

ST ALBANS CITY AND DISTRICT COUNCIL

REPORT TO: Christine Traill, Director for Community and Place Delivery and Councillor Helen Campbell, Chair for Public Realm and Lead Councillor for Parking.

DATE: 14/02/2025

REPORT TITLE: Parking Scheme Report, Traffic Regulation Order for Resident Permit Parking Thirlestane (Zone VW)

WARD/S: Bernards Heath

CONTACT OFFICER: Parking Development

TRAFFIC ORDER TITLE: The St Albans City and District (Control of Parking) Order 2023 (Amendment No 7) Thirlestane Order 2025

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1. The purpose of this report is to provide the Council's Strategic Director for Community and Place Delivery and the Chair of the Public Realm Committee with the background, consultation process and information relating to the proposal of various waiting restrictions and resident parking places in Thirlestane.

2. Background



- 2.1. This report summarises the comments that were received in response to the consultation, which was carried out between 24/10/2024-14/11/2024 to seek stakeholder views from St Albans residents, businesses, and visitors on proposed waiting restrictions and resident parking places in Thirlestane.
- 2.2. The proposals put forward which this consultation was based on, were aimed at:
- Increasing the available provision of residents parking places.
 - Reducing instances of inappropriate or inconsiderate parking.
 - Improving access to adjacent properties.
 - Reducing congestion, and
 - Improving road safety.
- 2.3. The proposed alterations to the existing parking arrangements at Thirlestane are shown in Appendix A (map 1 of 1) and outlined below:
- 2.4. Zone VW would:
- Introduce resident parking for eligible permit holders only, operating hours between Monday-Sunday, at all times.
 - Introduce designated disabled bays.
 - Introduce 'No Waiting at Any Time' (Double Yellow Line) restrictions.
- 2.5. The introduction of Permit Parking at Thirlestane will prioritise parking for permit holders (i.e. residents), therefore allowing them to park closer to their own properties by preventing commuters and visitors to the local shops parking there during the restricted hours.

- 2.6. The introduction of No Waiting at Any Time (Double Yellow Line) restrictions aims to control parking within the Permit Parking area and prevent inappropriate parking near junctions, as well as on bends and in turning heads. Several sections of the roads in question are not wide enough to accommodate parking on both sides of the road. Therefore, the proposed restrictions will help to prevent obstruction issues as well as inappropriate parking and retain access for emergency services.

3. Recommendation

- 3.1. It is recommended that the Council's Director for Community and Place Delivery, in consultation with the Council's Lead Councillor for Public Realm, agree in proceeding to make the above Traffic Regulation Order in line with Section (14) of The Local Authorities' Traffic Orders (Procedure) (England and Wales) Regulations 1966, following its advertisement on **24/10/2024**.

4. Report Sign Off

| Strategic Direct for Community and Place Delivery | Lead for Public Realm |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Name: Christine Traill | Name: Helen Campbell |
| Date: 21 February 2025 | Date: 04 March 2025 |
| Signature:  | Signature:  |
| <u>Cross out below as appropriate;</u> | <u>Cross out below as appropriate;</u> |
| <i>Agree to Make Traffic Regulation Order/s</i> | <i>Agree to Make Traffic Regulation Order/s</i> |
| <i>Agree to Abandoned Scheme</i> | <i>Agree to Abandoned Scheme</i> |

5. Consultation Summary

- 5.1. Three avenues were made available for those wishing to comment on the consultation, online, through email to parking.consultations@stalbans.gov.uk or in writing to The Parking Development Team – St Albans City and District Council, Civic Centre, St Albans, AL1 3JE.
- 5.2. In total, 8 representations were received.

