

Local Highway Panels Members' Guide

12 Parking Restrictions



1. Introduction

Essex Parking Partnerships

The Parking Partnerships are a council-run organisation which brings together on-street and all council-owned off-street parking services in Essex. The aim is to administer the parking rules to a fair, proportionate and consistent standard in order to provide a service in a reasonable and responsible way.

The service is a partnership between Essex County Council and twelve Borough, City and District councils and is run in two areas; the [North Partnership](#) is led by Colchester Council and the [South Partnership](#) is led by Chelmsford Council.

Each partnership is responsible for its area's on-street Civil Enforcement Officers ("traffic wardens"); the enforcement process together with challenges to, and payments of, parking penalties ("parking fines") plus administration of the parking restrictions ("yellow lines") and the management and maintenance of the scheme.

Legislation required that any operational surplus made from the on street parking service must be used for on highway, traffic management related activities. This surplus is the only funding that the Parking Partnerships have available for the introduction of new on-street restrictions.

2. Typical Problems

'Can we have a sign to stop HGVs?'

'We need an additional junction warning sign'

'We want a toad crossing'

'The developers traffic keeps driving down my road!'

'The road sign is hidden by the hedge'

'I need a sign directing people to my business'

- Requests for parking restrictions can be extremely contentious and can divide communities.
- Displacement parking has to be considered especially if tackling commuter parking issues. Many commuters will walk up to 1 mile to park for free so the wider knock-on implications need to be considered.

- School gate parking issues are for a limited time in the morning and afternoon and are generally term time only.
 - They are created by the parents/guardians who may themselves live within half a mile of the school.
 - They are difficult to enforce and are widely ignored.
- Limited waiting (single yellow line) restrictions are extremely difficult to enforce effectively.
- Footway/verge parking.
 - This is extremely difficult to enforce unless there are yellow line restrictions in place.
 - The issue is often the result of limited off-street parking available to residents and the narrow width of the carriageway within residential areas.
 - Requests for on-street disabled parking bays should be made via the website. Information can be found via the following link [Disabled Parking Bays](#)



3. Things to Consider

Essex Parking Partnerships Schemes

The on-street operational surplus made by the parking partnerships is published annually. Each Partnership has a prioritised list of schemes for new or amended Traffic Regulation Orders (TROs) that it is managing.

In the first instance all requests for parking schemes should be made to the individual Parking Partnerships.

3. Things to Consider continued

Essex Highways Parking Schemes

Essex County Council will only directly implement parking schemes that meet the following criteria:

- They have been identified as necessary to tackle congestion.
- They reduce road traffic casualties in line with the ECC collision Safety Scheme criteria.
- Are funded through developer contributions that have been identified as a requirement for the planning approval of a local development.

LHP Parking Schemes

Schemes that the Parking Partnerships are unable to prioritise can be considered by the LHPs however it is important to be aware of the difficulty in implementing new parking TROs.

- Parked vehicles cause motorists to drive at slower speeds – removing them may result in complaints about speeding.
- Parking restrictions apply to all vehicles equally – restrictions aimed at removing commuters and local employees will apply to residents as well.
- Vehicles are allowed to stop on yellow lines to load/unload and set-down and pick-up passengers.
- In many situations, residents do not have off-street parking nor do they have the space to create any. Restrictions will cause hardship to those residents who will have to park further away carrying heavy shopping or transporting children etc.
- Parking restrictions will generally only displace parked vehicles to the nearest unrestricted piece of road leading to further requests for restrictions. Generally people will park up to 1 mile away from their destination in order to park free of charge.
- Routinely the introduction of new parking TROs will take up to 18 months and can be longer.

Parking on verges

Parking particularly on grass verges can create significant problems. Remedial action to prevent parking on verges needs careful consideration. Any action taken may result in additional unwanted parking in surrounding areas.



Managing parking around schools

Safety and congestion are the main concerns of both parents and residents but it is important to remember that for school gate parking concerns there is no magic wand and additional waiting restrictions are rarely an effective solution.

- Child casualties around schools are thankfully very rare in Essex.
- The congestion slows the traffic and makes serious injury to children less likely.
- It is normally a Term time only issue and only at the beginning and end of the school day.
- Zig-zags have to be signed and backed with a TRO to be enforceable.
- If Zig-zags are enforceable then there is no stopping or dropping off in any circumstances. That includes the parents.
- Double or single yellow line restrictions allow dropping off and picking up and will not resolve the school gate congestion issue.

Parking issues are a common factor affecting those travelling to and from school by any mode. The problems they create can be lessened by many methods, specifically geared to the school and its local environment, and coordinated into a strategic School Travel Plan, owned by the school community, outlining the issues, the demand from pupils, parents and staff, and producing a cohesive package of measures to improve the journeys made. Actions could include infrastructure such as bike and scooter storage on site, pedestrian entrances away from the traffic, agreements with neighbours for cars to park further away from the school and walk from there, and safety education for walkers, scooters and cyclists. For free support and advice to produce their Travel Plan, schools can contact the [Travel Plan Team](#).

