

- younger people with less knowledge or experience of rural areas understand the opportunities that the countryside and rural locations offer;
- sunshine is not the only attraction of the seaside as a destination. With more children and older people entering the market, having an easily accessible and family-orientated destination will be ideal for intergenerational (and shorter) family holidays.

6.1.3 Parking Policies and Strategies

Much guidance and advice on parking operations is provided to car park operators, developers and local authorities. These reports often cover a range of operational and legislative requirements. Others set out the main policy considerations that should guide local authority decisions in relation to street design and access. However, many of the published studies are almost exclusively concerned with city and town centres, with little specific consideration given to rural or coastal areas⁸.

In March 2015, the **Welsh Government** published a detailed study⁹ to examine the relationships between local authority decision making in relation to parking charges in Wales, the views of people visiting town centres across Wales, local stakeholders and examples of best practice across the UK. The report recognises that charging for car parking is one aspect of a complex interplay of factors influencing willingness to travel by car, time and money spent, and business activity in town centres. It is therefore very difficult to separate the influence of car parking charges from other factors.

Car park charging is often perceived, particularly amongst businesses, as being a key determinant for changes in footfall levels in town and city centres. Over three-quarters of the business owners / workers interviewed suggested that car parking options have an impact on the number of people coming into the town centre and therefore on their custom. However, the available evidence is almost entirely anecdotal and there is very little published evidence which links changes in car park charges to changes in town centre footfall.

Visitors to town centres suggested that car park charges impact on how long they choose to remain in the centre and, consequently, how much they spend whilst there. However, the general availability of spaces is felt by visitors to be more important than cost in their overall decision about visiting. Traffic flow and parking signage are felt by visitors to have the same, if not greater, effect on their decision to visit the town centre, how long they spend there, and how much money they spend.

A 'blanket' free parking strategy was generally found not to benefit target visitors (for example, the spaces were used primarily by town centre workers who were taking up the spaces all day, rather than shoppers) and consequently had an unexpectedly negative impact on footfall. The report also provides three broad conclusions that can be used to inform future research;

- there is a lack of robust evidence available to link car parking strategies and town centre footfall;
- charging for parking is one of a complex array of factors that can influence town centre vitality;

⁸ Parking Operations and Policies: A Review. VPL Limited (June 2010) – [Link](#)

⁹ Assessing the Impact of On-Parking Charges on Town Centre Footfall. Prepared for the Welsh Government (March 2015) – [Link](#)

- Individual towns are very different economically; with different factors at play across locations. Parking strategies will need to be tailored to local areas to maximise the impact on footfall.

The **British Parking Association** (BPA) produced some guidance on Parking Provision in Town and City Centres. In this study, the BPA recognise that there is a significant amount of anecdotal evidence, opinion and speculation over the relationship between car parking provision and town centre prosperity. This confusion has been problematic for policy-makers at numerous levels, which is most acute for local authorities who have to balance the sometimes conflicting needs of multiple stakeholders in developing accessibility and transport strategies. It further recognises that the costs borne of maintaining and servicing a car park and the opportunity cost of what other uses that space could have been dedicated to, pitched against the needs of the car user, also provide a difficult dilemma for local government, especially in light of a continuing devolution of fiscal responsibility.

The analysis also indicates that there is no clear relationship between car parking charges (set by parking owners/operators) and the amenities on offer in a location with some mid-range and smaller centres charging more than what is consistent with the national average. It does stress that having a plan for parking as part of a wider transport strategy that clearly states what the parking is for, is vital. Another important question is “What is this space worth?” not just, “How much does it cost?” If parking is about value, rather than cost, then it is clear from this research that smaller locations, with relatively fewer attractions (retail and otherwise) need to carefully consider their parking provision and fees. Considerations about provision, fees and transport strategies must extend to the evening and night-time economy. Car parking charges should therefore be viewed more holistically as part of an accessibility strategy for town centres which takes into account the need to promote and support local businesses, which will subsequently impact positively on the organisations health.