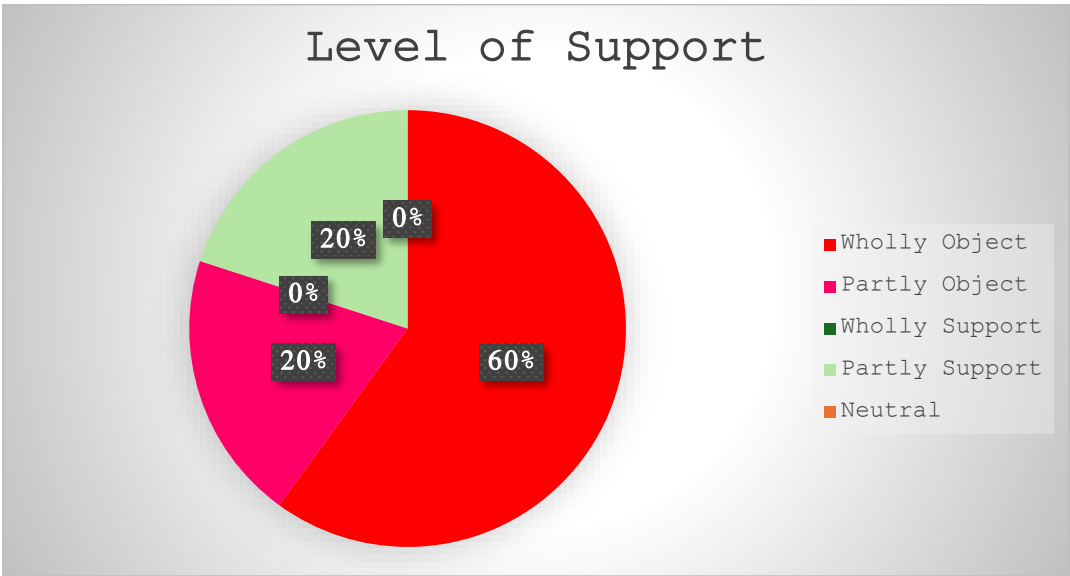
6. Online Representations

- 6.1. The online consultation survey consisted of the following parts:

- **Part 1 - Relation to St Albans City and District:** Respondents provided information on their relationship (resident, visitor, commuter, business, stakeholder group or other) to St Albans City and District.
- **Part 2 - Feedback Category:** Respondents indicated which aspect of the consultation they were providing feedback on, including parking, financial concerns, environmental issues, access, traffic, safety, disturbance, or other areas.
- **Part 3 – Level of Support:** Respondents expressed their level of support for the proposed changes by selecting from the following options: wholly support, partly support, wholly object, partly object, or neutral.

- **Part 4 - Feedback on proposals:** Respondents commented on the proposed changes in an open question.

- 6.2. In total, 5 online representations were received.
- 6.3. **Feedback Categories-** Out of these, 5 respondents (100%), were residents of Thirlestane. Of the feedback categories, 2 respondents (40%) chose 'parking' alone, 1 (10%) chose 'parking' and 'access', 1 (10%) chose 'parking' and 'financial' and 1 (10%) chose 'parking', 'traffic', 'access', 'disturbance' and 'other'.
- 6.4. **Levels of Support:**

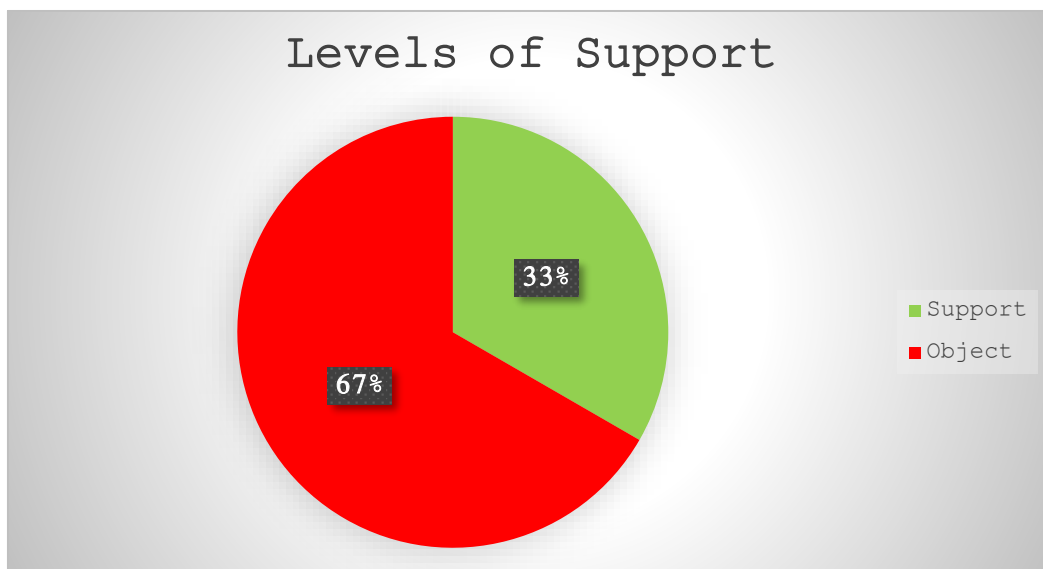


- 6.5. **Top themes expressed by online representations:**

| Themes |
|--------------------------------|
| 1. Financial |
| 2. CPZ not needed |
| 3. Reduction in parking spaces |

