

## RESPONSES TO PUBLIC QUESTIONS

### From Cllr Tatters, Doddington Parish Council

Could you please explain to me why the car parking time limit in the long stay car park at Castlegate has been reduced down to one overnight stay only.

Also the Berwick Railway Station car park, for which we pay, has been reduced down to a maximum of just three consecutive nights.

I travel up and down the country quite often for work and often need five days parking to use the train.

As we are now constantly being encouraged to use public transport instead of our cars the parking time limits do not motivate people to leave their cars at home.

### Response from Local Services:

*Introducing a maximum stay into all long stay car parks was one of the recommendations made following parking studies carried out in 2017. The study report for Berwick set out details of the existing town centre car park provision, usage and issues and went on to forecast how this is likely to change in the future and what measures could be adopted to tackle existing and future parking issues. New data was collected and consultation was undertaken with local stakeholders to gain an understanding of issues, future changes and potential solutions. The action plan developed from the parking study was agreed with the Town Council and implementation is on-going. The parking study and action plan can be found on our website at the following link:*

<https://www.northumberland.gov.uk/Highways/Parking.aspx#parkingstudies>

*Overall following the parking studies it was agreed that town centre long stay car parks in Alnwick, Berwick, Hexham and Morpeth would be subject to a 24 hour maximum stay whilst other long stay car parks across the County (including railway station car parks) would have a new limit of 72 hours introduced. The purpose of these time limits is to reduce the practice of cars being 'garaged' in public car parks for longer periods of time, which unfortunately was becoming a regular occurrence,*

*and also prioritising the availability of spaces for use by daily commuters. It was felt that 72 hours at railway stations was appropriate as this allowed extended overnight stays but limited long term use. Where commuters need to park for longer, say a week or more, we want to encourage them to make alternative arrangements rather than parking a vehicle in a space that will prevent use by daily commuters. The time restrictions are intended to ensure the turnover of parking places, ensuring a fair approach to parking for employees, residents, and visitors alike who wish to use the car parks.*

*We will take into consideration the issues you have raised when we review the impact of the restrictions, which will be later this year.*

**Further question from Councillor Tatters:**

Please provide further details about what other parking alternatives/arrangements were possible, particularly for people going on holiday, especially given concerns that the new arrangements could lead to people parking their cars outside of other people's houses whilst they went on holiday.

**Further response from Local Services:**

*I write following your question at the North Area Local Area Council where it was agreed that a further written response about parking at Berwick station would be provided to you. As noted in the response at the meeting, Introducing a maximum stay into all long stay car parks was one of the recommendations made following parking studies carried out in 2017. The study report for Berwick set out details of the existing town centre car park provision, usage and issues and went on to forecast how this is likely to change in the future and what measures could be adopted to tackle existing and future parking issues. New data was collected and consultation was undertaken with local stakeholders to gain an understanding of issues, future changes and potential solutions. The action plan developed from the parking study was agreed with the Town Council and implementation is on-going. The parking study and action plan can be found on our website at the following link:*

*<https://www.northumberland.gov.uk/Highways/Parking.aspx#parkingstudies>*

*Overall following the parking studies it was agreed that in order to maximise turnover and increase the availability of spaces town centre long stay car parks in Alnwick, Berwick, Hexham and Morpeth would be subject to a 24 hour maximum stay whilst other long stay car parks across the County (including railway station car parks) would have a new limit of 72 hours introduced. The purpose of these time limits is to*

*reduce the practice of cars being 'garaged' in public car parks for longer periods of time, which unfortunately was becoming a regular occurrence, and also prioritising the availability of spaces for use by daily commuters. It was felt that 72 hours at railway stations was appropriate as this allowed extended overnight stays but limited long term use. Where commuters need to park for longer, say a week or more, we want to encourage them to make alternative arrangements rather than parking a vehicle in a space that will prevent use by daily commuters. The time restrictions are intended to help address the capacity issues being experienced in these busy car park by increasing the turnover of parking places, ensuring a fair approach to parking for employees, residents, and visitors alike who wish to use the car parks.*

*We understand your concerns about alternative places to park for those people wanting to travel from the station for longer periods than the 72 hours allowed in the railway station car park. Parking capacity overall within Berwick is constrained and in reaching the decisions about the 24 hour and 72 hour restrictions in the long stay car parks the Council is trying to balance the various needs of all the users and in particular to assist those making daily journeys whilst we work to increase capacity. It was felt that those people requiring stays longer than 72 hours at the station were most likely to be able to make alternative arrangements to travel to the station avoiding the need to park. I am sure that you will already be aware that many of the residential streets around the railway station and town centre in Berwick have residents only permit restrictions and /or time limits in place to ensure that the parking needs of residents, local B&Bs etc are also considered as part of our overall approach to parking controls/transport. We appreciate the concerns that you raise and these will be included in the review of progress of the parking action plan that we will be carrying out with the Town Council in the autumn. In the meantime we are continuing to work to increase car parking capacity overall, such as at the Quayside (where we have applied for planning permission) and the railway station (where we are working with LNER on an extended car parking area) and actively pursuing any other sites that become available in the town.*