



Cabinet

Tuesday, 9 April 2024

Bingham Car Parking Project Update

Report of the Director – Neighbourhoods

Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Environment and Safety, Councillor R Inglis

1. Purpose of report

- 1.1. The Bingham Car Parking Strategy Group was established following a report to Cabinet in September 2023, regarding car parking in Bingham. This report provides an update on the work that this Group has undertaken over the last six months.
- 1.2. The report also presents proposals for changes to Bingham's current car parking offer, designed to improve parking in Bingham, encouraging short stay rather than all day parking in the town centre in line with the Council's Off-Street Car Parking Strategy.

2. Recommendation

It is RECOMMENDED that Cabinet:

- a) recognises the work carried out by the Bingham Car Parking Strategy Group;
- b) approves reducing the length of stay in the Council's parking bays in Bingham Marketplace to 30 minutes as set out in paragraph 4.9 of the report;
- c) approves changing restrictions on market days to allow spaces to be made available to the public when they are not in use by market traders, as set out in paragraph 4.9 of the report;
- d) approves changes to Newgate and Needham Street Car Parks to introduce charging for parking after 1 hour, as set out in paragraph 4.9 of the report; and
- e) approves establishing a permit scheme at Bingham Arena, creating circa 30 spaces for long stay, to be made available for a fee to town centre businesses, as set out in paragraph 4.9 of the report; and

- f) supports the proposal for Nottinghamshire County Council to reduce the length of stay in their parking bays in Bingham Marketplace to 30 minutes, as set out in paragraph 4.9 of the report.

3. Reasons for Recommendation

The Council has worked in partnership with Bingham Town Council and Nottinghamshire County Council to first understand parking in the town centre and then to explore options for possible improvements where challenges have been identified. The proposals outlined in paragraph 4.9 are based on the analysis of independently gathered data and support the policy objectives of the Council's Off-Street Parking Strategy to:

- Manage parking in order to maintain the vitality and viability of district and town centres by ensuring the needs of shoppers and visitors are prioritised.
- Manage parking provision to ensure that it encourages short stay rather than all-day parking.

4. Supporting Information

Bingham Car Parking Strategy Group

- 4.1. The Car Parking Strategy Group has been active since October 2023, with four meetings held. The Group includes members from Bingham Town Council, Nottinghamshire County Council and Rushcliffe Borough Council.
- 4.2. The Group's initial focus was gathering accurate and relevant data to better understand the situation regarding parking in Bingham. Once this data was collected and analysed, the Group considered changes, which Rushcliffe Borough Council and Nottinghamshire County Council could make to improve parking in Bingham, freeing up spaces in the centre for short stay users such as shoppers and health centre visitors.

Data Collection

- 4.3. Bingham Town Council, Nottinghamshire County Council and Rushcliffe Borough Council jointly commissioned an external traffic data collection company to conduct in person surveys on Wednesday 8, Thursday 9 and Saturday 11 November 2023.
- 4.4. Key findings from the surveys are as follows:

Car Park	Key Findings
Bingham Arena - 205 spaces 0-3 hours free >3 hours £25	Approximately 66% occupancy at peak times.

<p>Needham Street - 40 Spaces</p> <p>Pay & Display 0-2 hours free >2 hours £20</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 81% stay for less than 1 hour. • 17% stay for 1-2 hours. • 2% stay for more than 2 hours.
<p>Newgate Street - 108 spaces</p> <p>12 hours free</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 67% stay for less than 1 hour. • 24% stay for 1-2 hours. • 9% stay for 2-4 hours. • 1% stay for more than 4 hours.

4.5. Key findings from the car park user questionnaire are as follows:

- Most popular purpose for using the car parks is shopping.
- Park and ride represent a low proportion of users (~5% on weekdays).
- Approximately 94% of users (across all surveyed days) indicated that the car park was the first location visited to park.
- 29% of car park users travelled from within Bingham.

4.6. In addition to commissioning on-site surveys the Council conducted an online survey, which was well publicised on social media and via press releases. The survey received over 1,500 responses. This survey also reported that the majority of those parking in Bingham are shoppers (57%), the majority reporting that they stay for less than two hours (78%). 68% of respondents suggested that they often struggle to find a parking space in Bingham. This latter finding contradicts the data collected on site and suggests that there is clearly a perception of lack of capacity in car parks, whether or not this is the reality. To further support the data collected conversations have also been held with key stakeholders such as the Health Centre and Inspire to understand their current usage of local parking facilities.

Proposed Package of Changes

4.7. While the data suggests that parking spaces are generally available in the main car parks, they are clearly busy and often near capacity, particularly Newgate Street Car Park. In addition, there is clearly a public perception that parking is an issue in Bingham and needs to be addressed.

4.8. The Council has considered this in the context of the data collected but also taking a wider holistic approach including reference to the Council's Off-Street Parking Strategy, particularly the policy objectives to:

- Manage parking in order to maintain the vitality and viability of district and town centres by ensuring the needs of shoppers and visitors are prioritised.
- Manage parking provision to ensure that it encourages short stay rather than all-day parking.