7. Email Representations

- 7.1. In total, 3 email representations were received.
- 7.2. Email respondents did not provide a feedback category or a level of support, therefore, based on free text content, sentiments have been manually assigned to either support or object.
- 7.3. **Levels of support:**



7.4. **Top themes expressed by email representations:**

| Themes |
|--------------------------------|
| 1. Financial |
| 2. Reduction in parking spaces |

8. Council Response

- 8.1. Appendix B of this report outlines all 8 representations raised by respondents. This section of the report concentrates on the analysis of the top 3 themes recorded and provides the Council's response to these.

8.1.2. Financial

Concerns were raised over having to pay for permits, specifically that the cost of a parking permit is unpalatable and/or unaffordable.

The cost of resident permits in St Albans City and District Council are emissions based and are consistent across all Zones. Revenue generated from permit parking Zones cover the administrative costs of enforcing permit parking Zone restrictions and issuing permits to residents. Any lowering of the pricing of vehicle permits would impact the Council's ability to effectively administer and enforce permit parking zones.

It is not predicted that these charges will generate a surplus. However, should any arise in the future, it would be legally ringfenced for expenditure on other transport related purposes and could not be used for general council expenditure.

8.1.3 Reduction in Parking Spaces

Some residents expressed concerns that the plans resulted in loss of available parking provisions.

Losses in parking capacity are possible in certain locations (for example, in narrow roads) due to the need to maintain access but are often compensated by the rise in availability throughout the Zone due to the expected fall in the numbers of non-resident vehicles parked.

The perceived reduction of parking space is due to elongated bays only being proposed in locations where it is safe to park. This reduces the ability to park in areas where it should not take place, such as junctions and/or where it could obstruct access, including for emergency vehicles. The Zone has been designed to maximise safety whilst retaining parking provisions, and double yellow lines have been proposed to combat obstructive and dangerous parking, whilst maintaining access for emergency services.

8.1.4 CPZ is not needed

Please see council response above. The council remains satisfied the rationale for change outlined in the Statement of Reasons for recommending the making this Order remain valid.

Appendix A- Map 1 of 1, Zone W, Thirlestane



Appendix B- Representations Received

| Online Respondents |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Wholly Object |
| <p>I live in the block and have a car. I have never had an issue with finding a parking space and - judging by that same availability - do not believe that there is an issue for disabled car drivers to find a space, either. "Traffic" is minimal, and so safety does not seem to be an issue, either. Therefore, it appears that the only genuine reason to implement this would be to generate increased revenue from the residents.</p> |
| <p>I would suggest that introducing and enforcing parking restrictions/ bays on Manor Road (where non-residents park for their commute from SA City train station) and/ or on Hatfield Road (where traffic and safety are both issues because of legal/ illegal parking, particularly between St Peter's Street and St Peter's Road) would be more sensible if there is a genuine concern about parking/ traffic/ safety/ access/ disturbance/ the environment in the area.</p> |
| <p>Us as residents object to this as money is very tight for us and a lot of family's. I think I speak for most that residents having to pay to park is definitely an issue and most own two cars. We pay car tax and insurance then rent household bills and then being made to purchase parking permits. It just won't work so we are totally against this idea. I imagine if you was to offer free permits to residents up to two vehicles you may get residents inside.</p> |
| <p>To whom it may concern:</p> <p>Firstly, please could you acknowledge by return upon receipt of this submission of concerns. Please also respond being clear what the next steps to the consultation is as this has not been communicated.</p> <p>Secondly, I request that all concerns submitted are made accessible to all residents to ensure that we have a full picture of what our community's thoughts and concerns whether for or against.</p> <p>Intended outcomes as detailed in the proposal:</p> <p>Increase the available provision of residents parking spaces</p> <p>There are no details in the proposal documents that outline how this will be achieved. I would like to know:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The current no. of parking spaces used, including informal parking vs. the no. of spaces that the new provision gives? • How many homes are within the scheme coverage and what has been the basis of analysing the no. of cars per household? <p>To my knowledge there is already insufficient parking provision per household including the informal parking that occurs which means that the proposal would mean a significant reduction of parking spaces. Upon visual review a reduction of approximately 30 spaces, based on the current estimate of 45 bays under the new scheme. This number alone highlights the inappropriateness of charging resident high fees that over 50% of will be unable to park. (based on number of residents and ave. no. cars per household).</p> <p>Please confirm if my understanding that as a private resident's site and not part of the public highway, the permit scheme for Thirlestane is only applicable to residents and will be a private scheme overseen by the lease organisation (St Albans District Council).</p> |