Enforceability of Restrictions

The enforceability of restrictions depends on a number of things

- The availability of civil enforcement officers (CEO)
 - There are only a limited number of CEOs and they cannot be everywhere at once. If there is a particular issue that requires enforcement you should contact the Parking Partnerships to discuss your concerns.
- The type of restrictions.
 - Limited waiting restrictions require two separate visits from a CEO. The first identifies the vehicles parked at the time of the visit. A second visit must then be made after the posted time period allowed for parking. Any vehicles still there can be issued with a PCN (parking ticket).

Normally the first visit triggers people to alert each other to remove the vehicles and the second visit rarely finds any people over staying the time limit.
- Local circumstances.
 - Enforcement in some locations can be like scaring pigeons... as soon as the CEO moves off the parkers return. Schools, cash points and food takeaway locations are the most difficult to enforce.

4. Typical Measures

There are two main types of enforceable waiting restrictions, Prohibitive Waiting Restrictions and Permissive Waiting Restrictions.

Prohibitive Waiting Restrictions

Generally, these are indicated by yellow road marking and the times of the control which will be indicated by the accompanying signs (except double yellow lines, which apply 24 hours per day and cannot have supporting signs).



Permissive Waiting Restrictions

These are usually indicated by white parking bays and the times of the control are also indicated on the accompanying signs. The signs will also indicate who can use the parking bay and any limits on its use, such as length of stay or day of use.

Sometimes designated use of the bay can be identified on the carriageway in white lettering, such as 'disabled', 'doctors', 'loading' or 'permit holders only'



- Permissive bays manage the demand for parking
- Encourage turnover of vehicles
- Remove conflicts for parking in areas of high demand
- Provide a turnover of parking in locations such as outside shopping areas
- Overcome problems where residents have little or no available parking

Advisory Parking restrictions

There are some waiting restriction signs that can be installed without a Traffic Regulation Order. These are advisory only and are not enforceable. The restrictions that can be 'advisory only' include residents' disabled parking bays and school keep clear markings. These are not enforceable.

- **Advisory Disabled Parking Bays**
 - An application should be made via the web or by contacting the Contact Centre.
- **School Keep Clear markings (zig zags)**
 - These have been implemented at most schools in the County.

Verge Parking

Bollards and verge marker posts

These are only effective when their need is respected by local residents. Once installed they create a maintenance burden for the County as well as making grass cutting more difficult



Converting Grass Verges to a Hard Surface

It is possible to convert a grass verge to a hard standing surface such as grasscrete, block paving, concrete or bitmac. However, the cost of this is high and totally transforms residential areas encouraging parking, in reality it rarely provides the amount of parking required to meet demand. It also increases the amount of non-permeable surface and can increase the risk of ground water flooding.



5. Scheme Investigation

All parking restrictions must be consulted on. This is a legal requirement and all road users are entitled to comment on proposals and object to them.

The proposed Traffic Regulation Order must be accompanied by a Statement of Reasons which must show that it addresses one or more of the following factors:

- **Safety**
- **Congestion**
- **Environment**

When objections are received, these need to be resolved. This could involve modifying a proposal or, in some cases, abandoning it completely. The outcome of any public consultation can never be accurately predicted and is a lengthy process.

6. Costs and Timescales

The Essex County Council contract with Ringway Jacobs is a target cost contract and not a fixed price contract. This type of contract was chosen as the best type of contract to deliver savings and efficiencies and also to promote partnering between ECC and Ringway Jacobs.

An explanation of the process and indicative costs and timescales can be found in [Appendix 1](#)

7. Glossary of Terms

AVL	Automatic Vehicle Location (similar to RTPI)
CMA	Cabinet Member Action
CMB	Cabinet Member Briefing
EA	Environment Agency
ECC	Essex County Council
EH	Essex Highways
LHP	Local Highways Panel
NEPP	North Essex Parking Partnership
PP	Parking Partnership
RTPI	Real Time Passenger Information
S106	Section 106 (Money provided by a Developer to County Council to implement infrastructure as an obligation of the planning permission)
S278	Section 278 (Infrastructure required to be implemented by the Developer as an obligation of the planning permission)
SERP	Safer Essex Roads Partnership
SID	Speed Indicating Device
SEPP	South Essex Parking Partnership
SLO	Speed Limit Order
SSSI	Site of Special Scientific Interest
TRO	Traffic Regulation Order
TSRGD	Traffic Signs Regulations and General Directions
VAS	Vehicle Activated Sign