

Central Bedfordshire Parking Strategy

'Approach to Parking' Engagement Workshops Report

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1. Introduction

1.1. Transportation Planning (International) (TPI) (part of the Amey Group), working with Central Bedfordshire Council (CBC), project managed and facilitated two stakeholder engagement workshops in Dunstable and Chicksands on Wednesday 30 November 2011 and Friday 9 December 2011, respectively. The aim of the workshops was to provide stakeholders with a forum to discuss the salient issues regarding parking in Central Bedfordshire and to help develop the Council's understanding of these issues. The outcomes will be presented to the Council via this report and will feed into the development of CBC's emerging Car Parking Strategy ('Approach to Parking'), which will form part of the Local Transport Plan and will present the Council's approach to parking management.

1.2. This report summarises the key outcomes of the engagement workshops, and is set out in the following way:

- Structure of the Engagement Workshops
 - Aim
 - Approach
 - Participants
 - Workshop Format
- Outcomes
- Summary

2. Structure of the Engagement Workshops

2.1. Aim

- 2.1.1. The aim of the engagement workshops was to provide stakeholders with a forum to discuss the salient issues regarding parking in Central Bedfordshire and to help develop the Council's understanding of these issues.

2.2. Approach

- 2.2.1. To enable as many people as possible to attend, two workshops were held on separate days; one in the southern half of the unitary area (Dunstable) on Wednesday 30 November 2011 and one in the northern half of the area (Chicksands) on Friday 9 December 2011. Each event was scheduled from 14:00 to 18:30.
- 2.2.2. At each workshop, the tables/groups were arranged to ensure that the composition was made up of a mix of representatives from the various organisations. A TPI/Amey facilitator sat on each of the tables to capture outcomes, comments and views raised during the workshop discussions. A separate 'resources' table was utilised for plans, maps etc. and was available for reference purposes throughout each workshop.
- 2.2.3. Furthermore, topic sheets were posted around the room, and during the refreshment breaks the participants were encouraged to add their comments and views using Post Its.

2.3. Participants

- 2.3.1. A broad range of organisations were invited to attend the engagement workshops, including local businesses, developers, homebuilders, architects, Planners, public transport service providers, taxi associations, emergency services, Chamber of Commerce, Parish and Town Councils, and councillors from CBC. Appendix A lists all those that attended. The workshops were led and facilitated by members of the TPI/Amey team.

2.4. Workshop Format

- 2.4.1. The workshops were led by Alan Bailes, Head of Transport Planning at Amey, and were structured around four key discussion topics from the 'Approach to Parking' document, delivered to the group via a PowerPoint presentation:
- On-street parking (non-residential)
 - Public off-street parking
 - Private off-street parking
 - Residential parking (rural/urban)

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- 2.4.2. Some suggested points for consideration were given for each of these topics in order to encourage debate, including:
- Pricing and enforcement
 - Parking standards
 - Supply and demand
- 2.4.3. Appendix B shows the PowerPoint scenario presentation used by TPi/Amey for the workshops.
- 2.4.4. The tables were given around 20 minutes to consider and debate each topic, followed by a feedback session to the rest of the group. A final plenary feedback session was held at the end of each workshop to give the participants the opportunity to raise any points that may have previously been missed, and to encourage the stakeholders' ownership of the day.
- 2.4.5. Each table's topic discussions were facilitated by a member of the TPi/Amey team, who aimed to challenge the participants to think widely and to share agreements or reservations about the topics for discussion, as well as capturing the salient outcomes of each debate.

3. Outcomes

3.1. The key problems and solutions for each of the four parking topics that were captured during each workshop are shown in Appendices C and D. Some of the 'headlines' are shown below:

- Problems vary across the authority and between rural / urban areas. No 'one size fits all' solution.
- Shortage of all types of parking. Suggested solutions of providing a mix of parking provision (i.e. on-street, off-street, long-stay, short-stay); setting up private/public partnerships to maximise use of parking areas, e.g. allowing public use of village hall/church/private business car parks at certain times of the day; converting verges/disused green land to parking; and allowing/encouraging residents to convert their front gardens to parking.
- Particular problem areas: outside schools during pick-up/drop-off times; outside Post Offices/cash machines/etc. (short term convenience parking); residential streets (people don't use garages/driveways); parking on double yellow lines; and too near junctions.
- Lack of enforcement. Suggestions for more ANPR and CEOs. Introduce a 'Park Watch' scheme, where residents/locals act as self-enforcement.
- Public transport isn't a viable alternative for the private car, particularly in rural areas. Need to link bus/train timetables; provide services to business areas and at times suited to business hours; provide services to villages as well as urban areas.
- Promotion of sustainable travel, including company Travel Plans and Personalised Travel Planning.
- Charging for parking isn't consistent across the authority.
- Potential for flexible ticketing – tickets that can be used across the authority.
- Devolve decision making powers re. parking and enforcement to Town/Parish Councils.
- Need to review parking standards, e.g. providing spaces by household size.
- Workplace Parking Levies – potentially could work in urban areas. [*See update note in Appendices C and D]
- Residential Parking Zones – could work if properly enforced. Need to cover whole areas rather than individual streets.

