



Northumberland

County Council

**RECORD OF DECISION TAKEN BY
SERVICE DIRECTOR OF LOCAL SERVICES**

PAUL JONES

RESIDENT PERMIT PARKING AND TIME LIMITED PARKING ON ARGYLE STREET IN ALNMOUTH

Cabinet Member: Glen Sanderson

Purpose of Report

To consider the results of the Experimental Resident Permit Parking and Time Limited Parking on Argyle Street in Alnmouth.

Recommendations

It is recommended that in view of the feedback received during second experimental period, the following dual restrictions are introduced as a permanent Traffic Regulation Order:-

- Resident Permit Parking At Any Time
- Time limited Parking Place 8am - 6pm 3 hours, no return within 4 hours, all days

Link to Corporate Plan

How - "We want to be efficient, open and work for everyone"

Living - "We want you to feel safe, healthy and cared for"

Connecting - "We want you to have access to the things you need"

Delegated Decision Report

Key Issues:

1. Residents Permit Parking was introduced on Argyle Street under a 6 month experimental order following the two public consultations held in Hindmarsh Hall where residents of Argyle Street specifically requested Resident Permit Parking in their street.
2. A formal consultation with residents of Argyle Street was also carried out prior to implementing the experimental order.
3. The scheme was successful for those with permits who were able to park close to their properties on Argyle Street.
4. The scheme was a contentious issue for those who were unable to park on Argyle Street when there was a high demand for parking places in the rest of the village.
5. After considering the issues raised during the first experimental Traffic Regulation Order (TRO), it was felt that the following parking restrictions should be introduced as a second experimental TRO for a further 12 month to allow the effects of the revised restriction to be monitored and considered.
 - Resident Permit Parking At Any Time
 - Time limited Parking Place 8am - 6pm 3 hours, no return within 4 hours, all days

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RESIDENT PERMIT PARKING AND TIME LIMITED PARKING ON ARGYLE STREET IN ALNMOUTH

Delegated Decision Report

Background

6. Concerns were raised by residents of Argyle Street to local County Councillors and Parish Councillors regarding the difficulties they face when trying to find a parking place on their street due to non residents using the street to park while visiting Alnmouth. The residents stated that the issues were caused due the following:-
 - High number of properties without off street parking.
 - High number of properties compared to parking places.
 - People using the street to park while visiting the beach.
 - Guesthouses / Hotels advising their guests that parking is available on Argyle Street.
7. A resident permit parking scheme was introduced on Argyle Street as as an Experimental Traffic Regulation Order, following feedback received from two public consultations and one consultation with the residents of Argyle Street. As the majority of residents supported the scheme, but some non residents had raised concerns, the scheme was introduced as an Experimental TRO for a 6 months period, which allowed the council to monitor what effects the restrictions had on the rest of the village, while gathering feedback.
8. When the experimental period ended, feedback showed that the residents supported the restriction and non residents didn't as it was claimed that most of the bays sat empty through the day while the demand for parking was high in the village and there were always spaces left on Argyle Street that could be utilised.
9. It was therefore recommended the following dual parking restrictions were introduced on an Experimental TRO for a period of 12 months:-
 - Resident Permit Parking At Any Time
 - Time limited Parking Place 8am - 6pm 3 hours, no return within 4 hours, all days

Feedback

10. Throughout the second experimental period the council requested feedback on the scheme which concluded on Friday 31st August 2018. Twelve comments were received which were mostly favourable, although there were aspects of the scheme that did cause concern. A summary of responses is attached as Appendix A.
11. Comments received showed that the majority of residents supported the restrictions, but were unhappy with the lack of enforcement during the evening. These comments were taken onboard and Parking Services were asked to conduct evening enforcement exercises in an attempt to deter further abuse of the parking restrictions.

Delegated Decision Report

12. Concerns were also raised regarding the duplication of resident parking permits by holiday lets. It was discovered that permits were being photo copied to prevent guests from leaving with the original. Those responsible have been advised that the original permit must be on display and anyone displaying a copy will receive a Penalty Charge Notice. Parking Service have also advised guest house owners of ways to prevent guests from leaving with the permit.