If this is a private resident's scheme, if residents are unable to park within Thirlestane initially they will seek parking on the surrounding roads, which will put pressure on residents parking in the surrounding area. This is likely to lead to an increase in permit schemes in the area. As we will be part of a private resident's scheme, we will not have access to these permits. Therefore, if this happens it means that they may have to seek alternative parking miles away as the permit parking in surrounding roads increase.

Therefore, I do not believe with the current information that there will be an increase in available provision, but quite the opposite. This will have a knock-on effect on the value of our properties, therefore for those owning or private renting a significant impact financially.

I also have concerns for those that are elderly or vulnerable in parking and then walking to their home late at night.

Reduce incidents of inappropriate and inconsiderate parking:

Whilst I understand that this is not necessarily the case across the estate, the majority of Thirlestane residents pride themselves on being a community and how we work together to make the best of any challenges such as parking.

Although I can appreciate it is frustrating when on occasion it is difficult to park, this is by exception rather than a daily issue. I personally have not had an issue parking except on a very rare occasion (once in 2 years). We take time to know each other and know each other's cars so that we can contact each other should there be an issue.

I know there are challenges with commuters and local football fans parking here, a FREE scheme for residents that is applied at peak hours in the middle of the day between 11am - 1pm as applicable in other areas of St Albans would support this. This would also demonstrate to those frustrated that the issue is not commuters however the fact that the provision is insufficient for the average number of cars per household, which has obviously grown significantly since the flats were developed.

Please also provide information on how this point has been validated and the details or if it is hearsay?

Improve access to adjacent properties:

This point is not clear as I cannot see how parking within the estate impacts on adjacent properties, apart from pushing this issue onto surrounding roads as highlighted above. Therefore, making the issue worse.

There are challenges for the recycling vehicles on one particular corner leading up to the garages 1-17, however we have had a number of meetings with Simon Smith, Asset manager in regards to this. During these meetings it was agreed that there was a simple solution to improving this by removing a bollard and reducing part of the extended pavement that is not necessary.

Reduce congestion:

Again, this point is not clear. Please provide clarity on congestion and how this has been validated or if it is just hearsay?

Improve road safety:

Please provide supporting information on validated incidents, near misses or other supporting events that provides evidence that this is an issue as I am not aware of any incidents in the time that I have lived here.

There is a significant issue in the laybys outside the estate when large vehicle park in the block visibility when endeavouring to exit the estate, however this is not included in this proposal.

Further points:

The maintenance of the current road system is very poor. Yellow lines, hatchings and markings are not maintained to the point that they are not visible. Therefore, there is no clear indication of where parking is and is not permissive. This includes the recently installed bin and disability accesses leading to the flats.

The map indicates that parking will be available up to garage numbers 1 & 2. I currently lease garage number 2. Unless 2 of these bays adjacent to the garages are kept clear it is not possible for me to access my garage for parking purposes due to the space required to manoeuvre into the garage.

The permit charges are in line with those of a government scheme and I feel are inappropriate for a private resident's scheme as it would not have the same infrastructure to support it. Also, with the current lack of capacity we would be paying for a permit in most cases not to be able to park.

The same would apply for needs for permits for trade/contractor vehicles. Although we would have visitors permits available these would be of no use if spaces were not available. Although I know there are provisions for this in public resident permit zones within St Albans, to my understanding as this not being part of public highways is inapplicable to us and this will also be exacerbated by parking being displaced by council contractors when significant works are occurring. Again, at this time we would not have permits to park elsewhere in the local area.

When this was raised previously, we were told that St Albans Parking Schemes offer carer permits and also permits for this type of activity, however this is a private resident's scheme and not part of the local government schemes. I have not had any notification of an amendment to my lease to say that there are plans to make the estate part of a public highway.