4. Summary

- 4.1. In summary, the outcomes from the two stakeholder engagement workshops held in November and December 2011 gave an overview of the key problems encountered for different types of parking in Central Bedfordshire, along with a range of potential solutions. These outcomes will be presented to the Council via this report and will feed into the development of CBC's emerging Car Parking Strategy ('Approach to Parking'), which will present the Council's approach to parking management.
- 4.2. The workshops generated a good level of debate and discussion and received much positive feedback from the participants. There was general consensus that the aim of the workshops, "to provide stakeholders with a forum to discuss the salient issues regarding parking in Central Bedfordshire and to help develop the Council's understanding of these issues," had been achieved, and that the workshops were a success.
- 4.3. This report will now be circulated to all those that attended, to give a further opportunity for stakeholders to raise their views and thoughts regarding parking in Central Bedfordshire.



Appendix A

Workshops' Attendees List



Table 1: Attendees – Workshop 30 November, Dunstable

Name	Organisation
Alan Bailes	TPI/Amey
Alan Shadbolt	CBC
Alec Worsfold	Arriva the Shires
Barry Field	CBC
Brian Spurr	CBC
Caroline Wakefield	TPI/Amey
Christine McDonnell	Woburn Parish Council
Chrystyna Smith	Studham Parish Council
David Bowie	CBC
Dawn Sutherns	Amphill Town Council
Huw Williams	TPI/Amey
John Loughlin	Bedfordshire Police
Ken Matthews	CBC
Margaret Wright	Amphill Town Council
Nigel Young	CBC
Paul Salmon	CBC
Roy Johnstone	CBC
Sarah Hughes	CBC
Steve Pomponio	Arriva the Shires
Steve Fuell	Slip End Parish Council
Terry Ellis	Heath and Reach Council
Tony Lines DL	Toddington Parish Council
Wayne Garside	TPI/Amey

**NB: some attendees were substituted on the day.*

Table 2: Attendees – Workshop 9 December, Chicksands

Name	Organisation
Alan Bailes	TPI/Amey
Alan Cooper	Stotfold Town Council
Alison Graham	Shillington Parish Council
Andrew Penn	Lidlington Parish Council
Angela Barker	CBC
Barry Field	CBC
Bert Schrier	Henlow Parish Council
Brian Padgett	Clifton Parish Council
Brian Saunders	CBC
Brian Spurr	CBC
Budge Wells	CBC
Caroline Maudlin	Sandy Ward
Charles Gomm	CBC
Christina Turner	Stotfold Town Council
Dave Slinn	Stagecoach East
David Bowie	CBC
David Lawrence	Biggleswade Town Council
Derrick McLeod	Harlington Parish Council
Deryck Irons	Campton & Chicksands / Silsoe Parish Council
Dianne Hughes	Flitwick Town Council
Howard Potter	TPI/Amey
Huw Williams	TPI/Amey
Janice Green	Marston Moreteyne Parish Council
John Crawley	Dunstable Town Council
John Foolkes	Bedfordshire & Luton Fire and Rescue Service
Jon Hill	Nissan Technical Centre (Europe) Ltd
Judy Lanham	Clifton Parish Council
Ken Matthews	CBC
Lyndon Davison-Williams	Barton-le-Clay Parish Council
Martin Platt	Flitwick Town Council
Mike Bishop	Leighton-Linslade Town Council
Nigel Aldis	CBC



Table 2: Attendees – Workshop 9 December, Chicksands

Name	Organisation
Nigel Carnell	Leighton-Linslade Town Council
Nigel Young	CBC
Paul Mackin	Shefford Town Council
Paul Salmon	CBC
Phil Lines	TPi/Amey
Richard Halden	Barton-le-Clay Parish Council
Roger Parker	Haynes Parish Council
Russ Leith	Shefford Town Council
Steven Watkins	Biggleswade Town Council
Stuart Oliver	Houghton Regis Town Council
Terry Colbourne	Dunstable Town Council
Tony Howells	Shillington Parish Council
Tony Swain	Houghton Regis Town Council
Tricia Turner	CBC
Wayne Garside	TPi/Amey

**NB: some attendees were substituted on the day.*



Appendix B

Workshop Presentation



**Central Bedfordshire Car Parking Strategy
Engagement Workshops
30 November 2011**



Welcome!

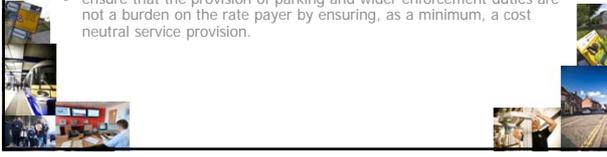
Councillor Nigel Young
Deputy Executive Member for Sustainable Communities
Strategic Planning and Economic Development
Central Bedfordshire Council





'My Journey' – Approach to Parking

- The Approach to Parking Management aims to support the local economy and facilitate sustainable development growth.
- The policies contained within the document help contribute towards the delivery of the objectives of the Local Transport Plan 3 and more specifically to:
 - encourage sustainable travel modes and help reduce reliance on the private car;
 - enhance the built and natural environment;
 - meet residents' needs for car parking near their homes;
 - improve journey time reliability for road users; and
 - ensure that the provision of parking and wider enforcement duties are not a burden on the rate payer by ensuring, as a minimum, a cost neutral service provision.