Recommendations

13. From the outset, the County Council has endeavoured to respond positively to local concerns raised in this area and it is inevitable that some sections of the community will be dissatisfied with whichever decision is reached. However, the assessment of the feedback received showed that the majority of those who responded gave positive feedback. It is therefore recommended the dual resident permit parking and time limited parking restrictions are introduced as a permanent TRO, as shown in Appendix B.
14. These restrictions allows resident permit holders to park at any time, without time limit, but facilitates parking for other users when there is a high demand for short stay parking in the village during the day with a time restriction of 3 hours.
15. The Council has the power to hold a public inquiry before making any traffic regulation order. Such an inquiry might enable disputed evidence to be tested under cross-examination and the need for an order to be critically examined by an independent inspector. In this particular case, officers believe the extensive consultation process and involvement with interested parties, means that such an inquiry is unlikely to bring any fresh information to light and it is therefore recommended an inquiry is not held.

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Implications Arising out of the Report

Policy	Consistent with existing policies
Finance and value for money	None
Legal	None
Procurement	None
Human Resources	None
Property	None
Equalities (Impact Assessment attached) Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/>	None
Risk Assessment	
Crime & Disorder	None
Customer Consideration	The proposed restrictions have improved access for residents of Argyle Street in Alnmouth
Carbon reduction	None
Wards	Alnwick

Background papers:

None

Delegated Decision Report

Report sign off.

Authors must ensure that relevant officers and members have agreed the content of the report:

	initials
Finance Officer	
Monitoring Officer/Legal	
Human Resources	
Procurement	
I.T.	
Director	
Portfolio Holder(s)	

Delegated Decision Report

DECISION TAKEN

Title of Officer: Paul Jones - Service Director -Local Services

Subject: Resident Permit Parking and Time Limited Parking on Argyle Street in Alnmouth

Consultation: Experimental TRO. Feedback received throughout the experimental period.

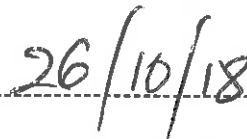
Decision Taken: To approve the introduction of the following permanent parking restrictions on Argyle Street in Alnmouth :

- Resident Permit Parking - At Any Time
- Time Limited Parking - 8am - 6pm, All Days, 3 Hours, No return within 4 hours

Signature of Director



Date



Appendix A

Comments

In light of the recent changes to the parking restrictions on Argyle Street, which the residents have been notified by Parish Council newsletter, could I now ask what the plans are for the rest of the village, in particular Northumberland Street, which even in January this year, was gridlocked for most of the time.

I came home from work last night at 5pm only to find that there wasn't a single free parking space on the entire length of Northumberland Street.

As requested by NCC, I am contacting you to offer personal feedback on the second experimental parking restriction order for Argyle Street, which came in to force on 29th Dec 2017.

As you will be aware, the newer parking order still relies on the original permits given to people owning properties on Argyle Street (Both house owners who are not resident but rent out their properties full time as businesses and also full time residents). These permits run out at the end of this month, so replacements are needed within the next three weeks in order for the experiment to continue to run its course, from 29th Dec 2018 until 28th Dec 2019

The newer permits are obviously not as successful in allowing us to access parking nearby our premises, but we would very much like to keep them, as they still offer some hope of parking in our street fairly regularly.

The permits have generally helped prevent visitors from dumping their cars in Argyle Street, regardless of where in the village they may be staying, for a week or more, stopping locals from parking there.

Also they have prevented several cars from multiple families visiting one or other of the house lets within Argyle Street from filling the entire road. (Though many photocopied fake permits, colour fading with age, are in use)

However, other locals and now regular visitors too, are well aware that the restrictions are rarely if ever now, being policed by wardens. So once again, we regularly can't park in our street at night and now the good weather is back, often can't get a space during the day either, as people arrive to spend the whole day on the smaller beach right beside our street.