4.9. The following proposals are intended to maximise short stay parking opportunities in the town centre, and ensure sufficient funds are generated to cover the costs of the proposed changes and generate income for the ongoing maintenance of the car parks:

Proposal	Summary of Change	Comments
<p>A. Rushcliffe Borough Council (RBC) Marketplace bays (20 spaces) – reduce length of stay.</p> <p>See Appendix A</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Change to 30 min max stay (reduction from 2 hours) • Change restrictions on Market days to allow spaces to be made available when they are not in use by market traders. 	<p>Members of the public do not discern between which bays are RBC and NCC. It is therefore essential to make changes to RBC and NCC bays at the same time to avoid any confusion.</p>
<p>B. Nottinghamshire County Council (NCC) Marketplace on-street bays – reduce length of stay.</p> <p>See Appendix A</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Change to 30 min max stay (reduction from 2 hours). 	<p>Members of the public do not discern between which bays are RBC and NCC. It is therefore essential to make changes to RBC and NCC bays at the same time to avoid any confusion.</p>
<p>C. Newgate Street – change to short stay.</p> <p>See Appendix A</p>	<p>106 spaces – currently 12 hours free (no return within 3 hours)</p> <p>Up to 1 hours = free 1-3 hours = £1 3-4 hours = £5 4-12 hours = £10</p> <p>See 4.10</p>	
<p>D. Needham Street – change to longer stay.</p> <p>See Appendix A</p>	<p>40 spaces – currently 2 hours free (£20 for up to 12 hours)</p> <p>Up to 1 hours = free 1-3 hours = £1 3-4 hours = £5 4-12 hours = £10</p> <p>See 4.10</p>	

E. Long stay permits at Bingham Arena	Create circa 30 spaces for long stay, to be made available for a fee to town centre businesses. This is likely to be between £200 and £300 and compares favourably with, for example Nottingham City Council business car parking charges.	
F. Traffic Regulation Orders (TROs) on central residential streets – Nottinghamshire County Council function.	<p>Subject to respective approvals for the options A – E which are expected to take circa 6-months.</p> <p>Once these changes have been made, Officers at NCC (who are responsible for on-street parking) will review the impact and consider whether TROs might be required on central residential streets. These could potentially consist of resident permits and time restrictions.</p>	<p>These actions have been considered in parallel to the changes being proposed (A to E), however no decisions will be made by NCC until the impact of the changes can be properly assessed.</p> <p>This is an NCC decision to be taken at a future date and will be subject to due process, including public and Councillor consultation.</p>

4.10. Annual income projections for proposed changes to Newgate Street and Needham Street car parks are presented below. The figures presented are cumulative and excluding VAT. These figures do not include income for 4-12 hours (£10), as current data suggests that take up of this option would be limited. The figures below can only be an estimate, as we cannot accurately predict the precise behaviour change these new charges will prompt.

	Up to 1hr	Up to 2hrs	Up to 3hrs	Up to 4hrs
Income projection (higher scenario)	£0	£87,516	£108,583	£141,633
Income projection (lower scenario)	£0	£66,453	£82,825	£113,645

4.11. As stated in paragraph 4.9, the proposals are intended to prompt behaviour change, freeing up capacity for short stay parking in the town. However, the changes must also seek to cover associated costs, both in the short term and longer term. The following is an estimate of the associated costs:

Additional annual revenue expenditure	£16,000
Additional capital expenditure	£42,000

Cost of resurfacing (this will not be required as a direct result of these changes, but will be required in the next few years, so is an important cost to consider when thinking about the future of the car parks)	£90,000
Total	£148,000

- 4.12. The existing costs associated with Newgate St and Needham St amount to £42,000. Therefore the overall revenue costs are £58,000. Capital expenditure of £42,000 will need funding immediately, with a further £90,000 of capital costs expected in the future.

Implementation

- 4.13. The Council will create a notice to vary the existing parking orders for the Marketplace and Newgate and Needham Street car parks. Nottinghamshire County Council will need to follow their own process for varying the parking order for their Marketplace parking bays. For both councils, this is a multi-stage process which will include an advertisement period where the changes will be published and open to objections. It is expected that this process will take up to 6-months. It is hoped that changes will be implemented by October 2024.
- 4.14. The Council will conduct comprehensive communications activity in the run up to any changes, with changes to length of stay and charges clearly signed on-site.
- 4.15. The Council will be able to monitor the impact of the changes in Newgate and Needham Street car parks through ticket sales via the pay and display machines. However, it is important to give the changes the appropriate length of time to establish and to allow people to adjust to the change, therefore a more comprehensive exercise to assess the impact of the changes will be conducted circa 12 months after the implementation. This may result in Nottinghamshire County Council seeking to introduce Traffic Regulation Orders if significant displacement to on-street parking is evidenced. See paragraph 4.9, proposal F.