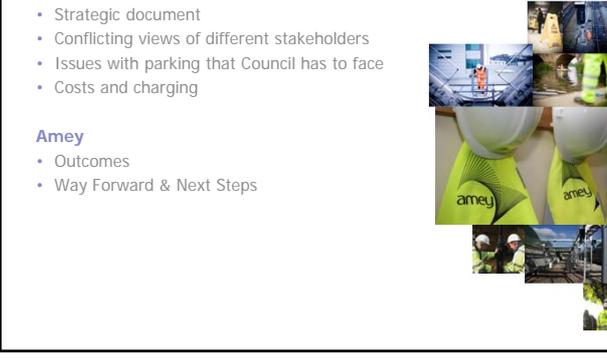


Aim of the Day

- Strategic document
- Conflicting views of different stakeholders
- Issues with parking that Council has to face
- Costs and charging

Amey

- Outcomes
- Way Forward & Next Steps





Amey Team – Leading the Workshops

Alan Bailes

- Head of Transport Planning
- Lead Facilitator

Caroline Wakefield

- Administration & Facilitator

Huw Williams

- Facilitator

Wayne Garside

- Facilitator





Invitees

- Town Councils
- Parish Councils
- Unitary Council
- Key Businesses
- Transport Service Providers
- Emergency Services
- Chamber of Commerce



Format of the Day

- 14:00 – 18:30
- Light refreshments
- Presentation
- Mixed tables
- Group discussions
 - Topic discussions
 - Facilitated by Amey team
 - Nominate a speaker to give feedback
 - 20 minutes to discuss, 5 minutes to feed back
- Plenary feedback session
- 'Your thoughts'
 - Post-Its



Timings

- 14:00 – 14:30 Registration & refreshments
- 14:30 – 14:45 Welcome & presentation
- 14:45 – 16:00 Group discussion
- 16:00 – 16:15 Refreshments & 'your thoughts'
- 16:15 – 17:30 Group discussion
- 17:30 – 18:00 Plenary feedback session
- 18:00 – 18:30 Next steps & 'your thoughts'
- 18:30 Finish



Group Discussion

Topics

- On-Street Parking (non-residential)
- Public Off-Street Parking
- Private Off-Street Parking
- Residential Parking (rural/urban)

Points to consider throughout

- Pricing & Enforcement
- Parking Standards
- Supply & Demand



On-Street Parking

- What are the problems?
- What are the solutions?
- Points to consider:
 - Pricing & enforcement (prioritisation & CPZs)
 - Parking standards (mix & number of spaces)
 - Supply & demand (short-stay vs long-stay, provision for deliveries/emergency vehicles/etc)
 - 20 mins to consider
 - Nominate a spokesperson
 - 5 mins feedback



Public Off-Street Parking

- What are the problems?
- What are the solutions?
- Points to consider:
 - Pricing & enforcement
 - Parking standards (mix & number of spaces)
 - Supply & demand (short-stay vs long-stay)
 - Effect of good public transport?
 - 20 mins to consider
 - Nominate a spokesperson
 - 5 mins feedback



Refreshment Break

- Light refreshments available
- 'Your thoughts'
 - use Post-Its to voice your views
 - Topic sheets are around the room
- Back in 15 minutes





Private Off-Street Parking

- What are the problems?
- What are the solutions?
- Points to consider:
 - Pricing & enforcement
 - Parking standards (mix & number of spaces)
 - Supply & demand (short-stay vs long-stay)
 - Effect of good public transport?
 - Workplace Parking Levy (WPL)
- 20 mins to consider
- Nominate a spokesperson
- 5 mins feedback



Residential Parking

- What are the problems?
- What are the solutions?
- Points to consider:
 - Rural vs urban
 - On-street vs off-street
 - Pricing & enforcement (residential parking zones (RPZs))
 - Parking standards (mix & number of spaces)
 - Supply & demand (provision according to dwelling size)
- 20 mins to consider
- Nominate a spokesperson
- 5 mins feedback



Plenary Feedback Session



- On-Street Parking (non-residential)
- Public Off-Street Parking
- Private Off-Street Parking
- Residential Parking (rural/urban)
- Problems / Solutions
 - Pricing & Enforcement
 - Parking Standards
 - Supply & Demand



Next Steps



- Report of the workshop
- Circulate to attendees in the next month
- Revision of 'Approach to Parking' document



Final Words



David Bowie

Head of Service
Traffic Management
Central Bedfordshire Council



And finally...



- 'Your thoughts'
 - Use Post-Its to voice your views
 - Topic sheets are around the room

Thank you attending!





Appendix C

Workshop 30 November Outcomes



On-Street (Non-Residential) Parking

Problems	Solutions
People aren't paying attention to the basic principles of the Highway Code, e.g. parking on double yellows (such as in Luton / Dunstable), parking too near junctions (such as Slip End). Blocks through-traffic and public transport.	Police can act upon dangerous parking and obstructions.
Short-term convenience parking (e.g. Ampthill) for banks, shops etc. (10-15 minutes) on double yellow lines. Blocks the roads and can cause a problem for buses.	CPZs rather than introducing charging. Works in places like Leighton Buzzard where on-street parking is restricted to 30 mins on the High St.
Parking on both sides of the road – blocks road, traffic cannot get through. E.g. Kings St, Dunstable.	Introduce on-street parking charges. There was a preference for pay by meter with staggered charges that are linked to journey purpose.
Parking on pavements (predominantly in small towns/villages where streets are narrow (e.g. Ampthill)).	Where streets are narrow – take away any available garden frontage to allow more parking provision.
Loading/unloading causes congestion issues (predominantly in small towns/villages where streets are narrow (e.g. Ampthill)).	More enforcement including ANPR and more CEOs.
Issues outside schools. Pick-up is particularly an issue as parents stop to socialise. Parking can prevent buses from getting down the road. Due to the rural nature within the Authority there are little or no alternatives to school journeys by car.	More mobile enforcement units. These were seen as the only way to successfully improve enforcement given the rural nature of the Authority.
All day commuter parking. It was felt that this was due to a shortage of off-street spaces for employment (long stay).	Introduce a 'Park Watch' scheme, where residents/locals act as self-enforcement. Fits well with Cameron's Big Society concept.
Long term parking. For example, in Luton, people travelling to the airport park in the village then get the bus. Residents rent out their own parking to travellers.	Residents parking permits to help solve airport/village parking problem (Luton). Introduce an ID card system for the bus so it can only be used by residents.
Some places have too little long-term parking (e.g. Ampthill). Employees forced to park on-street anywhere.	Remove parking restrictions. There was a suggestion that parking restrictions are removed and you let the parking market self-regulate.
Lack of enforcement - very few CEOs.	Government should incentivise people to buy smaller second cars and allow these to be parked on-street in the centre of towns.
Enforcement around areas such as railway stations (e.g. Leighton Buzzard/Flitwick) can simply push the problem further out.	Provide a mix of parking provision. Good example is Leighton Buzzard: some free on-street parking and a multi-storey car park all linked together to create an environment where it's easy to park.
There is no charging for on-street parking anywhere. Problem AND solution?	Flexible ticketing. Introduce flexible ticketing for off-street car parks to encourage increased use (i.e. once a ticket has been purchased it can be used in multiple car parks across the authority).