I think this could be simply remedied by the use of a paid ticket machine, to record the time cars have parked, ensuring that people do not stay longer than 3 hours or return within four hours, with regular warden checks, including first thing in the morning, for none residents parking overnight. This would also bring revenue in to NCC.

I do hope that you might give this idea some thought.

I write to add comments to those already made in my email of 29/11/2017 concerning Argyle St parking, which is also enclosed again below for reference.

We are unable to monitor properly the use of the current limited 3hr parking since neither it, nor the permit system, are being enforced by the authorities, in fact I fail to see how it can be 'policed' without additional staff since it would require some 3 visits each day by the NCC wardens; on the rare occasion the wardens have been noticed over the last 6 months, it has been on a 'drive-by', presumably checking the posts, notices, road lining and marking remain intact (the assets??); there is also no requirement displayed for a parking clock to be placed on the dashboard. And so the parking regulations are being ignored other than by a handful of 'good citizens'. Whilst the current scheme may be an improvement on having no permits at all, it's trial has failed to date due to lack of proper enforcement.

I can only request that the council get their house in order to ensure a proper assessment can be made of the revised requirements; the arrangements certainly have NOT worked over recent months when car parking has become increasingly sought after by the larger no. of car tourists/visitors, especially at Christmas, Easter, half-term hols, etc (when the wardens are also scarcer than usual!!)

Provision of new, additional car parking is the general answer for Alnmouth, but the Argyle St parking issues need better regard than shown by the NCC so far this year!!

Here's to a refreshing improvement.

Certainly the 1-way traffic system through Alnmouth works very well and I support its retention fully.

think it is useless as everyone thinks they can park after six. I was going out Monday night and two men in a van were parking in Argyle St I said the cant park after six and they said they can we were standing beside the notice and they said that was how they read it and they would ask in the Schooner were they were staying ,so it was still there when I came back three hours later .So why should we have residential parking when there is no one checking late at night

I have been a resident in Alnmouth for xx years and have lived in argyle street for xx years and the parking issues these last 5 years are worse than ever. Having the permits have helped massively and would be a great loss to residents as during holiday times it is impossible to park and feel that people in the village who have b&b's and holiday let's encourage there guests to park in argyle street as well as visitors coming for the day. I would welcome being charged for permits if it means that residents can have a space

As the consultation period regarding the trial parking scheme comes to an end I would like to offer my thoughts and observations.

As a permanent resident at xx Argyle Street, I am, not surprisingly, in favour of retaining the current scheme. Although the scheme is open to abuse, mainly from visitors renting holiday accommodation, the permits have been of great benefit to full time residents. It is unfortunate that the Parish Council is hostile towards the scheme and has tried to lobby other Alnmouth residents to oppose it. One of the arguments put forward by the Council is that the loss of public parking bays has been detrimental to local businesses. I find this very hard to believe as most businesses appear to be thriving. For example the holiday lets in Argyle Street have been occupied by visitors virtually all year round. Furthermore, the numerous festivals and events in the village are reported to have attracted record numbers of visitors.

Another argument put forward by the Council is that parking permits should be available to all Alnmouth residents and not just those residing in Argyle Street. However, I believe that Argyle Street is a special case given its close proximity to the beach.

Whilst I am strongly in favour of adopting the scheme on a permanent basis, as mentioned earlier it is being abused, mainly by visitors renting the holiday lets. Despite being assured that only two permits would be issued to each household, one of which should bear the registration number of a vehicle belonging to the household, it is clear that some holiday lets are in possession of multiple permits. A number of visitors park their cars in the street over night without a permit, confident that the traffic warden will not make a night time or early morning visit. In order for the scheme to work properly, I believe it requires better enforcement through more frequent patrols at different times of the day. Some wardens may also need further training, as one warden interprets the signs permitting restricted parking between 8am and 6pm to mean that anyone can park in the street outside those hours.

I hope the above comments are helpful and sincerely hope the scheme is retained in its present form.

