

**Basingstoke Canal Joint Management Committee****Car Park Charges - Decision Paper**Hampshire  
County Council**10 October 2013**

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Email: [Fiona.shipp@hants.gov.uk](mailto:Fiona.shipp@hants.gov.uk)**Key Issue**

To approve a scheme of charges for canal side car parks within Hart District with Reading Road Car Park, Fleet being used as a trial.

**Summary**

Implement car park charging, initially at Reading Road car park in Fleet. The aim being to deal with canal visitors not being able to access the car park, due to crowding from long stay users exceeding their stay during working hours. With the high cost of amending a parking order, it is logical to include other potential car parks in Hart District in this order in case the scheme is extended in the future.

**Officer's recommendation**

The JMC is asked to:

- a) Approve and authorise the BCA to collect the car parking fees at Reading Road Car Park in Fleet in conjunction with Hart District Council on behalf of Hampshire County Council and expend the proceeds in maintaining the Canal.
- b) Authorise the BCA to apply for a change to the parking order to include other Hart District sites, Barley Mow, Crookham Wharf and Colt Hill to save costs at a later date should it be decided to extend parking charges. See appendix 2, location map of car parks.
- c) Authorise BCA to set an appropriate scale of charges in conjunction with Hart District Council.
- d) Authorise BCA to use their discretion in issuing season tickets and free permits to selected car park users.
- e) Authorise the BCA to conduct a phased implementation of charges at other car parks, namely Barley Mow, Crookham Wharf, Colt Hill if this is deemed appropriate and depending on success (income and space availability) or otherwise at Reading Road car park.
- f) Authorise the BCA to review car parking in other Districts / Boroughs and seek further authority to implement car park charging in those areas. This would include Farborough Road, Aldershot, Scotland Road Bridge, Woodham, and The Canal Centre, Mytchett.

## **1 Introduction & background**

- 1.1 There has been difficulty for some time for canal users wishing to access the canal from Reading Road Car Park, Fleet. This small car park holds approximately 15 cars. However it appears that staff from neighbouring businesses use this as a parking spot for the whole day whilst at work thereby avoiding parking charges in the remainder of Fleet's car parks. On occasion it has been noted that some long-stay cars blocking each other in to achieve additional parking. Cars often obstruct the BCA Canal access gate. See appendix 1 photos of car park
- 1.2 The BCA have received several complaints from canal users wishing to use the car park but always finding it full.
- 1.3 BCA proposes to implement car parking charges as a method of improving access to the canal for canal users. For non canal users the BCA will at least receive an income for their use of the land.

## **2 Consultation**

- 2.1 A six-week statutory public consultation period is a requirement of an off-street parking order. This consultation will be conducted by Hart District Council [HDC] as part of any amendments to their existing off-street parking order.

## **3 Discussion**

- 3.1 The BCA proposes that the charging rates are organised to help solve issues for Canal visitors e.g. that it is very cheap to park for the first couple of hours, but much more to park for the whole day. Thus discouraging whole day parking, or if the public chose to pay at least the canal is benefiting from this, while allowing short term towpath users to have more chance of finding a space for only a small fee.
- 3.2 A car park of 15 spaces is likely to generate £7,000 - £9,000/year gross based on 65% usage<sup>1</sup>.
- 3.3 If parking charges were also extended to Barley Mow and Crookham Wharf Car Parks as well, the possible income for the three rural car parks in Hart District might extend to £12,250 per annum gross (Figure 1). This would be a significant income for the Canal, however, as these car parks do not suffer from the same non-Canal related use as Reading Road the justification in extending charges is purely economic to help make the Canal a sustainable economic unit. However as they are much more rural than Reading Road, it is likely these car parks would generate lesser income/space with a lower percentage of usage.

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<sup>1</sup> HDC figure based on other rural car parks in Fleet area

Parking Charge Bands For Basingstoke Canal										
3 Car Parks (Crookham Wharf, Barley Mow, Reading Road)										
		Number			2hrs	3hrs	4hrs	all day	TOTAL	
Car Park	Machine	Spaces			£1.20	£2.40	£2.50	£6.00	REVENUE	TOTALS
	No									TICKETS
	1				9000	250	100	100	£12,250.00	9450
<b>Totals</b>		<b>50</b>			<b>9000</b>	<b>250</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>£12,250.00</b>	<b>9450</b>
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>			<b>£0.00</b>	<b>£0.00</b>	<b>£10,800.00</b>	<b>£600.00</b>	<b>£250.00</b>	<b>£600.00</b>	<b>£12,250.00</b>	