On-Street (Non-Residential) Parking	
Problems	Solutions
<p>Public transport isn't viable alternative to private car. Infrequent services (1 bus every 2 hours to Toddington) meaning that not enough people are using it. Private car is more convenient.</p>	<p>Increase sustainable awareness. Introduction of Personalised Travel Planning to inform and educate.</p>
<p>Mind set: people feel tied to their cars (die hard drivers) and will always use them. Public transport (in particular buses) is regarded for the old & infirm.</p>	
<p>Problems vary across the district. Typically, rural areas don't experience the problems outlined above, except for parking at junctions.</p>	
<p>Night-time more of an issue when everyone's home (parking at junctions). Day time parking more a problem in Ampthill.</p>	
<p>Traffic. E.g. Dunstable. Leighton Buzzard has a bypass meaning that people travelling to the town are there to shop or visit – not the case in Dunstable.</p>	



Public Off-Street Parking	
Problems	Solutions
Shortage of off-street parking. A lot of demand for public off-street parking in towns for shoppers and employees. Ampthill facing a lot of development and will face congestion. Toddington has no convenient car parking.	Provide additional supply. E.g. pre-fabricated decks - could be added cheaply and quickly as demand requires. Example is at Leighton Buzzard railway station.
Charging varies across Central Bedfordshire. Dunstable and Leighton Buzzard municipal car parks are the only off-street parking places that charge.	Public/private partnerships. Additional supply could be achieved by working together with private car park owners to open up their spaces for public use.
No spare land available to convert to off-street parking. People still park on wide grass verges. Conversion of verges to parking is expensive and limited by planning restrictions (e.g. Slip End, Ampthill).	Allow use of village hall car parks. Village hall car parks are empty for large parts of the day (e.g. Shillington) and could be used to provide additional supply.
Car park locations. It was felt that off-street car parks were not convenient.	Use Grasscrete to convert verges to parking. Retains greenery whilst being strong enough to park on. Questions of it not being sustainable / long lasting.
Residents parking in off-street spaces. E.g. Heath and Reach.	Provide convenient off-street parking. If people are to use off-street parking it needs to be close to its catchment (e.g. if commuter parking it needs to be near employment zones).
Too many disabled spaces. Not effectively enforced.	Free parking but with time limit, e.g. Ampthill's Waitrose car park. Anyone can park here but time is limited to 2 hours. Enforced by 'Britannia' (retained by Waitrose). [Only off-street parking available in the village except for approximately 20 bays.]
ANPR. People cannot swap tickets (e.g. if someone has paid for longer than they intend staying and giving their ticket to someone else).	Each town/parish should be allowed to decide their charges.
	Allow for some free parking, e.g. Woburn which has free car parks to take account of destination shopping, historic and social activities.
	Pricing should be linked to journey purpose. E.g. if a car park is provided for town centre use (i.e. shopping/leisure) then charging should be cheaper for shorter stay (i.e. up to 3 or 4 hours).
	Split parking by use (i.e. part long stay/part short stay).
	Introduce workplace parking permits/smart cards. Allow employers/employees to purchase discounted permits to encourage commuters to park off-street (this is linked to on-street problems).



Public Off-Street Parking	
Problems	Solutions
	Introduce minimum duration of stay. Some cars parks should be provided only for long stay commuters.
	Provide a mix of parking provision. Good example is Leighton Buzzard: some on- and off-street parking, short stay and long stay.
	Promotion / education of sustainable travel is better than encouraging driving / parking.
	Amphill Rugby Club , out of town – could be used as a mini Park & Ride . Questions of whether it would get much use during the week / outside peak hours. Located too close to the village – could walk in 5-10 minutes.
	Issue residents with a free parking permit and only charge visitors. Encourages people to shop locally and allows residents to park. Could use Council tax register to determine local residents.