According to the Alnmouth Council village newsletter the consultation deadline is at the end of August so I would like to add my remarks for your perusal.

I think (in common with other residents I have spoken to) there has been a marked improvement in the situation from the previous "nightmare" where parking was near impossible.

It has meant that there are usually some spaces for returning workers and residents who've been shopping.

Coupled with the one way system which has diverted many more visitors to the beach parking (bringing in more revenue to the burgage holders) we agree the situation is no doubt better.

I for one would like to thank Dan Fraser and his team for all the hard work.

Despite reservations from some parish councillors including a few business owners the traffic situation has improved all round and I know other residents in the village would like a similar scheme in their areas.

Also the worries about a downturn on local business seems not to have occurred. Business continues to boom and at least three of the village pubs and a club have undergone large refurbishments in the last 12 months.

There are issues worth bringing up:

Policing: It seems to us that wardens coming through the day is ineffective unless they return three hours later to see if offenders have stayed longer than the permit period allows. Visits by wardens after 6PM or before 8AM even just occasionally, particularly towards the weekend, will achieve much more success.

False permits: We have noticed that although each dwelling is allowed 2 permits in the case of xx Argyle Street they seem to have four. There are suspicions that xxxxxxxx have been duplicating the permits and encasing them in laminate. On other occasions we have noticed out of date permits which expired in Spring 2018.

On a spot check last Friday after 6PM I noticed 4 cars without permits, one out of date permit and 4 permits assigned to number xx.

I hope you don't mind me bringing up these issues in what has proved, in our opinion, a successful scheme which has improved our lives.

Kindest Regards

I am writing to officially lodge a complaint and object to the Argyle Street Permit Parking Scheme, which I understand will be reviewed after 31st August 2018. I outline my reasons for objecting: I have lived in the village of Alnmouth for xx years and have never owned a property with off road parking, which until the NCC introduced the new one-way system, has never presented a parking problem for me.

However since the introduction of the 'experimental one-way system' which increased the double yellow lines throughout the village and the addition of Permit Parking for the Residents/Holiday Home owners of Argyle Street, it has been impossible to park in the village. Whilst I appreciate the Permit Parking rules have since been relaxed to allow a 3 hour parking time for non-residents of Argyle Street, this is of no use to me as I work full time and do not return to the village until after 5pm most days.

On most occasions when I am circling the village to waiting for a parking space, some times at least 4 or 5 times around the village before giving up, as I pass Argyle Street each time, I can see plenty of available parking. I'm sure visitors to the village endure the same frustrations but as they don't have to be here, eventually give up and leave.

The Permit Parking in Argyle Street has divided the village, created additional issues for local businesses as well as residents - when most houses in Argyle Street are second homes or holiday lets - it just doesn't seem a fair system that one street has this special privilege for something that affects the entire village - all this has done is exacerbate the parking issues by pushing more cars to park on Northumberland Street.

You will be aware that 51% of homes in Alnmouth are now owned by second homeowners or being run as holiday lets, please take time to consider the residents of this village and offer a suggestion that encourages people to stay living here.

My suggestion would be to have 50% of the overall parking in the village as 'Residents Only' and that any resident can park anywhere within the village. The other 50% could then be offered to visitors. Or perhaps we could use the same business model as Holy Island when it comes to visitor parking.

Ironically, I understand one of the key reasons the new one-way system was introduced was to enable the local buses to move through the village without being held up by inconsiderate parking. Now the buses don't come through the village as much, but trade vans still park on double yellow lines and block the road.

I would urge you to reconsider your decision and either make the entire village Residents Parking (not Permit Parking) or else remove the luxury of Permit Parking for those residents of Argyle Street.

I await your reply

During the day, on the whole, parking has improved and most visitors seem to abide by the 3 hour limit although more checks are needed by the CEO, especially during peak times which can still be difficult.