The BPA report also encourages parking operators to consider the following ideas for improving the quality of parking provision and car user experience:

- Introducing new payment methods;
- Collect data on fluctuations in car park occupancy wherever possible and use this information to refine your car parking provision to moderate demand;
- Provide real time parking information to assist car users in finding available space efficiently and understand the tariffs which are applicable at the relevant point of the day or night;
- Remove disproportionate enforcement for minor parking infringements such as occupying a parking space a couple of minutes over the allotted time. Loyalty to a place is often built on experiences and rigid enforcement is an easy way of turning consumers away from high streets;
- Reinvest periodically in car parks to ensure they remain at a high standard to avoid potential health and safety issues that are common with older structures;
- Bring together private and public providers of car parking provision to ensure there is co-ordination between all on-street and off-street car parks in a town centre in order to fulfil a strategy for transport and accessibility;
- Calculate the potential impact a rise in car parking revenue will have on the local business community and the subsequent collection of business rates before implementation;
- Use smart technology to reward consumers for visiting the town centre and link rewards to the payment process for parking.

In a separate report, **Yorkshire Forward**¹⁰ recognise that managing parking supply and behaviour can be a very powerful tool in making towns more attractive to visitors, thereby improving their economic viability. Their review of evidence draws the following conclusions:

- Parking is not usually one of the primary factors affecting competitiveness. Rather, people are drawn to towns, or away from them, by other factors, such as place of work and the quality of shopping facilities and public spaces;
- Charging is not the only important aspect of parking provision; the availability of parking and ease of use appear to be more important;
- Properly formulated parking policy measures should have a neutral or beneficial impact on economic performance;
- The acceptability of charging relates to several factors;
 - relative costs (and offer) of competitor towns;
 - availability of free parking elsewhere in the town;
 - the status and pull of the town;
- Only where all other things are equal, might parking controls play a role in the competitiveness of neighbouring settlements.

The report also recognised that a parking 'free for all', with no restrictions or controls on parking and a lack of enforcement is identified as a failure to manage assets effectively and provide good customer service. In turn, this may adversely affect local economic performance.

When changes to parking restrictions, charges or enforcement are made, the evidence suggests that the primary responses to that change tend to be:

- an acceptance of the new arrangements (in which case people's behaviour broadly remains unchanged);
- a change in parking location (people park further away from their destination in an attempt to avoid paying a charge); or
- a reduction in the length of stay in order to reduce parking costs.

Despite fears to the contrary, there is little evidence to suggest that the primary response to parking management is more extreme than this; there is no evidence that visitors use alternative destinations more. However, these arguments only hold true as long as the management approach is appropriate and sensitive to local needs.

The **Association of Town Centre Managers (ATCM)**¹¹ also provides seven factor sets that should be considered for town centre parking. These are:

- *Quantity and convenience*: quantity must match the size of the town centre and in smaller centres, must not be more than five minutes' walk away from the main shops;
- *Payment and control*: payment on departure encourages a longer shopping trip and therefore greater spend;
- *Free short stay*: a very limited amount of free parking (first few minutes) helps short visits and customer satisfaction, but it must not be open to abuse (ATCM is not an advocate of free parking);

Reference: [Market Towns Programme - Let Parking Be Seen II](#) Yorkshire Forward [Link](#)
The role of parking in the success of urban centres: A review for Towns Count and CMAA [Link](#)

- *Pricing structure:* tariffs should be limited to up to three hours to discourage the use of parking spaces by commuters;
- *Security:* car parks need to be well designed, maintained and managed, with uniformed patrols and CCTV;
- *Quality:* car parks are often the 'gateway' to the town centre and should reflect the need to meet high customer expectations;
- *Signage:* highway signs including variable messaging boards can help drivers to find available spaces more easily.

In order to facilitate and assist discussions relating to the devolution of local assets and services, Cornwall Council has produced some guidance notes for town and parish councils in devolving car parks. This includes a range of legal, financial and operational requirements, including civil parking enforcement; tickets; security; signage; branding; cleaning and maintenance and payments. As part of this process, the Council determined that devolution relating to their car parks will be based on one of the two following principles:

1. That if a car park asset is transferred by freehold, then the Town or Parish will also need to take responsibility for its legal provision and control, including preparation of its own Parking Order, provision/management of equipment and enforcement arrangements. These services could all be purchased back via Cornwall Council if required, from the income generated. Cornwall Council would need to determine whether its budget requirements have been met through a 'loss' of income being more than offset by the value of services/assets transferred.
2. Where a Town or Parish Council does not wish to take over the full responsibility for the parking asset, but does wish to take transfer of toilets within a car park, then the Council will consider appropriate parking charges to reflect the increased income required, above the Council's target budget, which will then be transferred each year to the Town/Parish. This arrangement is limited only to supporting facilities within the car park and is not able to be applied to raising additional income for other services in the vicinity. This will need to be considered on a site by site basis as the level of charge increase required may not be realistic.