Private Off-Street Parking

Problems	Solutions
<p>Shortage of private off-street parking e.g. Chicksands.</p>	<p>Public/private partnerships. Additional supply could be achieved by working together with private car park owners. e.g. Businesses could allow residents to park on their land at close of business.</p>
<p>Today, people tend to work further away and need to travel to get there.</p>	<p>More enforcement e.g. ANPR.</p>
<p>Public transport - lack of services; isn't a viable alternative to private car; timings not suited to companies; no dedicated buses for companies.</p>	<p>More ticket machines so people don't have to walk as far.</p>
<p>Guided Bus doesn't have the coverage to offer viable alternative to driving. Focused on getting people into Luton. Doesn't frequent hospitals.</p>	<p>Park & Ride – possibility but it was felt that the population was too small to make it a credible solution. Would only transport people to and from the workplace (wouldn't get used at any other times of day).</p>
<p>High charges can displace parking problems elsewhere, e.g. Hartington Station - people are now finding other free parking nearby or in other towns.</p>	<p>Dedicated shuttle buses for companies, such as at Woburn Abbey. Biggleswade has a business park out of town – dedicated shuttle bus could be a possibility.</p>
<p>Free parking at companies encourages people to drive rather than walk.</p>	<p>Workplace Parking Levies (WPLs) * – Arguments for and against. Would potentially discourage parking, although raises the question of linked-up trips, e.g. wanting to go shopping after work. Idea not favoured by some as there are not sufficient alternatives to travel by car within Central Bedfordshire. Could be a good idea in city centres but not in rural areas.</p>
<p>Not enough parking for businesses, e.g. in Ampthill - Waitrose, Natwest etc. Means that many employees have to park on-street.</p>	<p>Private companies – need Travel Plans including employee bus passes. Work with employers to provide reduced rate bus passes to encourage travel by alternative modes. Discount travel tickets are not currently offered locally (NHS is only example).</p>
<p>Preference for people parking outside businesses on double yellow lines (for convenience) rather than the designated spaces at the rear. Lack of enforcement. E.g. Ampthill Post Office.</p>	<p>Parking standards need to be revised. Whilst difficult to retrofit to historical developments, any new developments should have sufficient parking. Businesses should provide parking that caters for their staff and the people who use the service.</p>
<p>Putting pressure on businesses to provide their own parking may cause them to move elsewhere, particularly small companies.</p>	<p>Employer incentives. It was suggested that employers be incentivised (i.e. reduced business rates) to provide additional parking for employees.</p>
<p>Schools – not enough parking to take account of both teachers and parents picking up / dropping off.</p>	<p>Schools – could convert part of the playing fields to car parking. However, dealing with the Education Authority is difficult.</p>



Private Off-Street Parking	
Problems	Solutions
Parking at/near rail stations. People park on-street around the station if car park is full.	Rail companies should take more responsibility for the parking problems they create.
Not enough parking for residents as businesses take all the land.	

- * **NB.** In December 2011, the Department for Transport (DfT) effectively blocked local authorities in England from introducing Workplace Parking Levies, declaring that any proposals must have “support from the local business community”. The new approach will not be embodied in legislation. “Local authorities must show they have properly and effectively consulted local businesses, have addressed any proper concerns raised and secured support from the local business community” (DfT in a report outlining the conclusions of the Government’s Red Tape Review on motoring regulations).

Source: Local Transport Today, Issue 586, 16 December 2011



Residential Parking	
Problems	Solutions
Lack of residents parking. Predominantly in terraced streets and new builds. e.g. Heath & Reach / Studham – terraced houses, no parking. Toddington - 18 th & 19 th century cottages, hardly any on-street parking available. Ampthill / Leighton Buzzard / Dunstable – terraced housing, double parking on either side of the road.	Provide additional, convenient off-street parking for residents.
Households can have several cars – one for each partner getting to work as well as for grown-up children.	Residential Parking Zones (RPZs) - arguments for and against. Some seemed happy with the idea if the enforcement was good. Would mean that people would be forced to use their garages again. Would need to be applied on an area-wide basis rather than street by street. Others felt that a general allocation of spaces that could be used by everybody was a better approach.
Car sharing can cause problems as people drive to the sharer's house and leave their car parked outside.	Rather than having individual parking allocation, have group allocation
Residents want immediately accessible parking. Will often ignore their dedicated garage and off-street spaces and will park on-street instead.	Convert disused green land to parking. To retain some green space, could use Grasscrete.
Un-adopted residential streets / new builds – parking is not enforced. Can take up to 6 years to adopt a road within a new development, by which time it can be too late to then introduce restrictions/enforcement.	Improve red-tape for roads adoption.
Long process to introduce restrictions – consultation, objections, appeal. Need to have schemes in place <u>before</u> build.	Charge for additional parking if households have more than 1 car.
Blocks of garages around the back of buildings – used more for storage than parking.	Larger garages. More pressure on developers to ensure that enough room is available in garages to fit larger cars and as well as space for storage.
Development Control / design standards. Developers attempting to get as many houses on sites as possible, so limiting parking provision. New roads in residential areas are at the absolute minimum in terms of standards.	Wider roads in new developments. Easier access for buses, emergency services, etc. Developers should provide wider roads with lay-by parking.
Parking standards are too low. e.g. Baughmond's Close – 1 space per house and 1 extra space per 10 houses - not enough. Government targets to reduce car use through reducing parking standards is ineffective and leads to significant parking issues with residential zones.	Development control involvement from the beginning. The consensus was that the planners should take more of an active role with the developer to make sure sufficient spaces are provided.
Lack of visitor parking. On new build estates there is generally an area set aside for visitors parking at the rear, but this can be poorly lit and not used as a consequence.	Re-think parking standards. The discussion centred on providing spaces by household size (i.e. 1 space 1 bedroom, 2 spaces 2 bedrooms etc.).



Residential Parking

Problems	Solutions
Commuters/ shoppers in urban areas parking in residential areas.	House buyers need to consider their parking requirements <u>before</u> they purchase a property.
Difficulties in obtaining planning consent for a driveway/ dropped kerb.	