When a parking scheme was first proposed many years ago, we were assured that due to all of these factors it would be a free scheme and only applicable at a minimum number of hours to deter commuters.

I want to be clear that I wholly object to this proposal based on the above.

From my perspective it has been poorly analysed and thought through from a holistic perspective. The solutions have been based on a public highway template that does not support a private estate. It appears to be a reactive response to frustrated complaints and fails to address or acknowledge the fact

that as car usage has evolved and increased there is no longer the capacity to provide sufficient parking for residents to which there is a simple solution to identify non-residential parking – FREE residents parking permits.

Partly Object

I always been able to find somewhere to park near my flat and do not think it is necessary to make the whole area resident parking only. On the occasion that I have had visitors come to stay, they have also found sufficient parking nearby. I have also never felt unsafe or felt there was too much traffic in this area, even at peak times so the proposal just feels unnecessary.

Partly Support

Dear St Albans City Council,

Thank you for your proposal; I believe this will be a significant step toward reducing inconsiderate and unauthorized parking.

I would like to highlight a few potential challenges and offer some suggestions to address them. Under the current plan, we anticipate the loss of 5-10 parking spaces previously used by residents:

- Two parking spots near the recycling containers on the west side of the compound.
- Five to eight spots near the garages, which are currently often occupied by residents who presumably own these garages. By parking in front of their garages, these residents help free up space in the other designated spots for the wider community.

With these reductions, the remaining parking spaces may barely suffice for residents' needs, leaving little to no room for guest parking. This may particularly impact parking availability for Thirlestane residents, especially during peak times on weekend evenings.

To mitigate these issues, I propose the following:

- Allocate a few spaces specifically for guest parking, with a rule allowing residents to use these spots only when all other parking options are full.

I believe this approach will not only improve parking availability for guests but also make it easier to detect and address unauthorized parking. I hope you will consider this suggestion, and I look forward to hearing about any additional measures you plan to implement to address the concerns outlined in this letter.

Email Respondents

Object

Dear Parking Consultation,

Thank you for your response with regards to my email dated 22 October.

Having read through your email response I noticed that you had only received responses for your survey from only 30 residents from the total 80 properties. For me that is not sufficient information. As currently there is not enough parking for residents in Thirlestane. As a resident living there I can definitely confirm this.

So paying for a permit would be unfair on some residents whom already struggle to park at Thirlestane due to the lack of space currently available.

You response does not include any sort of discounts available for residents to purchase visitor permits as I have explained in my first email that I heavily rely on family members to help me out with my children on a daily basis.

Thank you for taking note of my response and would I please be notified with regards to the outcome of this consultation.

I received your letter in the post this morning and I completely disagree that as a resident at Thirlestane we have to pay to park our cars outside our homes. It's absolutely ridiculous and it is nothing but a money making scheme for St Albans City Council.

80% of residents own two vehicles so parking is already insufficient for the residents.

Also when I moved into my home almost 6 years ago as you drove into Thirlestane there was a sign stating parking was for residents only. As this is a money making scheme for the council they took the sign down so we could be in this situation again where we are being notified that permits need to be proposed.

Also when speaking to another resident I found out that a owner of one of the properties in Thirlestane who rents out her property whom does not live here was at your meeting pushing for permits to be introduced at Thirlestane. As she does not live here how is she pushing for this as it will be a cost she can easily pass into her tenants.

As residents whom live at Thirlestane why are we not notified when meetings about Thirlestane take place.

I am a single parent with one young child of 2 years and another whom attends the nearby school and I receive a lot of help from my father whom is here at Thirlestane helping with school run or pick ups daily during the school week. Every time my father visits I would need to provide him a visitors permit and therefore that is a cost I am unable to keep up with.

I believe as a council you should do more by replacing and putting up more signs clearly stating that parking is for residents and visitors only.

As residents we know whom the main culprits are parking here and going off to work to the train station or into town. If clear signage was there it would help deter them parking at Thirlestane.

Therefore I am completely against any parking permits being issued here.

Good Afternoon,

I am a resident at one of the Thirlestane properties. The level of permit holder placement that you have identified here is significantly short of what will be required. I can only speak for the more immediate area surrounding my property, but it would appear that many spaces can and should be added.

Please see below a markup in purple of a further additional 8 to 10 spaces that have not been considered. These spaces are currently being used to good effect without any issues. May I also add that it is obscene to tier these charges based on a vehicle performance basis. It should be a blanket cost for a book of permits... I cannot agree with this at all.

