

## Resident Questions for Housing Area Panel

<b>Department</b>	Housing
<b>Date question raised</b>	5/07/2022
<b>Date of Area Panel</b>	16/08/2022
<b>Area in city</b>	Central
<b>Star rating applied by residents</b>	2 star – local area issue
<b>Deadline for officer response</b>	25/07/2022
<b>Name of officer responding</b>	Hilary Edgar
<b>Officer job title</b>	Housing Service Operations Manager
<b>Title of Question:</b>	Carparks at Somerset Point, Essex Place and Warwick Mount
<b>Issue:</b> There is extensive abuse of the parking regulations. Poor administration and lack of enforcement has led to a situation where residents who are paying for numbered parking spaces are often not able to use them.	
<b>Background:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Issues around these car parks have been raised many times, over a long period, with Councillors and officers. Central residents are very frustrated by the Council's lack of action and failure to resolve the situation.</li> <li>b) Residents at Somerset Point, Essex Place and Warwick Mount put time and energy into a monitoring process with the Council over a four-month period. There has been no action or improvement following this.</li> <li>c) The regulations for parking are not enforced. The private companies employed to do this are slow to respond and often won't take action. They ask for photographic evidence and residents have been abused and threatened when they do this.</li> <li>d) Clear guidelines about the parking regulations are not easily available and should be widely circulated.</li> <li>e) Visitors' permits are copied and sold with no action taken.</li> <li>f) Visitors' permits are used for extended stays in resident bays.</li> <li>g) There have been no new permits issued since 2016.</li> </ul>	
<b>Action requested by residents:</b> Request a report at Area Panel detailing the action that will be taken to resolve problems with the car parks for blocks of flats.	
<b>Officer Response:</b> Hilary Edgar	
<b>Officer contact details:</b>	Hilary Edgar, Housing Services Operations Manager

Tel: 01273 293250

Email: [hilary.edgar@brighton-hove.gov.uk](mailto:hilary.edgar@brighton-hove.gov.uk)

**Response:**

I am sorry to hear of residents' frustrations with the current parking arrangements at **Essex Place**. I will respond to the specific points, in turn, below.

- a) Issues around these carparks have been raised many times, over a long period, with Councillors and officers. Central residents are very frustrated by the Council's lack of action and failure to resolve the situation.**

Car parks on Housing land are patrolled daily by our parking enforcement contractor, One Parking Solution, (OPS). OPS will issue Parking Charge Notices where they find unauthorised parking in the numbered bays rented to individual licensees. If residents who rent bays find cars using their spaces, they should contact OPS who will attend and ticket the vehicle. OPS can be contacted during business hours by telephone (0330 043 0240) and by text (07500326306) in the evenings and at weekends. During business hours licensees can also contact the Housing Customer Service team on 01273 293030 to get an alternative bay to use while their own is occupied.

This is a general overview of the enforcement arrangements that are in place. I would be happy to attend a residents' association meeting to discuss car parking in Essex Place and the wider area.

- b) Residents at Somerset Point, Essex Place and Warwick Mount put time and energy into a monitoring process with the Council over a four-month period. There has been no action or improvement following this.**

I am sorry to hear this was the case. I believe the bays monitored were for visitor parking. We have a 'three strike' procedure that can lead to the permanent withdrawal of visitors' permits from residents who are found to misuse them. However, it can sometimes take a long time for this to happen due to gaps between instances of misuse.

Misuse of visitor bays should be reported to the Housing Customer Service team, giving details of where the bay is, the vehicle registration and the number on the permit which the vehicle is displaying (this is important, as each permit is linked to a specific resident's address and will let us know if misuse is happening repeatedly).

- c) The regulations for parking are not enforced. The private companies employed to do this are slow to respond and often won't take action. They ask for photographic evidence and residents have been abused and threatened when they do this.**

OPS should attend when called and if this is not the case, can residents please let the Housing Customer Service team know when this happens.

Although OPS are required to patrol each site once per day, in practice, particularly in the town centre car parks, they attend several times a day.

OPS have confirmed that between 19<sup>th</sup> July 2021 and 18<sup>th</sup> July 2022 they issued a total of 140 Parking Charge Notices and made regular patrols of the car park. I can confirm that they do not require any photographic evidence to be provided by residents in order to carry out enforcement.

To investigate and prove visitor permit misuse, the Housing Customer Service team asks for the information in b) above. Some residents provide this by sending in photos, however this is not needed for the team to act on the information provided and we do not want anybody to put themselves at risk by doing this.

**d) Clear guidelines about the parking regulations are not easily available and should be widely circulated.**

There is information about the enforcement scheme displayed in each car park. In terms of visitor bay parking, information about this was circulated to residents yearly, with new visitor permits. Please see point g) below for plans to reissue these.

**e) Visitors' permits are copied and sold with no action taken.**

If Housing Customer Services are informed about these cases and misuse is proven, these permits will be permanently rescinded.

**f) Visitors' permits are used for extended stays in resident bays.**

The Housing Customer Service team will investigate every report of overuse and discuss these with the resident who has issued the visitor permit.

In a small number of cases, if there are personal sensitivities that a resident has made us aware of where they need to have visitor park more often, we would allow this. However, we would still ensure these arrangements do not lead to unreasonable usage.

**g) There have been no new permits issued since 2016.**

This is the case. We held back on reissuing permits as we want to move to digital permits for visitor parking, where bays can be booked for specific periods of time and misuse dealt with without relying so heavily on residents' reports. However, given the length of time since the permits were last issued, we will reissue them this year while we continue to work on a new visitor parking system. Information on how to use them will be given to residents at the same time. Reissue of visitor parking permits for Essex Place car park.

**Specific Action:**

**Action:** As above.

**Timeline: 2022**

**Start date:** N/A

**End date:** N/A