In addition, the Council can only commit to agreements which involve raising the car parking income to fund the local management of facilities within a car park within the current four year financial planning period. Within the intervening period it is expected that Town and Parish Council's will be able to establish alternative funding arrangements to secure the future operation of facilities beyond 2018/19, thereby minimising the risk of funding shortfall and service reduction in the future.

The local devolution package must also ensure that Cornwall Council meets its financial requirements. This means your costings need to take into account any future net income that Cornwall Council would have earned from a car park.

6.1.2 Pay on Exit

The most popular version of Pay on Exit parking seems to be either the Pay on Foot option (a ticket is issued on entry and this is then paid for 'on foot' prior to leaving) or ANPR (where the number plate

is read on entry, the user then uses a machine to pay before leaving; this method is both barrier-less and ticketless). Other Pay on Exit systems include:

- 'traditional' pay on exit, using barriers and an attendant who takes payment upon exit;
- pay at barrier¹², user pays fixed fee using coins at barrier;
- Park with Ease¹³, this is a system whereby payment can be made up to 48 hours after a user has parked, payment is made online, by mobile or by credit/ debit card. There are no specific details on the website how this works but on the payment section it requests a registration plate, so it likely uses ANPR cameras.

There are many Pay on Foot and ANPR providers available, including:

- [UK Parking Control Ltd \(UKPC\)](#) - also offers [i-View](#), as a temporary ANPR system to help identify the right kind of parking solution for individual car parks
- [Auto Mate](#)
- [Metric Group Xparc System](#)
- [Metric Group ANPR system](#)
- [Parkeon](#)
- [Parkeon ANPR](#)
- [Cale](#)
- [New Parking Solutions \(NPS\)](#)

No costs were listed on the websites of any of these providers. Most of the providers indicate that they would be able to give prices if contacted though this would obviously just be an estimate and a site visit would probably need to take place for a more accurate price. Price would likely also be dependent on a range of factors, i.e. number of pay stations used and number of entry / exit points, etc. Gloucester City Council¹⁴ identified an outline cost of £300,000 (excluding civil works) to install a Pay on Foot and ANPR system, for three car parks. There is no mention as to the size of the car parks, so again comparison of the cost is difficult.

There are a number of issues to consider when implementing Pay on Foot systems. Firstly, most of the providers listed above use a barrier system and as such car parks would need to have space to implement this, whilst still providing an exit/ entrance for pedestrians. As such, a barrier based system may not be suited to smaller, surface car parks where space is at a premium. The systems are typically used in multi-storey car parks and the providers above give examples of suitable car parks, including: hospitals, schools/ universities and shopping centres/ retail parks. Also, many Pay on Foot systems have a mechanism (electronic signage or lighting system) to indicate the number of available spaces to potential users; need and costs associated with this would need to be considered.

Two separate reports (from Allerdale Council¹⁵ and Perth and Kinross Council¹⁶) both outline items for consideration when looking at Pay on Foot systems. These are:

¹² Example: <http://www.xpark.com/submit-an-access-token/> Example: <http://www.parkeon.com/>

¹³ Gloucester City Council Report: <http://www.glos.gov.uk/info/200000/transport/2018/2018-10-18-System-Review-Report-2018-2019>

¹⁴ Allerdale Council Report: http://www.allerdale.gov.uk/asset_upload_documents/Allerdale_Council_-_2016-17-10-14.pdf

¹⁵ Perth & Kinross Council Report: http://www.perth.gov.uk/asset_upload_documents/Perth_Kinross_Council_-_2016-17-10-14.pdf

- **Power Sources** – If no mains power is available then Pay and Display, which can use either solar or battery power, is the only option.
- **Size of Car Park** – The installation and operation of a Pay on Foot system will cost considerably more than Pay and Display in a small car park, the space needed for entry/ exit lanes is also disproportionately large. As such, Pay on Foot systems are rarely used in car parks below 100 spaces.
- **Entry/ Exit** – With the introduction of a Pay on Foot system the number of vehicles that can enter the car park is reduced from 15 per minute to 6 per minute. It is, therefore, essential that there are an appropriate number of barriers to cope with the number of vehicles and any barrier breakdowns.
- **Grace Periods** – Also outlined as another essential feature of PoF systems is the grace period for the driver to exit the car park after they have paid for their ticket. Typically this is 10-15 minutes and any car park using a PoF system would need to identify a suitable period to leave following payment.
- **Internal Layout and Structure** – The car park should be designed such that vehicle and pedestrian interaction is minimised. With PoF drivers start to pay for parking as soon as they take a ticket. Pay stations should be located where drivers enter the car park on foot.
- **Number of Pay Stations** – There should be sufficient number of pay stations to cope with busy periods.
- **Traffic on Local Roads** – Vehicles need to be able to exit the car park easily. Problems can occur if the road vehicles exit onto is busy, resulting in queuing in the car park, which may leave drivers unable to exit during the grace period and having to pay again. The layout of the car park may also leave vehicles unable to enter, which can cause queuing on the road into the car park. Having sufficient barriers to cope with demand can alleviate this.

