

## **Tarporley High Street Business Parking Survey 2017/18**

### **Background and Survey Summary**

Tarporley is a key rural service centre and has witnessed substantial growth in its economy, its businesses and housing. Since 2010 the village has already experienced a 25% increase in housing, with more to come. Surrounding towns and villages in the Tarporley catchment area have also experienced rapid housing growth. Lack of adequate parking facilities has been a problem for businesses for many years - even before this recent growth - and, apart from modest adjustments to existing car parks, no new car parks have been built for decades.

Workers, commuters, residents and shoppers desperately need substantially increased car parking capacity that will not only enable existing businesses to survive but also allow the village to thrive. Car parks and street parking are full to overflowing and a survey of the businesses shows why. Just 68% of Tarporley High Street businesses have employees requiring up to 70% of the public car parking spaces, with other employees and the vast majority of customers having to fight for the remainder. This is a truly shocking statistic that warrants urgent action.

Furthermore, Tarporley has a growing reputation in the surrounding area as a place where it is difficult to park, and many customers have stopped coming to Tarporley because of the lack of car parking spaces.

Only since the adoption of the Tarporley Neighbourhood Plan in 2016 have developers started to come forward with proposals that include significant new car park infrastructure but, as yet, none of these have been submitted for Planning Approval.

Tarporley Parish Council carried out a High Street Business Parking Survey from October 2017 through to June 2018.

Based on the results of this survey and considering car park utilisation and latent customer demand, Tarporley Parish Council consider that there is a requirement for at least an additional 265 public car parking spaces near the centre of the village to cater for daily peak demand.

Substantial extra capacity is urgently required as a first step. Following this, a strategy can be put in place that utilises time-limited parking and/or charges to optimise car park utilisation for residents and shoppers. Additional longer stay capacity for employees and commuters is also required.

## Survey Results

Invitations to complete the Tarporley Parish Council High Street Business Parking Survey were hand delivered to 78 businesses along and around the High Street from Burton Square to the Tarporley Business Centre on Nantwich Road. Responses were received from October 2017 through to June 2018 using Survey Monkey.

High Street businesses held a meeting in the Swan Hotel on 14th November 2017 to discuss a number of matters and the Parish Council Chairman was given the opportunity to speak about the importance of the parking survey and the need for a good response rate. Further encouragement to complete the survey followed through into 2018 and by June 2018 a total of 53 respondents had completed it – a 68% response rate. The Survey Monkey survey questionnaire took an average of just under 12 minutes to complete.

### Survey Respondents - 53

Retail:	24
Pub, bar, restaurant, hotel or café:	10
Estate Agents:	4
Hairdresser, nails, beauty, health or fitness:	7
Financial services, accountants or solicitors:	2
Other:	12

These add up to more than the total number of respondents because some businesses/premises identify as multiple business types.

### Employee Parking Need

The survey asked businesses about the number of parking spaces they own, how they are allocated and about the typical number and peak number of employees they have on their premises. Here are the results for the 53 respondents:

- Dedicated business owned employee car parking spaces: 83
- NORMAL number of employees who drive their car to work and park in Tarporley: 222
- PEAK number of employees who drive their car to work and park in Tarporley: 276

**Therefore, taking the normal and peak figures less the existing dedicated spaces, the number of public parking spaces needed for the respondent's employees is between 139 and 193 - on public car parks or on-street parking.**

This number may significantly understate the situation, as around 25 businesses did not respond to the survey.

## Customer Parking Need

The survey asked businesses about the number of parking spaces they own, how they are allocated and about the typical number and peak number of customers they have on their premises at any one time. Here are the results for daytime parking for the 53 respondents.

- Dedicated business owned customer car parking spaces: 77
- NORMAL number of daytime customers: 378
- PEAK number of daytime customers: 610

**If only half of customers drive their car to the High Street, the number of customer public parking spaces needed is between 112 and 228 - on public car parks or on-street parking.**

Again, this number may significantly understate the situation as around 25 businesses did not respond to the survey.

In addition, it does not count the number of customers lost to Tarporley because they believe or have previously found that they cannot find a parking space. Based on anecdotal evidence from business owners the Parish Council estimate that this could conservatively account for 20% of driving customers, which if attracted back to the village would make many struggling High Street businesses more viable.