There are 2 main problems. The first is the photocopied permits that are being used which appear to be made by xxxxxx. These permits need to be checked closely and removed to make it fair on everyone. There are 2 properties that I have observed that have copied permits, xxxx and xxxx. The second problem is the amount of vehicles without permits that park all night (and sometimes all day also). As this is the time that residents need the spaces the most, maybe a few more visits by the CEO after 6pm and before 8am would be beneficial and get the message across to people that it is permits only between these times.

I have recently observed on 2 consecutive nights, 5 vehicles with no permits, 3 vehicles with copied permits and one vehicle on double yellow lines. Also around the rest of the village at night, vehicles park on pavements, double yellows and the bus stop.

I have read the objections to the parking scheme and they seem to have 3 things in common.

1. Other residents with no parking of their own can't park in Argyle Street all day and night.
2. Businesses can't send people to Argyle Street to park all day and night.
3. People attending functions in the Hindmarsh Hall can no longer use Argyle Street as a car park.

Visitor numbers are increasing every year as is the number of places to rent/stay but with no thought or provision of extra parking. The parking scheme in Argyle Street has had no effect on businesses in the village but it has, mostly, improved the lives of the residents.

I hope the scheme stays in place when you make your final decision as it will encourage residents to stay in the village and not move away as is happening at the moment. Visitors are needed and welcomed but surely residents are more welcome to sustain the village during quieter times. Residents in the rest of the village could also apply for their own scheme if desired.

Thank you for everything done so far to improve the village as a whole and thank you for taking our comments on board.

People parking after 6 pm and staying overnight is a nuisance and no one checking, otherwise the scheme seems to be successful. Also there are some fake permits being used by the holiday lets.

Just wanted to say I think the residents only parking scheme in and around Argyle Street Alnmouth is a good scheme and should be continued. There are some improvements that could be made - such as limiting the number of permits per house to a maximum of 2. As a "permanent" resident of Argyle Street it is often comical seeing visiting cars - sometimes up to 5 per property - arrive and seeing them being given A4 sized parking permits which do look like they have been photocopied. It might be simpler to issue a house with just 2 permits and highlight on the permit that it is for a specific house. Doing this might allow any Traffic Enforcement Office to easily spot any irregularities. I can totally understand there being a stipulated time period, through the day, when visitors can park for 3 hours. But it would be nice to see regular checks outside of "normal hours" to catch cars who arrive and park later in the day. I understand there may be a financial cost to extending the scheme, but, to be honest, I don't think any permanent resident would argue about paying this if it was easier to come and go freely in the car and not have to worry about getting back and not being able to park in the street. I know some property owners argue that by getting rid of the permits would allow them to have more guest and thereby boost income to the village, but, to be truthful, when you see the number of "online" shopping deliveries that arrive into the street you have to think that the majority of people are using them and they are not using any of the local amenities at their disposal. But I do hope the scheme continues.

The parking scheme in argyle street has worked very well. I have heard that there have been photos taken of the spaces in the street but even the tourist go out for the day and people including myself do actually work. After 6pm there are very rarely spaces available. There have been a few times in the recent weeks where I have been unable to actually find a parking space in argyle street and have ended up on marine road.

I do have concerns that some of the parking permits have been photocopied. Early on, they were obvious as the hologram in the top left corner was black. The more recent photocopies the "P" in the left corner is silver but it is not a hologram as it is not reflective and does not contain the word valid either. The other week number xx argyle street gave 4 out to the cars that arrived. number xx argyle street and number xx are not guest houses. the owners rent their whole house out to families/ friends. It is unfair that a resident parking scheme seems to be abused by the holiday homes in the street.

I am obviously aware that there are not many streets in alnmouth you can actually park on. unfortunately the homes that are rented out, always come with more than one car- often especially in argyle street they often have at least four and have had as many as six.

Alnmouth needs a car park on the outskirts of the village (like craster) if you wish to visit the village they people would be prepared to walk.

I am concerned that at one of the parish council meetings there was only one alnmouth councillor who was in favour of argyle street parking.

Alnmouth needs a car park on the outskirts of the village (like craster) if you wish to visit the village they people would be prepared to walk.