

Swindon's Country Parks – Car Parking Charging

1. Detail

- 1.1 Car parking charges at Lydiard House and Park and at Coate Water Country Park were implemented on 1st July 2016. During the implementation, a dedicated telephone line and email address was publicised to enable users and stakeholders to feedback about any issues experienced during the implementation of the charging. This was accompanied by information in local press, as well as discussions with onsite stakeholders and users, and briefing for local members. A small number of reports have been received of incidents of displaced parking on adjacent roads or residential areas. An issue has been noted around Coate Water where congestion caused by parked cars overspilling a layby is causing issues for pedestrians and motorists. The council will investigate the most appropriate way to resolve this issue and will also continue to monitor ground conditions in the car parks for improvements and maintenance.
- 1.2 Full year income across both sites was projected at £400,000. The income levels for the first 4 months (July-October 2016) is broadly line with the modelling for part year income during 2016-17 in the order of £250k - £300k.
- 1.3 During the implementation period, requests for suspension of parking charges have been received – particularly for long-standing annual charity events held in the parks. The organisers felt members of the public would be less likely to attend and contribute towards the charitable fundraising if car parking charges are in place. Since the implementation of the charging, different approaches have been tested to support user groups, volunteers and charitable events to operate at both Lydiard and Coate. From April 2017, volunteers and organisers for charitable events or fundraising events that benefit the Town and organisers of user groups on site will be supported to park without charge in the most appropriate way, whilst enabling the income from parking charges to reduce the subsidy of the sites.
- 1.4 Long term, further benefits can be achieved at Lydiard by providing a surfaced overflow car parking area. However, location, orientation and size of overflow parking depends on future operations of the site, and is not proposed to progress this work at this point.

2. Phase 2 – Country Park Car Parking Charging Implementation;

- 2.1 Following the implementation of charging at Lydiard and Coate, the car park usage at other Country Parks has been assessed and proposals are set out for each park below.
- 2.2 Stanton County Park - It is proposed to gather views of users and residents on expanding car parking charges to Stanton Country Park at the tariff consistent with Coate, as set out below. This would expect to achieve in the region of £25,000 - £35,000 of income in a full year, with potential implementation in spring 2017. The proposed charging model is £1 for up to 2 hours, £2 for over 2 hours and a season ticket at £30 per annum.

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- 2.3 Barbury Castle – it is not proposed to implement charging at Barbury Castle due to a number of factors including; displacement parking would likely be an issue on the access road and remoteness of car park, and this also brings an increased risk of vandalism and high costs of enforcement of charging due to remoteness of site. The business case for this will be reviewed in the future.
- 2.4 Moulden Hill – it is not proposed to implement charging at Moulden Hill as limited data is available on car parking levels so monitoring will be put in place and the business case for this assessed at a later date.
- 2.5 Shaw Forest – it is not proposed to implement charging at Shaw Forest Country Park as the small size of the car park would not make it viable to operate this.