Figure 1

- 3.4 Whilst it is not the central intention of the proposal, introducing Car Parking charges allow an income to be taken from one of our biggest user groups, i.e. towpath users, who otherwise enjoy the Canal entirely free of charge.
- 3.5 It is proposed to allow certain groups free parking if they have already paid to use the canal. The issue of free use permits will be at the discretion of the BCA.
- 3.6 Blue Badge holders will be allowed to park for free as is the policy for other Hampshire countryside sites.
- 3.7 HDC advise that charging hours should be 8am – 6pm Mon –Sun. Allowing early morning and evening use of the car park free for Canal users. This fits with the purpose of charging to free spaces for Canal visitors.
- 3.8 Price structure proposal is shown in Fig 2, with the structure, aimed at cheap short term use but expensive long term use. Weekends could be free but would reduce the potential income and it is likely that shoppers use this car park on Saturdays.

Figure 2

Up to 2hrs	2- 4hrs	all day
<b>£1.20</b>	<b>£2.50</b>	<b>£6.00</b>

#### 4 Financial and value for money implications

- 4.1 The costs of consultation and newspaper advertising for amendments to the Hart District Councils’ off-street parking order will be very similar if one car park or all Canal car parks within the District are included and would be in the region of £6,000. HDC may be able to share costs if they are also making changes to the order for their own car parks at the same time. This would result in a lesser £2,000 contribution from the BCA.
- 4.2 HDC will take a fee (3% - for up to £6,000, 5% - for up to £15,000) for their service of patrolling the car park and collecting coins and processing fees. HDC will also enforce any PCN and receive any income from any fines.
- 4.3 The capital cost of implementing the scheme is estimated at £7,400. These costs are made up of: a new ticket machine £5,500, electrical installation £1,500, signage £400. HDC have provisionally agreed that if required the set up costs can be met by Hart District Council and repaid from the receipts of the first 2 years income. Once paid in full the BCA will then start to receive income less charges for inspection, coin management and electricity.

- 4.4 A written quotation of precise fees and costs will be obtained from HDC in accordance with Procurement Standing Orders should Members approve the principle of charging at Reading Road Car Park.

## **5 Equalities & diversity implications**

- 5.1 A 10% provision for spaces for people with disabilities will be made available

## **6 Crime & disorder implications**

- 6.1 This scheme will help with crime and disorder issues as the car park will be checked by the parking warden patrol twice a day, which will help to deter issues.
- 6.2 It will prevent parking in front of the BCA access gate which is required for emergency access to the Canal.

## **7 Conclusion and recommendation**

- 7.1 An income of approximately £7,000-£9,000 could be raised from Reading Road car park each year. It is hard to predict exactly the figure as it could vary annually and will depend on usage and the fees set, however officers have tried to underestimate the potential income based on the advice from HDC estimate.
- 7.2 Charging will enable HDC to provide the BCA with statistics of how many cars are using the car park and how long they are staying, enabling analysis of whether the scheme works to free spaces for Canal visitors. This will be reviewed at the end of the first year.
- 7.3 A future additional income of up to £18,500 could be considered if charging were to be extended to Colt Hill, Odiham which has approx. 85 spaces. This figure is based on the estimate provided by HDC, however although the car park is larger than Reading Road it is likely that the usage would be much lower as it is in a rural location (e.g. 40% usage), and therefore will have a lower income potential.
- 7.4 The solution of charging at Reading Road Car Park should be closely monitored and might be considered for Scotland Bridge Road Car Park, Woodham, which has similar issues with non-canal users (from adjoining properties and industrial estate) using the car park all day causing problems for Canal visitors and houseboat owners.
- 7.5 It is recommended that all the car parks within Hart District are included in the annual review of the off-street parking order to save costs of inserting the car parks in the future; however, charging is only implemented at Reading Road initially. Other car parks would require maintenance works before charging could be implemented.

## **8 What happens next**

- 8.1 The BCA will get a firm written quote from HDC for their costs
- 8.2 Obtain Hart District Council member approval to amend parking order.
- 8.3 The BCA will ask Hart District Council to amend their off-street parking order to include all of the Canal car parks within the district with the intention of public consultation being run in February 2014 and implementation of the Reading Road scheme by June/July 2014
- 8.4 The BCA will carry out tree pruning, white lining works and arrange the purchase and installation of the ticket machine and signs

- 8.5 Obtain authority from HCC Regulatory Committee to charge on Hampshire County Council land.
- 8.6 Obtain full Hart District Council approval to commence this joint partnership operation

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