Project Name: Central Bedfordshire Parking Strategy

Document Title: 'Approach to Parking' Engagement Workshops Report

Appendix D

Workshop 9 December Outcomes



On-Street (Non-Residential) Parking

Problems	Solutions
<p>Parking on bends causes congestion.</p>	<p>Introduce on-street parking charges, e.g. in Biggleswade to help discourage long-term commuter parking.</p>
<p>Narrow streets / parking on both sides of the road – blocks road, traffic cannot get through. Can affect bus operations and emergency service access.</p>	<p>Allow / encourage residents to convert garden frontage into driveways to allow for more parking provision.</p>
<p>Rural areas have problems with parking outside shops, parking across pedestrian crossings and parking on pavements.</p>	<p>Move school staff parking off-site to allow a through route for parents dropping off and picking up children. Would help relieve parking issues surrounding the school.</p>
<p>Issues outside schools. Due to the rural nature within the Authority there are little or no alternatives to school journeys by car. Parking outside schools can cause problems for emergency service access.</p>	<p>Provision of drop-off zones at schools.</p>
<p>Commuter parking e.g. Flitwick. Commuters take numerous parking spaces around train stations to avoid paying the charges. Holiday commuters can leave their cars on-street for up to a week. Commuters have also been known to park across driveways, preventing residents from getting out of the house.</p>	<p>More enforcement including ANPR and more CEOs.</p>
<p>Lack of enforcement, especially regarding pavement parking, parking on double yellow lines, bus lane parking and taxis stopping in bus lanes. Few civil enforcement officers (CEOs). Liaison with the Police is important but the Police can only deal with instances of obstruction.</p>	<p>Focus enforcement on known and evolving ‘hotspots’ (e.g. schools and problem junctions, Shefford, Stopfold and Marton) and vary times and routes for patrols to maximise effectiveness.</p>
<p>People will not pay to park. As parking is free in the northern part of the authority, people will not pay for parking elsewhere. No charges in the off-street car parks (except railway station).</p>	<p>Stricter enforcement, i.e. not allowing a 5 minute ‘grace period’ before any enforcement action, as it undermines the effectiveness of the system. The recent introduction of the new enforcement vehicles should solve the problem as no grace period is to be allowed.</p>
<p>Lack of public transport. Doesn’t provide a genuine alternative to private car travel. Good PT coverage could encourage more people to leave the car behind (particularly the retired/ elderly).</p>	<p>Improve public transport. There was a feeling that introducing frequent local hopper style services would help reduce parking demand.</p>
<p>Problems vary across the district. Massive differences between urban/ rural areas’ parking problems / available solutions. Policy/ strategies are mainly aimed at the urban centres and don’t relate to villages. A ‘one size fits all’ strategy doesn’t work.</p>	<p>Utilise car parks at different times of day for different types of parking. E.g. utilising business parking for shopper parking at the weekends / utilising village hall parking areas at certain times of the day.</p>



On-Street (Non-Residential) Parking	
Problems	Solutions
Supply and demand – some believe that rural areas have plenty of parking unused whilst urban areas struggle to accommodate the amount of people wanting to park. Others state a lack of available parking in villages.	Encourage community ownership. There was a view that rather than introduce restrictions/enforcement the authority should encourage the community to be responsible and apply common sense.
Night-time / evening parking - inconsiderate parking, blocking entrances etc.	Introduce a 'Park Watch' scheme, where residents/locals gather information on poor parking and hand out notices to those parking badly (e.g. around railway stations). Work in conjunction with the local police and CEOs. Some concerns over having no formal enforcement powers and safety issues may surface with conflict with commuters. Could be better as a rural measure rather than an urban measure.
Personal Safety. It was acknowledged that people were parking on-street as they felt safer than using off-street car parks.	Encourage parking in garages. The general consensus was that residents store junk in their garages rather than cars.
Design issues - space is not used efficiently to create parking availability.	Make better use of grass verges to help increase parking stock. May be politically and locally sensitive.
Within long stay parking areas there is an underutilisation of permit-only parking bays (e.g. Church Street).	Local decision making – give power to local town/ parish councils to make decisions on parking and enforcement. Links to the Localism Bill.
Costs. Who pays for the solutions?	Convert shared space to parking , i.e. Ampthill's market square. Some conflicting opinion on the success of this.
	Provide additional cheap parking. The feeling was that this could only be achieved in larger towns as there no available land in smaller towns/villages.
	Shops could provide short-stay, 1-hour parking permits for customers. Enforced by the local authority. Would encourage local shopping and a high turnover of shoppers.
	Educate drivers to help reduce short-term convenience parking in poor places when using services such as cash points and post boxes.
	Create a Park & Ride system. Would only be useful for the largest urban centres.