Good Afternoon,

I am a resident at one of the Thirlestane properties. The level of permit holder placement that you have identified here is significantly short of what will be required. I can only speak for the more immediate area surrounding my property, but it would appear that many spaces can and should be added.

Please see below a markup in purple of a further additional 8 to 10 spaces that have not been considered. These spaces are currently being used to good effect without any issues.

Support

To Whom it May Concern,

I am really hoping that the parking restrictions (Zone VW/Thirlestane) will come into effect as soon as possible, it has been an absolutely longtime coming. However, please see the below questions and suggestions from me after reading through the proposals:

1. The proposal states, "If the Council proceeds..." What might stop the council from proceeding?
2. Exactly how will the parking restrictions be monitored and by whom?
3. How soon after the consultation ends might restrictions be implemented?
4. Having the back gate, with a lock, leading onto Manor Road reinstalled will restrict those from Newsome Place and those who park in Thirlestane and use the station.
5. I would like to suggest that having white line parking bays will improve safety with parking. For instance, immediately across from 37 - 44 Thirlestane, there is only enough legal parking for five cars, yet six cars are squeezed in making parking difficult and cars are sometimes damaged.
6. Will there be new and visible parking restriction signs, on entering Thirlestane and at the back gate leading to Manor Road?

I look forward to hearing from you.

Appendix C- Permit Prices, Allocation and Eligibility**Eligible addresses for Residents and Visitor Permits**

| Col 1 | Col 2 | Col 3 | Col 4 |
|-------|--------------------|--------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| No | Parking Place Name | Parking Place Zone | Eligible addresses |
| 1 | Thirlestane | VW | All - as existing at the time of making this order in 2024 any additional addresses or developments after the date of making the order, will be excluded |

Allocation of Residents Parking Permits and Residents Visitors Permit

| Col 1 | Col 2 | Col 3 | Col 4 |
|-------|---------------------------|--------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------|
| No | Permit Type | Parking Place Zone | Allocation |
| 2 | Residents Permits | VW | Maximum of 2 per property |
| 3 | Residents Visitor Permits | VW | 120 (12 books) per year, additional 50% upon application. |

Residents Permit Charges all Zones 2025

| Col 1 | Col 2 | Col 3 | Col 4 | Col 5 | Col 6 | Col 7 |
|-------------|-----------------------|-----------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------|------------------------------|------------------------------|------------------------------|
| <u>Item</u> | <u>Emissions Band</u> | <u>Emission (Registered after March 2001)</u> | <u>Engine CC (Pre-March 2001-Registered)</u> | <u>1st Permit</u> | <u>2nd Permit</u> | <u>3rd permit</u> |
| | | | | | | |

| | | | | | | |
|---|---|---------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------|--------|---------|---------|
| 4 | 1 | Zero emission | N/a | £15.80 | £31.50 | £47.30 |
| 5 | 2 | CO2 emissions rated up to 90g/km | Engine capacity up to 999cc | £24.20 | £60.40 | £120.80 |
| 6 | 3 | CO2 emissions rated 91g/km to 110g/km | Engine capacity up to 1,099cc | £48.30 | £120.80 | £241.50 |
| 7 | 4 | CO2 emissions rated between 111g/km up to 150g/km | Engine capacity up to 1,299cc | £60.40 | £181.10 | £301.90 |
| 8 | 5 | CO2 emissions rated between 151g/km up to 185g/km | Engine capacity between 1,300cc and 1,849cc | £72.50 | £217.40 | £362.30 |

| | | | | | | |
|----|------------|---------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------|--------|---------|---------|
| 9 | 6 | CO2 emissions rated between 186g/km up to 225g/km | Engine capacity between 1,850cc and 2,449cc | £84.50 | £225.20 | £422.60 |
| 10 | 7 | CO2 emissions rated over 226g/km | Engine capacity greater than 2,450cc | £96.60 | £289.80 | £483.00 |
| 11 | Motorcycle | | | £27.30 | | |

General Charges

| | | |
|----|---------------------------------------------------|--------|
| 15 | Administration / Refund /Replacement charge | £13.20 |
| 16 | Virtual Visitor Permits – 10 All Day Sessions | £22.50 |
| 17 | Visitor Parking Voucher (Scratch Card) Book of 10 | £30.00 |