5. Alternative options considered and reasons for rejection.

- 5.1. The Council could choose to make no changes to the parking offer in Bingham. The data collection exercise demonstrated that, while busy, people are generally able to park in the car parks. However, this is clearly not the perception of many of those who are using the car parks. The car parks are clearly busy and the Council believes, based on the data and the advice of independent experts, that the changes proposed can go some way to freeing up capacity for short stay, in line with our objectives set out in our Off-Street Parking Strategy.
- 5.2. The Council considered a number of different tariffs and charging structures for Newgate and Needham Street Car Parks. These were considered with the Car Parking Strategy Group.

Option	Fees	Approximate annual income
1	0-2hrs = £0 2-3hrs =£3 3-4hrs = £4 4-12hrs = £10	£89,641 (higher) £73,771 (lower)
2	0-30mins = £0 30mins-2hrs =£1 2-3hrs = £2 3-12hrs = £10	-£251,247 (higher) £187,851 (lower)
3	0-1hr = £0 1-2hrs = £1 2-3hrs = £2 3-4hrs = £3 4-12hrs = £10	£149,480 (higher) £117,688 (lower)
4	0-2hrs = £0 2-3hrs = £1 3-4hrs = £5 4-12hrs = £10	£54,117 (higher) £47,191 (lower)
5 Preferred option	Up to 1 hours = £0 1-3 hours = £1 3-4 hours = £5 4-12 hours = £10	£141,633 (higher) £113,645 (lower)

5.3. Options 1-4 were considered and rejected given concerns over the impact such charging could have with greater on-street car parking displacement into neighbouring streets and that a more aggressive pricing strategy could adversely impact economic growth in the town.

5.4. The Bingham Car Parking Strategy Group unanimously support the proposal to charge for parking in these two car parks and the proposed changes to the Marketplace bays. The Group did not reach consensus on the exact charging structure to be set for the two car parks, with some supportive of the proposal put forward above (option 5) and some supportive of an alternative tariff (option 4). The views of the group have been considered, with option 5 resulting as the one which best meets the objectives as set out in 5.3 and the Council's own Off Street Car Parking Strategy.

6. Risks and Uncertainties

6.1. There is a risk that these changes could result in an increase in on-street parking. This could result in difficulty parking for residents of those streets. The Council is already working closely with Nottinghamshire County Council to consider possible measures to mitigate this e.g. Traffic Regulation Order (see paragraph 4.9 proposal F).

6.2. There is a risk that the changes to Newgate and Needham Street car parks will result in a reduction in long stay parking options in Bingham, particularly for workers. As set out in 4.9, proposal E, the Council is proposing to develop a

long stay offer at Bingham Arena. The Council is already in touch with key stakeholders in Bingham, including the GP surgery, to work with them to potentially mitigate the impact of these proposed changes on their employees. The Council is also working with Nottinghamshire County Council to promote active travel e.g. cycling and walking, into Bingham, as it is clear that a large number of those parking in Bingham, live in Bingham.

7. Implications

7.1. Financial Implications

As outlined above in paragraph 4.11, there are additional costs associated with the changes proposed and ongoing cost relating to running and maintaining the car parks that the fee structure proposed should seek to cover. Undoubtedly more income could be raised with further tariffs between 1-3 hours (e.g. Option 2 in the Table at paragraph 5.2) and this may increase car parking churn given that survey evidence demonstrated over 90% of users stay for up to 2 hours. That said, both this and the need to cover costs is being balanced with the objective to still encourage demand and economic vitality.

7.2. Legal Implications

There are two pieces of relevant legislation associated with the proposed changes: Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 - Part I and Part IV of Schedule 9 of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 and Local Authorities' Traffic Orders (Procedure) (England and Wales) Regulations 1996 (SI 1196/2489) Material Change. Officers will follow due process in implementing changes which will involve making a new Off-Street Parking Places Order.

7.3. Equalities Implications

There are no equalities implications associated with this report and it is important to state that disability parking arrangements will remain unchanged.

7.4. Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 Implications

There are no crime and disorder implications of this report.

7.5. Biodiversity Net Gain Implications

There are no biodiversity net gain implications associated with this report.

8. Link to Corporate Priorities

The Environment	The Council is working to promote active travel, so that those that can travel to Bingham on foot/by bike, reducing carbon emission associated with driving.
Quality of Life	Working to improve parking will ensure that residents of Bingham and the surrounding areas can access support and

	facilities in the town as well as utilising and supporting local businesses.
Efficient Services	The revenue return from the changes proposed will ensure that costs for the implementation are covered and that future maintenance costs are also covered.
Sustainable Growth	Working to address parking challenges is intended to ensure that Bingham has the necessary infrastructure to continue to have a thriving and vibrant town centre, as the area continues to grow over the coming years.

9. Recommendation

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For more information contact:	Dave Banks Director Neighbourhoods 0115 914 8438 dbanks@rushcliffe.gov.uk
Background papers available for Inspection:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Report to Cabinet 12 September 2023 Update on Car Parking in Bingham. • Rushcliffe Off-Street Car Parking Strategy 2023-2027.
List of appendices:	Appendix A – Overview of parking locations in Bingham