Public Off-Street Parking	
Problems	Solutions
Shortage of available / reasonably priced off-street parking in town centres.	Provide additional supply. E.g. multi-storey car parks in towns with railway stations in the centre, such as Biggleswade and Flitwick. Long stay demands in Flitwick cause on-street parking pressures. More off-street parking is needed in Flitwick and Sandy.
Charging / price. The view was that off-street car parks are too expensive. Also, by asking people from rural areas to pay for parking, you are asking them to subsidise urban dwellers.	Public/private partnerships. Additional supply could be achieved by working together with private car park owners to open up their spaces for public use, e.g. local pubs to provide parking before 11am for school drop off etc.
No spare land available to convert to off-street parking, especially large car parks. Land is also expensive.	Council could look at compulsory purchase of land to ensure that parking is available in the most convenient areas.
Car park locations. It was felt that off-street car parks were not conveniently located.	Allow use of village hall car parks. Village hall car parks are empty for large parts of the day and could be used to provide additional supply.
Too many disabled spaces.	Review the number of disabled bays.
Personal Safety. It was acknowledged that people were parking on-street as they felt safer than using off-street car parks.	Ensure that parking areas are well lit and secure to help allay fears of personal safety.
Poor / expensive public transport. Difficult to get people to pay for bus services – many services are not commercially viable and would need subsidy. Also, bus routes dropping commuters from homes to train stations suffer from a difficulty in making a profit as they are essentially a ‘one way service’.	Pricing should be linked to journey purpose. E.g. if a car park is provided for town centre use (i.e. shopping/leisure) then charging should be cheaper for shorter stay (i.e. up to 3 or 4 hours).
Parking problems from commuters using public transport. Towns with railway stations in the centre face the biggest problems.	Time limits should be linked to journey purpose. i.e. parking is only permitted for a certain amount of time depending on the purpose of the trip, such as visiting theatre, shopping etc. Short stay parking should be between 2 and 4 hours to prevent workers from parking here.
Supply and demand – differs between long & short stay. Not reflected in the current availability and prices.	Split parking by use (i.e. part long stay/part short stay).
Cannot / should not rely on the ‘goodwill’ of free supermarket car parking as a viable parking option.	Supply and demand – Council need to monitor the differences between long & short stay parking and change the availability / fares accordingly.
Allocated parking for doctors surgeries being used by all (e.g. Dunstable).	Allow for varied payment options so people can pay for parking more easily.



Public Off-Street Parking

Problems	Solutions
Accessibility issues e.g. difficulty in accessing the off-street car park in Shefford.	Review the management of contract parking within off-street car parks.
New developments adding to existing parking problems. E.g. Center Parcs has been given planning permission to build another leisure park near Woburn/ Flitwick. Concerns over parking (in particular in Flitwick) where there are problems associated with commuter parking.	Integrated / coordinated public transport - public transport links between bus routes and train stations must be improved to avoid commuter parking issues. Particularly focus on improving public transport in commuter areas. Public transport routes to strategically feed all the main villages in the authority.
No 'appetite' to provide any more off-street parking.	Create a Park & Ride system. P&R works well in Bedford but is apparently very heavily subsidised. Could introduce an informal P&R that doesn't need new services or facilities. i.e. use existing bus services but encourage people to park along the bus route. Try and find an area for parking but not provide tarmaced spaces / signage – keep it cheap.
	Stricter enforcement. e.g. Tesco in Flitwick is strict on enforcement and has stopped commuters parking on its site.
	Re-order / relocate provision. Have short stay parking in centres and long stay further out in order to encourage shoppers into the town centre and have workers parking on the outskirts. Parking in Dunstable, for example, is the opposite way around and should be changed.
	Pricing. The cost of parking is relatively cheap when compared to high prices in places like Milton Keynes. It was noted that long stay parking was available free of charge for commuters in Biggleswade.
	Allow residents in some areas to purchase permits for off-street car parks to ease the pressure on-street.
	Potential subsidy from Council to help reduce the cost of train station parking to encourage use.
	Think creatively to make the best use of the parking provision we have.
	Use developer funding / Planning agreements to help fund the provision of off-street car parks.



Private Off-Street Parking

Problems	Solutions
Parking principles differ between urban and rural areas.	Public/private partnerships. Larger private off-street parking facilities in appropriate areas should be opened for public use at the weekends. This might include schools, colleges and churches and potentially involve rate reductions. Existing private off-street parking stock should be surveyed to see if public access can be made available. It was understood that there would be hurdles to overcome, such as insurance, security and management.
Public transport - lack of services; timings not suited to companies; no dedicated buses for companies.	Integrated / coordinated public transport - public transport links to business areas should be improved / timed to coincide with working hours.
Not enough workplace / commercial parking. Means that many employees have to park on-street. Businesses must provide the parking stated in their original planning application.	Workplace Parking Levies (WPLs) * – arguments for and against . Idea not favoured by some as there are not sufficient alternatives to travel by car within Central Bedfordshire, and is considered to be unfair to expect businesses / employers to pay and could drive them away from the area. Could work in large urban centres but would struggle to work in a semi-rural location.
Workplaces don't use their site space properly to maximise parking provision. Only use the curtilage of their property to make parking available. Should think of other ways to provide parking.	Developers should be encouraged to provide shared parking. Larger industrial or business park developments, for example, should be designed for communal parking.
Schools – not enough parking to take account of both teachers and parents picking up / dropping off.	Parking standards need to be revised. Parking standards should differ by location to reflect the local conditions e.g. the level of public transport. Need to increase parking standards at schools (there are not enough spaces for teachers at some sites) and at health centres and hospitals. A new Council policy on parking standards could sit alongside national guidelines.
Inconsistent supermarket employee parking policies. There are different policies across all supermarkets – some allow employee parking within public car parks and some do not.	Park & Ride – possibility but it was felt that the population was too small to make it a credible solution.
New developments do not always adhere to national parking standards.	Parking for new developments needs to meet the projected demand. In the case of businesses with staff shifts, the demand for parking may be greater at changeover times. Service level agreements should be in place between the Council and commercial units to ensure that a good level of workers' parking is offered.



