

Equality Impact Assessment



Hampshire
County Council

Countryside Service Blue Badge Charging Policy

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Department: Culture, Communities and Business Services

Date of assessment: 26/03/2018

Description of current service/policy

The current car parking charging policy allows Blue Badge holders to park for free at HCC owned Country Parks.

Geographical impact: East Hampshire, Eastleigh, Havant, New Forest

Description of proposed change

It is proposed, following the introduction of Automatic Number Plate Recognition system, to charge Blue Badge holders at the same rate as other users.

There are currently 60,000 Blue Badger holders in Hampshire equating to about 5% of the population. We estimate that between 2.5% and 10% of visits made to the Country Parks are by Blue Badge holders. It is likely that these numbers differ between parks.

The charges for parking are relatively low, in comparison with other similar attractions, currently £5 - £6 for a full day offering very good value for money.

Impacts of the proposed change

This impact assessment covers Service users

Engagement and consultation

Has engagement or consultation been carried out? Planned

Limited consultation has been conducted to date with park user groups at Lepe Country Park and Royal Victoria Country Park and with the Blue Badge scheme operators.

In order to implement the policy there needs to be a change to the current legal parking orders for each park. There is a statutory consultation period of 21 days that will be required for each Parking order at each park. It has been agreed to review the decision to charge Blue Badge holders in light of responses to this consultation.

Statutory considerations	Impact	Mitigation
Age: Low	Of the 60,000 Blue Badge holders in Hampshire 62% are over 70 and 40% of Blue Badge holders are over 80 years old. Only 3% are under 20. Whilst the change in policy will affect those in the older age groups those that are over 80 are less likely to use the Country Parks so the impact is therefore low.	
Disability: Medium	The aim of the Blue Badge scheme is to help disabled people who have severe mobility problem to access services and other facilities by allowing them to park close to their destination. It is the individual that holds the Blue Badge to enable them access when travelling as a passenger in a range of different vehicles. The Blue Badge scheme is not linked to income or ability to pay and there are no statutory requirements to provide free parking.	Blue Badge parking bays will be provided and marked up. There will be increased accessibility to the facilities and activities on offer at each Country Park as a result of investment.
Sexual orientation: Neutral		
Race: Neutral		

Religion and belief: Neutral		
Gender reassignment: Neutral		
Gender: Neutral		
Marriage and civil partnership: Neutral		
Pregnancy and maternity: Neutral		
Other policy considerations	Impact	Mitigation
Poverty: Low	<p>There is no evidence regarding the financial characteristics of Blue Badge holders. The majority are beyond working age however that does not necessarily mean that they have limited income.</p> <p>Whilst this group will be required to pay for a service, that was previously free, the relatively low cost of car parking £5/£6 for a full day represents good value.</p> <p>The intention will be to keep the charges low, and focus on collecting the charge efficiently, thus reducing the impact on Blue Badge holders.</p>	

Rurality: Neutral		
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Any other information