

EXETER CITY COUNCIL
SCRUTINY COMMITTEE ECONOMY
6 MARCH 2014

TOPSHAM PARKING MEMBER WORKING GROUP REPORT

1 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To note the update of the Topsham Parking Member Working Group.

2 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The Topsham Parking Member Working Group was formed during the summer of 2013 to consider a number of parking issues raised by Topsham residents and traders. These issues centred on increasing the parking capacity and establishing priorities between different types of car users.
- 2.2 The Group consisted of Members and Officers from both Exeter City and Devon County Councils, as well as representatives from the Topsham Community Association and local businesses.
- 2.3 Topsham is an historic town which attracts a high number of visitors who help sustain the economic viability of its small businesses. The centre of the town consists of narrow streets and dense housing, resulting in a high demand for limited parking spaces from residents, commuters and visitors.
- 2.4 The town benefits from two short-stay shopper car parks (Matthews Hall and Topsham Quay) and two long-stay commuter/residents car parks (Holman Way and Tapper's Close). Parking overnight (18:00hrs to 08:00hrs) is free at any of these locations.

3. PROPOSALS

- 3.1 To increase enforcement in Fore Street to help maximise turnover rates in the limited waiting bays serving the local businesses.

To increase Civil Enforcement Officer patrols in Nelson Close and Orchard Way to help alleviate parking congestion around the school and library.

Enforcement has been focused on these areas and the table below summarises the number of patrol visits and Penalty Charge Notices issued in these streets during the first and second half of 2013:-

Location	Visits (PCNs) Jan – Jun	Visits (PCNs) Jul - Dec
Fore Street	161 (102)	248 (180)
Nelson Close	69 (24)	94 (21)
Orchard Way	28 (2)	61 (15)

In addition the Community Safety & Enforcement Manager has sent a letter to the businesses in Fore Street to discourage the practice of shop workers parking in limited waiting bays and only moving their vehicle when spotting a Civil Enforcement Officer patrolling. Yellow lines have also been repainted in some areas of Fore Street to more clearly convey restrictions.

3.2 To accommodate the parking needs of the Saturday Market Traders.

Permits have been issued to enable a limited number of traders to use Matthews Hall car park.

3.3 To improve signage to car parks.

The Group concluded that the current road signage does not make it clear that long-stay parking is available at Tapper's Close and Holman Way car parks. Devon County Highways Officers have undertaken to amend and improve the existing signage to make clearer the public parking opportunities within Topsham. This is planned for the 2014/15 financial year.

Tariff board signage in Matthews Hall car park has been adjusted to aid vision.

3.4 To create additional parking bays by utilising part of the Recreation Ground, Matthews Hall Tennis Courts and relocating the recycling bins away from Holman Way car park.

The Group concluded that maintaining a centrally located tennis court and well used recycling facility was of more community benefit than an additional 20 off-street parking bays, particularly when a similar number of bays were usually available at Tapper's Close car park.

There is a restrictive covenant on the Recreation Ground for its perpetual use as a recreation or playground for children/youths. The land is also held in Trust and would require Charity Commission consent to convert a small part into parking bays.

Vegetation has been cut back along Ferry Road to enable easier on-street parking.

3.5 To consider the potential for coach parking at Tapper's Close car park.

Although a bay could be provided at this site relatively cheaply the narrow approach road would make manoeuvring very difficult and as a result this location is considered unsuitable.

3.6 To consider the feasibility of a residents parking scheme for Topsham.

Devon County Highways Officers considered that any plan to introduce an on-street residents parking scheme needed to be done so as part of a wider traffic management solution and should not be looked at in isolation by this group. The County Council plans to hold a review and formal consultation of the existing and any proposed on-street parking restrictions during 2014/15.

Exeter City Council will be undertaking a Car Park Review during 2014 to consider future off-street parking capacity and across the city. The results are expected to be reported early in 2015.

4. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

4.1 None.

5. RECOMMENDED

- (1) That the Committee note the update of the Member Working Group.
- (2) That Devon County Council undertake their proposed reviews during 2014/15

**TOPSHAM CAR PARKING MEMBER WORKING GROUP
Councillor Baldwin**

Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1972 (as amended)

Background papers used in compiling this report:-

Titles of supporting documents

Date 20 February 2014