## Total Employee Plus Customer Public Parking Need

Combining the respondents' requirements for employee and customer public parking spaces above, and factoring in the estimated loss in footfall caused as a result of the current lack of adequate parking facilities gives the following totals:

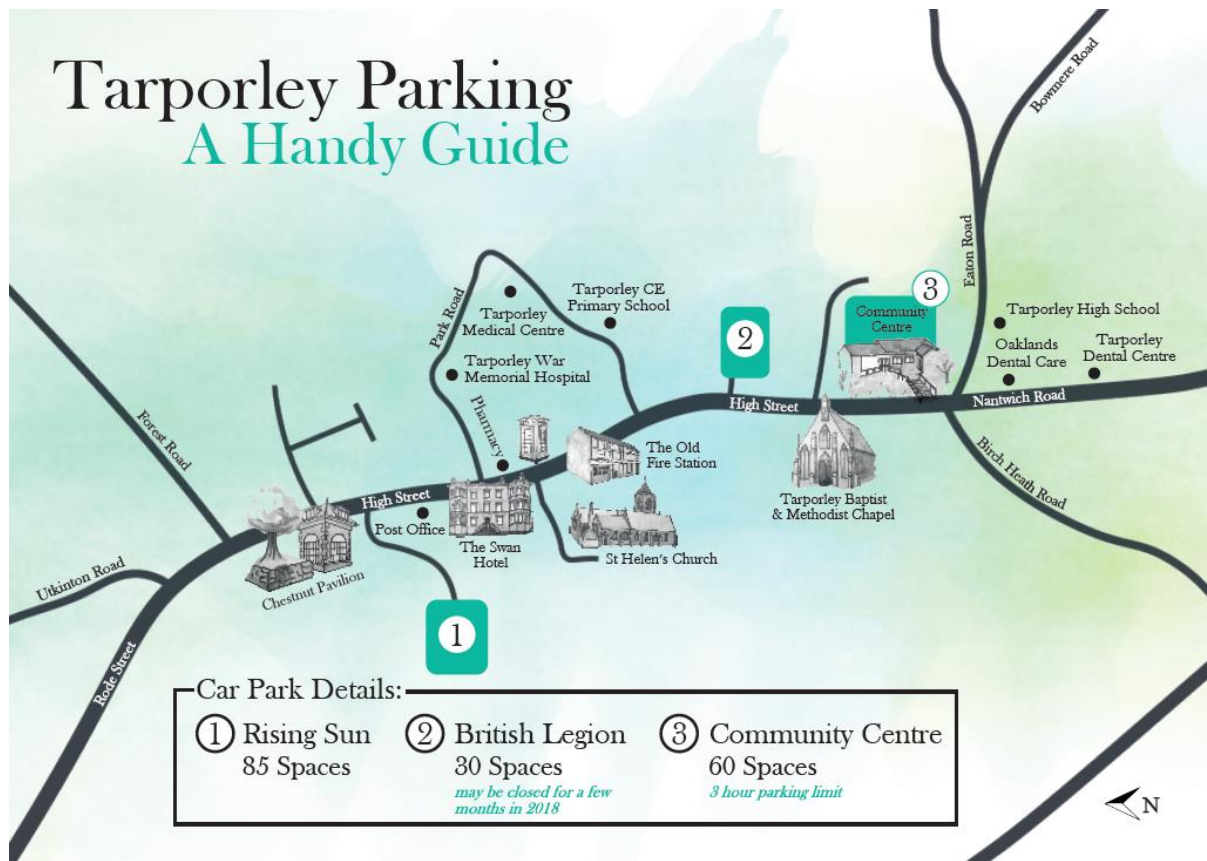
	Public Parking Spaces Needed	
	NORMAL	PEAK
<b>Business Employees</b>	139	193
<b>Business Customers</b>	112	228
<b>+ 20% of driving customers</b>	38	61
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>289</b>	<b>482</b>

*Table 1: Public Parking Spaces Required on or Adjacent to Tarporley High Street*

Again, this number may significantly understate the situation, as around 25 businesses did not respond to the survey, including some with significant footfall.

## Existing Public Car Parking Spaces

Shown below is the public parking guide produced by Tarporley Parish Council for businesses to hand to customers to make them aware of available off-street parking in Tarporley.