Private Off-Street Parking

Problems	Solutions
<p>Lack of lorry parking in Bedfordshire as a whole. Loss of laybys adds to the problem.</p>	<p>Developers to fund new / expanded car parks if not providing enough parking on-site. It was suggested that developers be given the choice of providing the full parking standard on-site or otherwise providing a minimum of 50% and a sum of money to fund the balance of provision in a new or expanded public car park in the area.</p>
	<p>Increase sustainable awareness. Introduction of Personalised Travel Planning to inform and educate.</p>
	<p>'Park Watch' - people should be more co-operative and monitor / help enforce parking themselves.</p>
	<p>Development control involvement from the beginning. The consensus was that the Planners should take more of an active role early on in the Planning process to put pressure on large developers to promote sustainable transport / provide necessary parking etc.</p>
	<p>More consultation with the public. Planners get too much say and affected people should be consulted more often.</p>

- * **NB.** In December 2011, the Department for Transport (DfT) effectively blocked local authorities in England from introducing Workplace Parking Levies, declaring that any proposals must have “support from the local business community”. The new approach will not be embodied in legislation. “Local authorities must show they have properly and effectively consulted local businesses, have addressed any proper concerns raised and secured support from the local business community” (DfT in a report outlining the conclusions of the Government’s Red Tape Review on motoring regulations).

Source: Local Transport Today, Issue 586, 16 December 2011



Residential Parking

Problems	Solutions
<p>Lack of residents parking. Predominantly in terraced streets and new builds.</p>	<p>Provide additional, convenient off-street parking for residents.</p>
<p>Parking principles differ between urban and rural areas. No 'one size fits all' solution. Having a car is essential in such a rural setting such as Central Beds.</p>	<p>Residential Parking Zones (RPZs) - arguments for and against:-</p> <p>For: RPZs may work better in towns and cities (compared to villages). More RPZs would be welcomed to prevent commuter parking. Would need to be over a whole area as opposed to certain streets.</p> <p>Against: RPZs wouldn't work in villages. Local residents wouldn't be keen. Spaces couldn't be guaranteed. Questions over who would pay the cost to introduce one.</p> <p>Suggestions of: not providing permits for residents with off-street parking / not charging residents for permits (but how to pay for enforcement?) / charging £50 for first permit and increasing the price for each extra permit required.</p>
<p>Residents want immediately accessible parking. Will often ignore their dedicated garage and off-street spaces and will park on-street instead. People want to park in front of the house as it has the perception of safety.</p>	<p>Residents' permit allocation policy and visitor vouchers need to be reviewed (the balance of allocation is a problem in Letchworth).</p>
<p>Un-adopted residential streets / new builds – parking is not enforced.</p>	<p>Stricter enforcement. Bring ANPR enforcement in-house to the Council to increase enforcement hours, e.g. from 8am – 5pm to 7am – 7pm. Shift working.</p>
<p>Poor Development Control / design standards. Some new estates have been designed with 'half drives', where the car is parked on a driveway but impedes the footpath. New accommodation for the elderly is lacking adequate parking.</p>	<p>Improve local design standards to ensure that new developments maximise the available space for parking. Follow the lead of Northamptonshire by ignoring Government guidance. Opportunity to redesign the street scene.</p>
<p>Parking standards are too low. Government targets to reduce car use through reducing parking standards is ineffective and leads to significant parking issues with residential zones.</p>	<p>Re-think parking standards. The discussion centred on providing spaces by household size (i.e. 1 space 1 bedroom, 2 spaces 2 bedrooms etc.).</p>
<p>Lack of visitor parking. e.g. in the case of 'home help' visiting elderly and vulnerable people. Visitor parking needs to be thought of early in the Planning process for a new development. Spaces need to be easily accessible, well located and appealing to visitors.</p>	<p>Development Control involvement from the beginning. The consensus was that the Planners should take more of an active role with the developer to make sure sufficient spaces are provided.</p>



Residential Parking

Problems	Solutions
Residents parking across their driveways to ensure that they can get out in the morning and to ensure that people don't use their driveways. i.e. Biggleswade.	Wider roads in new developments. Easier access for buses, emergency services, etc. Developers should provide wider roads with lay-by parking.
Garages used for storage rather than parking. Some argued that garages should not be counted as a parking space.	Larger garages. More pressure on developers to ensure that enough room is available in garages to fit larger cars and as well as space for storage. Charging for electric vehicles should be provided.
For roads with off-street parking provided, parking restrictions should limit the amount of on-street parking. Will help prevent blockages and maintain road width.	Local decision making – give power to local town / parish councils to make decisions on residential parking and enforcement. Links to the Localism Bill. They know where the issues are and how the dynamics of the towns / villages work.
Converting unused grass verge to parking could entail large costs.	Convert grass verges to parking. Green verges are unsuitable for parking and an alternative material is needed, where adequate room exists.
Street terraces provide no off-street parking and the gardens are too small to accommodate parking. In these areas, residents' permits need to be available.	Encourage people to convert gardens frontage into parking. Make the application process easier / subsidise dropped kerbs and costs.
Commercial vehicles parking in residential areas and taking away spaces that are already at a premium.	Developer / Section 106 funding – use locally to improve parking issues and/or public transport infrastructure. Developers could provide bus stops etc. within larger developments.
	Incentivise people to limit car use.
	Introduce parking restrictions during the middle of the day to prevent all-day commuter parking. Residents' exemptions.
	Parking for new developments needs to meet the projected demand.
	Do not permit the conversion of garage space to living space.
	The principles behind the Home Zone practice should be examined to test the appetite for residents' funding of better street designs and management.