



EAST DEVON DISTRICT COUNCIL

FRAMEWORK POLICY

USE OF OFF-STREET CAR PARKS BY CAMPERVANS & MOTORHOMES

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Version: Draft Richard Easthope

1. Background

East Devon District Council's Members have recognised that there is an increasing number of campervans and motorhomes visiting our towns, villages, coast and countryside, which in turn, has led to a greater demand for daytime and overnight parking provision. Some visitors are staying in established campsite locations and are simply seeking short-stay daytime parking associated with their chosen leisure activity. However, increasingly, visitors are seeking an experience approximating "wild camping" and already choosing some of our public car parks for unauthorised overnight stopovers.

2. Reasons for adopting this policy

2.1 Encouraging the use of public car parks for overnight stopovers could be in the best interests of our towns and villages, recognising that visitor spending does contribute to the local economy in a significant way.

2.2 A pilot scheme in Exmouth which has allowed overnight stopovers in some car parks over the last four years and has proven popular. Members consider that it had been broadly successful, although it has also been noted there have been some adverse impacts in local communities.

2.3 Overnight stopovers for Campervans and Motorhomes could generate additional car parking income and provide opportunities to invest in improving existing facilities

3. Management and Enforcement

3.1 It is recognised that a number of possible offences and contraventions of rules and regulations that have been associated with overnight stopovers (including for example the unauthorised discharge of liquid effluent in the road or car park, depositing of domestic waste in street litter bins, emptying chemical toilet cassettes into public toilets with associated spillage and various other forms of antisocial behaviour) may already be regulated by environmental legislation. However it is also accepted that enforcement is likely to be problematic in terms of available resources. It has been suggested that suitable and sufficient information signage along with effective day to day management of our car park sites will go a long way towards preventing these issues instead.

3.2 If, following the implementation of this policy, unanticipated incidences of antisocial behaviour begin to emerge, then environmental legislation will provide suitable safeguards and will enable the Council to apply effective remedies where the need has arisen. Enforcement could potentially be achieved through the application of Community Protection Notices or for more general issues, via Public Space Protection Orders. Car park CCTV could also be considered to enhance public safety, protect assets and deter ASB.

3.3 This policy now sets out clear terms and conditions to enable customers to clearly understand what is expected of them and empowers our Civil Enforcement Officers to effectively manage behaviour and prevent problems. The Council's car parks' management and enforcement team will need to be strengthened with some additional resources to achieve this.

3.4 The intention is that this policy will apply to ANY vehicle that is being used to provide accommodation for an overnight stopover. For the avoidance of doubt, this includes any lorry, truck, van or car that is being used for sleeping in one of our public car parks between the hours of 22:00 - 08:00.

4. Policy Development

4.1 The policy as set out below is to be kept under review and the Council's arrangements are highly likely to evolve further in the future.

4.2 Subject to further consultation with local groups, there will be opportunities to consider the merits of providing dedicated sites for motorhome and campervans including the provision of drinking water, showers, toilets, facilities for the disposal of domestic refuse, recycling and liquid effluent and possibly for electric hook-ups. The cost of the provision of these facilities would be met from revenue raised from new "overnight" tariffs.

5. Framework Policy

5.1 Day visitors

The Council will allow "motorcaravans" and any vans of any size* to park in our pay and display car parks (on a first-come first-served basis) between the hours of 08:00h and 22:00h daily. If the vehicle cannot be accommodated within the lines of a marked parking bay, visitors must pay for any and all additional parking bay(s) that their vehicle occupies or prevents other vehicles from using by buying multiple parking sessions simultaneously.

* subject to the maximum 3.5 tonne weight restriction already set down in the East Devon (Off Street) Parking Places Order 2008 (as amended)

5.2 Overnight Stop-overs

5.2.1 The Council will allow short-term overnight stopover parking for vehicles providing accommodation in all pay and display car parks within its Portfolio that are deemed to be "suitable" car parks.

5.2.2 The specific parking bays that are to be made available for this purpose will be set out in the East Devon Off Street (Amendment) Order (Campervans and Motorhomes) 2022 and the question of suitability will be determined on a site by site basis by tripartite Campervans, Vans and Motorhomes TAFFs with

Member representation from East Devon District Council, Devon County Council and the relevant Town or Parish Council in whose area the specific car park is situated. In the case of East Devon District Council the representation must include both the relevant Portfolio Holder (or a substitute Cabinet Member) and the Ward Member(s) for the Ward in which the specific car park is situated.

5.2.3 The specific details of each site will be subject to approval by the relevant tripartite TAFF. Larger parking bays may be marked with different coloured lining paint at some sites with clear (colour coded) signage explaining the overnight parking rules. In any event, the Council will permit overnight stopovers only in circumstances that are compliant with relevant fire safety legislation. The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 would apply to each car park site that is being used for overnight stopovers and the Council must accept responsibility for managing compliance with this legislation. It is also noted that the council's obligations do not extend to assessing the fire safety of individual vehicles (this is because there is an exemption for vehicles that are licenced for use on the road (under the Vehicle Excise and Registration Act 1994) where separate controls apply. The Council will need to take steps to manage at least a 3 metre separation between all overnight stopover vehicles.

- (a) A simple legally compliant solution can be achieved by allowing overnight stopovers in our standard 2.4 metre wide bays but making it a condition that there are at least two empty bays between one vehicle and the next vehicle. This separation is not required during daytime hours and compliance with this requirement between 22:00h and 08:00h would be a practical way forward.
- (b) The alternative solution for compliance will be to re-mark "overnight stopover" bays as 2.5m wide bays with a 1.5 m hatched zone on either side again meaning that no overnight stopover vehicle will be closer to another vehicle than the permitted 3 metres.

In both cases, strict observance and enforcement of the "parking within a marked bay" rule will be necessary.

5.2.6 Other rules to encourage good conduct during overnight stopovers:

- (a) Domestic waste, recycling and liquid effluent may only be disposed of in approved and authorised places
- (b) For the safety and convenience of everyone, items should not be placed outside of a vehicle during a stay – for the avoidance of doubt this includes (for example) chairs and tables, washing lines, water

sports equipment, barbecues, bicycles and firewood. Unless stated otherwise, only a parking space is being provided.

6. Resident parking

Any resident who chooses to use a “motorcaravan” or any van as either their main or secondary vehicle should be able to use our pay and display car parks as necessary in connection with their personal and business trips around the district.

The following conditions apply;

Pay & Display

- a) If the vehicle cannot be accommodated within the lines of a marked parking bay, residents must pay for any and all additional parking bay(s) that their vehicle occupies or prevents other vehicles from using.
- b) Vehicles cannot be used as accommodation unless the relevant overnight stopover charge has been paid

Permits

- a) Residents who do not have sufficient off street parking at home should be able to use a parking space within one of our long stay car parks PROVIDED that the vehicle in question fits wholly within the lines of a marked parking bay. In this case, the residents concerned will also be eligible to purchase a parking permit for their vehicle.
- b) Vehicles parked using a permit cannot be used for sleeping or overnight stopovers unless the relevant overnight charge has been paid
- c) Any vehicle used for overnight sleeping using permit where the overnight stopover fee has not been paid, will be liable for a PCN and possible revocation of the permit.