Tarporley currently has the following:

- Public car park behind The Rising Sun – 85 spaces
- Community Centre car park – 60 spaces
- New car park on the old British Legion site – 32 spaces
- High Street from Burton Square to The Spar – 100 spaces

There are a total of 277 public car parking spaces along the High Street, however not all of these are available to High Street business employees and customers, as parking capacity is also utilised by the following:

- Residents who live on the High Street and their visitors
- People attending the many activities held in Tarporley Community Centre
- Those attending church services, events and activities
- People pursuing sporting activities, such as using the Tennis Club (located behind the High Street), and those using Tarporley as a base for walking and cycling
- People commuting to Chester by bus
- Parents dropping-off and picking-up from the schools

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From observation, surveys and anecdotal evidence from residents and business owners, the Parish Council conservatively estimates the following reductions in parking capacity available to employees and customers as a result of these activities:

Parking Area	Maximum Capacity	Estimated Available Spaces for Business Employees & Customers	Reason for Reduction	Notes /Comments
Car Park Behind Rising Sun	85 Spaces	65 Spaces	Commuter Parking & Non-customers (20)	
Tarpoley Community Centre Car Park	60 Spaces	30 Spaces	Community Centre activities	3-hour time limited. Not favoured by customers due to time limit and distance to village centre.
New Car Park on Royal British Legion Site	32 Spaces	32 Spaces		Currently closed, new 32 space car park due to open early 2019 replacing old 30 space RBL car park.
High Street (Burton Square to Nantwich Road)	100 Spaces	90 Spaces	Day time resident parking	
<b>TOTAL</b>	277 Spaces	<b>217 Spaces</b>		

*Table 2: Public Car Parking Spaces Available on or Adjacent to Tarpoley High Street*

## Additional Public Car Parking Space Requirement

Comparing the total employee and customer public car parking space requirement in Table 1 with the available spaces in Table 2 the following conclusion is drawn:

**Based on the results for the 53 businesses who completed the survey and the assumptions described above there is a demonstrable need for an additional minimum of 265 public car parking spaces near the centre of the village to cater for daytime peak periods and a minimum of 72 spaces just to cover normal daytime periods.**

Please note again that these numbers may significantly understate the situation:

- 25 businesses did not respond to the survey, including some with significant footfall
- This assumes 100% utilisation of spaces
- No allowance has been made for school drop-off and pick-up parking, funerals, weddings, etc.
- We have been deliberately conservative in our assumptions

## Other Findings of the Survey

There are several additional notable results from the 53 businesses who completed the survey:

- On average, 77% of the respondent's customers complain about car parking facilities in Tarporley.
- On average, 70% of the respondent's employees complain about car parking facilities in Tarporley.
- 71% of the respondent businesses said they would not agree to Tarporley becoming a Business Improvement District.
- Various responses were received to the question "Do you have any other suggestions for improving the car parking situation in Tarporley?" but nothing that the Parish Council have not already considered.

Please note that the Privacy Statement in the survey included: "The Parish Council will not pass your contact details nor individual responses on to any other organisation or individual. The results of this survey will be compiled, summarised, used and published in such a way that individual respondents and businesses are not identified." This was to ensure that businesses felt free to give full and frank responses.

For the following statements, where 0 = Strongly Disagree, 50 = Not Sure and 100 = Strongly Agree, the average response scores were:

- "Parking on the High Street and in village centre car parks should be time limited so that they are available for customers of Tarporley businesses rather than as an all-day employee car park or park and ride for Chester."  
Scored 57
- "My business would be prepared to buy season tickets for employee car parking spaces in new car parks in or around Tarporley to relieve the pressure on village centre car parks."  
Scored 40
- "My business would be prepared to contribute to the cost of a new "green" car park if land could be identified for one. (A "green car park" would be land temporarily designated for parking with a removable parking base.)  
Scored 37
- "My business would support a "Park On My Drive" scheme in Tarporley and would be prepared to pay for employees to use such a scheme. (A "Park On My Drive" scheme is where people with a spare parking space on their drive space rent out a parking space for a fee - perhaps while they are at work during the day, away from Tarporley.)  
Scored 26
- "Businesses should not have to provide additional funding for new car parks. We pay enough Business Rates already and CWAC Council should ensure that there are sufficient car parking spaces to support business growth in Tarporley."  
Scored 86

Other issues raised:

- High business rates are putting a huge pressure on small businesses.
- Tarporley is poorly served by public transport.
- People driving to the High Street from within Tarporley when they could walk.
- Through traffic not using the by-pass.