done on a case-by-case basis. The need to introduce new Resident Parking Schemes in areas where residents parking is affected by commuters and other competing parking demands will be considered. . Each locus will be assessed on a case by case basis, where local and competing demand will be gauged with the needs of all users taken into account before determining whether a scheme is necessary or not.

[Will there be a charge for residents parking permits?](#)

There are no proposals to charge for resident parking permits.

[How does the draft parking Management Strategy take account of the needs of disabled people and their carers?](#)

Improving parking management in the towns and villages will enhance accessibility for disabled users. The proposals include for providing measures to meet disabled user needs through the promotion of Traffic regulation orders to safeguard space on street for the mobility impaired or those who need care in their own homes. Through consultation, disabled users will benefit from an enhanced ability to park near their homes and measures taken to assist carers attending to patient.

[What is the Council Parking Enforcement policy around Schools?](#)

In recent years one of the most frequently expressed road safety concerns communicated to ELC is that of traffic movement and parking around some of our school streets, highlighting potential dangerous driving manoeuvres as well as indiscriminate and illegal parking by some drivers dropping and picking up children. Addressing traffic congestion,

dangerous driving and illegal parking too close to school entrances, remains an ongoing challenge facing ELC.

We are currently in liaison with our schools and trying to get the message out to parents/carers that blocking driveways / Junctions, parking on double yellow lines (and zigzag markings) around schools is a selfish and potential dangerous act for residents and those already walking, scooting / cycling to school. We have been trying to inform & encourage people of the obvious health benefits of more active travel modes for journeys to/from school and if they need to drop kids off to take a little extra time and park further away from schools in quieter streets.

We are also currently working with the Police and our Parking Attendants who have been carrying out regular patrols to try and control the situation through enforcement. This however is unfortunately a limited resource given the number of schools compared to parking attendants across the county and therefore have to manage the available resource accordingly.

[Will the proposals have an effect on the environment?](#)

One of the aims of the Parking Strategy is to have a positive impact on the Environment. The Strategy objectives link to the Local Transport Strategy and propose to reduce the dependence on the car and the environmental impact of traffic. Depending on the outcome of the consultation, the plan could deliver changes to parking in the towns that reduce the number of vehicles on the network. For people who wish to drive and park the strategy will make it easier to find a parking place, improve traffic flow and reduce journey times. Importantly the overarching proposals are designed to encourage more walking, cycling and public transport use as healthier, greener alternatives to cars. All of these improvements are being suggested to provide environmental benefits to our towns.

[Is there a requirement to monitor and evaluate the effect of proposed parking interventions?](#)

Yes, evidencing outcomes is important, the Council want to understand the effectiveness of the parking interventions, any indirect benefits being realised, and lessons learnt to ensure we are investing into projects that make a real difference.

[What are the next steps?](#)

Given the scope of the consultation, a report will be prepared by officials to identify priorities and key outcomes from the process. Feedback through the consultation process will be taken into account in the final drafting of the Strategies and associated plans before coming back to Council for further scrutiny, debate and adoption subject to agreement.