ANPR has one main problem; in the document below from Tunbridge Wells Council (written March 2015) it mentions that the Secretary of State does not permit Local Authorities to use ANPR systems. Another document from East Herts Council¹⁷ also suggests that Government advises that Local Authorities are not allowed to manage and enforce car parks solely based on ANPR. Having looked at several examples it appears that Local Authorities do use ANPR but they appear to be part of their Pay on Foot systems. The ICO¹⁸ seems to suggest that the only requirement of using ANPR is to complete a Privacy Impact Assessment and to conform with the Data Protection Act, in not keeping personal information (in this case Vehicle Registration Numbers) longer than necessary. However, this may relate to other uses of ANPR and may be more applicable to private companies. Regardless, this problem is something that would require thorough checking.

The report from Chichester DC below also highlights some issues with accuracy of ANPR cameras, with the industry standard identified as 93%. Therefore, an appropriate solution needs to be in place for when the cameras do not correctly identify a VRN (this is obviously still an issue if using ANPR as part of a Pay on Foot system).

¹⁷ East Herts Report: [link](#)
¹⁸ ICO CCTV Code of Practice: [link](#)

Examples of Pay on Foot Implementation

Chichester District Council¹⁹

Chichester District Council published a review in January 2016 twelve months after implementing a Pay on Foot system, also using ANPR cameras, in their second largest (multi-storey) car park. Listing the benefits of the PoF system the report points out the fact that users could stay in the car park without worrying about a Penalty Charge Notice for overstaying, therefore, they would be able to stay longer. It was also suggested that the longer someone stays, the more likely it is that they will spend money in the local economy. However, an increase in parking charges and issues around the costs of handling calls for the new intercom system meant that the car park did not generate an increased income. Overall the Council experienced a number of issues following the implementation of the PoF system, including: a lack of staff experience in dealing with problems that result from the new system and users being unsure how Pay on Foot works (with some users paying on entry and others attempting to pay at barrier on exit), arising from lack of advertising of the new system. Despite this, the report details generally favourable feedback from users. Following consultation with Chichester BID it was identified that they would like to see PoF systems rolled out at other car parks, but with incentives offered to use them. A local restaurant also reported that they had seen a decline in the number of people requesting bills quickly as their parking ticket was running out, and an increase of 2% in people ordering desserts.

Tunbridge Wells Council²⁰

Tunbridge Wells Council investigated the use of a Pay on Exit system following a petition from the public. As the chosen trial car park (multi-storey) was deemed unsuitable for barriers at the entry/exit, there was a need to investigate alternative systems. ANPR use was considered but the Council rejected this idea as they believed Local Authorities are unable to use the cameras. Instead they use Cale to implement a 'Post Payment' system. The solution did not require barriers and allows users to either pay on exit using credit/ debit card or still use Pay and Display. The system requires vehicle registration numbers to be input upon arrival at the car park. The Cale system can be upgraded to allow the usage of contactless solution, whereby the user is issued with a payment card that can be topped up (similar to Oyster cards), and has vehicle registration details stored on it. Tunbridge Wells Council was able to secure a three month free trial of the system and following the first month were encouraged by the result. 17% of users chose to use the pay by card 'Post Payment' option, 63% continued to use pay and display and 20% chose to pay by phone. The system was successful enough that the Council recommended that the system be purchased and fully installed, at a cost of £27,000.

6.1.3 Benchmarking: Comparative tariffs from other areas

The following table provides a breakdown of off-street parking tariffs in comparator towns across England. The towns have been identified using CIPFA's nearest neighbour model which identifies a group of the 15 most similar local authorities to East Lindsey. Additional data has also been added for specific coastal destinations to provide a comparison across foreshore parking. The table provides a summary of the standard pricing structures (where charged) as published online (some localised variances apply within the towns).

¹⁹ Chichester District Council Report: [Pay on Foot](#)
²⁰ Tunbridge Wells Council Report: [Pay on Foot](#)