

Car park management plan

This toolkit sets out the potential benefits to your organisation of a Car Park Management Plan (CPMP), the stages of implementation, what to expect during the process, and a case study of an organisation which currently operates a CPMP.

Why implement a Car Park Management Plan (CPMP)?

A CPMP can be an integral part of encouraging sustainable travel and ensuring the best use is made of available car parking spaces at your organisation. For most businesses, this involves weighing up the parking needs of the organisation, workforce and visitors or customers against the availability and cost of parking spaces at your disposal.

Do I need a Car Park Management Plan?

If your organisation is struggling to accommodate all the vehicles brought on site by staff, visitors or customers, then a CPMP should be an essential part of your business strategy. Businesses typically react to car parking pressure by looking at how to increase spaces, but this is not always possible and may only delay the problem rather than resolve it. Even if your organisation has no specific issues with parking availability, it can be a good way to put land to better use or to encourage staff to travel more sustainably.

Benefits

There are several benefits associated with implementing a CPMP:

- **Improve business efficiency:** your organisation will benefit by ensuring there are spaces available for visitors, customers and suppliers, and ensuring that those who need their vehicle can find somewhere to park
- **Reduce your overheads:** for the cost of a single parking space typically start from £400 per year
- **Maximise land values:** car parking spaces might be worth more if the space is used differently
- **Raise revenue:** charging for parking generates money that can be spent on improving sustainable travel facilities and offering greater travel choices
- **Prioritise essential users:** with more flexibility, you can offer reserved spaces for those who need them or as an incentive for sustainable travel – car sharers, pool cars, fleet vehicles etc.

Implementation

Stage 1: Setting up a working group

The first stage of the process is to set up a working group; this should include senior management, facilities management, HR and someone to represent the staff such as union contacts or staff representatives. The group should all clearly understand the reasons for introducing the CPMP and agree to work together towards identifying realistic solutions for the organisation.

Stage 2: Data analysis

The second stage of implementing a CPMP is to understand the parking needs of the organisation. The following questions can offer a starting point:

Business activity:

- What industrial sector(s) does your company work in?
- How many people do you employ?
- What shift patterns/hours do they work?

- › Do clients and suppliers visit on a regular basis?
- › Do you pay staff to drive on business?
- › Are staff required to bring their car to work?
- › Is the car park used solely for staff parking or are there other uses (e.g. deliveries)?
- › Does the car parking at your disposal match your business activities?
- › What fleet vehicles do you own / lease?
- › Do you have a contract with a vehicle hire company?
- › Do you have any pool vehicles available for business use?

Availability and quality of car parking:

- › How do staff usually travel to work?
- › How far do staff need to travel to work?
- › How is the current provision of parking – Too low? About right? More than enough?
- › What is the general condition of your car parking facility?
- › Is the car park well lit?
- › Are there good pedestrian footpaths through it?
- › Do you share your car park?
- › How do you allocate spaces to your staff?
- › Do you have parking for cars, bicycles and motorcycles?
- › Are there existing access controls (e.g. barriers/permits) in place?

Costs and constraints of car parking:

- › What is the tenure of your car park? Do you own it? Lease it?
- › How much does your car park cost the business each year? (e.g maintenance costs, lease costs)
- › Are you currently seeking additional parking spaces? What will these cost you?
- › Are you thinking about relocating to larger premises with more car parking?
- › What are your business mileage rates for staff? (Generous rates can encourage staff to drive unnecessarily).
- › What policies do you operate relating to staff travel? (E.g. for distances over 100 miles, pool vehicles or hire cars must be used in place of private cars).

Stage 3: Review of CPMP options

The third stage is to identify what types of systems may be suitable for your organisation and the work undertaken at stage two should inform the decision making process. There are various ways of managing your car park:

- › **Needs based parking permit systems** assign guaranteed parking spaces to those with mobility difficulties and those who car share. The remaining spaces are then allocated on a needs basis, often taking into account distance from work, the availability of alternative travel options, caring responsibilities and, in some organisations, length of service.

(For example: EDF Energy Exeter operate a needs based parking permit system.)

- › **Daily parking charges** make staff think about how they travel to work. Charging makes alternative modes more attractive, and the money collected can also be ring fenced and spent on travel planning measures such as improving facilities, offering discounts on public transport, guaranteed ride home policy, or providing incentives for those that travel sustainably. See the '[guaranteed ride home' toolkit](#) for more information about this.

(For example: Devon County Council's County Hall and University of Exeter operate this system.)

- Introducing a **distance based parking ban** which prevents staff who live within a set distance of the workplace from parking in the car park, which can free up spaces for those that have a longer commute. Dispensations are made for those with mobility difficulties and typically for those that car share.
- **Compulsory car free days** can relieve the pressure on parking and one car free day every five working days reduces the number of vehicles on site each day by around 20%.

(For example: Devon County Council's County Hall operates this system.)

- **Car share only bays** encourage staff to car share by guaranteeing a parking space and raising the profile of car sharing within the organisation. Increasing the number of staff who car share can reduce the pressure on existing car parking spaces.

(For example: Met Office, Exeter operate this system.)

Management options should be worked into a draft strategy that clearly sets out why the CPMP is being implemented, and what the expected benefits are for the organisation and those who use the car park.

Stage 4: Consultation

The fourth stage is to undertake a period consultation with staff to provide an opportunity for them to have their say on the draft strategy. This point of the process isn't about staff voting yes or no to implementing a CPMP – this decision is formed by the previous stages (forming a working group with staff representatives, identifying the need for the organisation and developing a suitable plan of action). It should, however, provide staff with the option to voice any thoughts and concerns, which should be taken into consideration and can help identify how staff could be helped during the implementation period

Stage 5: Finalising your CPMP

The findings of the consultation should guide the decision making regarding what initiatives should be implemented. A document should be produced which sets out the objectives, proposed measures, anticipated timescales for delivering the work and the predicted outcomes. If you plan to introduce car parking charges, ensure you have a clear plan for what the money will be spent on – e.g. investing in sustainable travel facilities. It is also important that the document communicates why the CPMP is being implemented and what the expected benefits are for the organisation and those who use the car park.

Stage 6: Implementation

It is time to implement the plan! Implementation is typically undertaken by facilities management. A member of staff should be given the responsibility to manage delivery and monitor the plan, as well as being available to respond to questions or concerns raised by staff. The plan should be implemented sensitively, and often a phased implementation can assist with the adjustment period.

Stage 7: Monitoring

The hard bit is over – now you just need to monitor the impact of your CPMP. Plan to review car parking usage at regular intervals to be able to evaluate the effectiveness of the measures implemented. This is also a good opportunity to feedback to staff and highlight the benefits to the company and to staff.

What to Expect

Car park management can often be the most controversial element of travel planning; it should therefore be applied sensitively. The implementation of measures that either restrict or charge staff for parking is generally contentious, even in situations where parking is particularly difficult and stressful. Whilst introducing the strategy to staff is a difficult process, implementation is usually much smoother comparison.

Further information and support

Want to encourage smarter travel to work at your workplace? Devon County Council can offer support* to organisations who want to enable their staff to travel more sustainably and actively. Please get in touch via traveldevon@devon.gov.uk for more information.

*Support offered will depend on availability of funding and engagement and commitment of your workplace.

This page was last updated February 2023.

TRAVELDEVON
Travel toolkit for businesses

traveldevon@devon.gov.uk