

**CABINET 14 December 2022
PUBLIC QUESTIONS**

Question from:	St Mary's Street Committee
Subject:	Permit Scheme
Portfolio Holder:	Richard Marshall

Cabinet may be aware that a second stage informal consultation is now underway for 14 proposed new and revised residents parking schemes in Bridgnorth in accordance with our on street residents parking strategy approved by Cabinet in 2018. These proposals include a proposed scheme combining on street parking concessions for both Listley Street and St Mary's Street. Face to face consultation sessions for schemes within both the Bridgnorth West and Tasley Division were held on Monday 5 December and Tuesday 6 December, and for scheme proposals within the Bridgnorth East and Astley Abbots Division on Monday 12 December and Tuesday 13 December.

- 1. Please will the council explain exactly how the removal of around 15 cars (those with 2 permits St Marys St) and an increase of potentially 51 cars (Listley St) will 'reduce congestion and pollution' when 100s of visitors also continue to drive up St Mary's Street to access free parking on the High Street?**

If as part of the proposals for the residents parking scheme, the current 40 minute waiting without a permit is removed thus making parking on St Mary's Street residents permit parking only this will alleviate provision of short term shopper/ visitor parking on the street.

Due to the current absence of on-street parking concessions for Listley Street residents, they are currently forced to use the parking provision on High Street either short term during the hours of restriction or long term out of hours. If minimal concessions for the Listley Street residents to park are provided this will release parking on High Street for visitors.

- 2. Please will the council explain why the availability of Listley Street North and South have not been considered simultaneously as part of this consultation to save the council money and in the interests of fairness, given the precedent which has been established in Shrewsbury ie residents in Shrewsbury town have access to bands 3, 4 and 5 car parks?**

The Listley Street North and South car parks are classified as a band 3 car park under the Councils parking strategy meaning that there is high demand usage by visitors and shoppers at peak times demand already exceeds supply.

There are no **on-street** parking concessions for residents in Shrewsbury with all available on street space being allocated either to disabled parking, loading provision or pay and display, for this reason the policy allows for residents parking concessions in St Julian's Friars car park, a band 3 car park within the Shrewsbury river loop. Concessions for residents are also allocated in Shrewsbury within Frankwell car park band 4 and Abbey Foregate carpark band 5, however both of these car parks are located outside of the Shrewsbury river loop. The Innage lane car park in Bridgnorth is a band 6 carpark as is Severn Street and offers the equivalent concessions for residents as Shrewsbury and across the county.

3. Please will the council explain why they are asking residents of St Mary's Street to give up their parking spaces to Listley Street residents?

St Marys Street is public highway, intended for pass and repass, however Shropshire Council as traffic authority is able to offer concessions for residents to park. The proposal will still allow residents to apply for one permit to enable them to park on the highway in close proximity to their home along with an additional 200 hours per annum allocation of on-street parking for their visitors. The council is also proposing to introduce additional residents parking spaces on Listley Street.

4. Please will the council explain why this decision is being made by 2 Cllrs and not through an open and democratic process of Committee

No decision has yet been made, we are currently undertaking a second round of informal consultation to obtain stakeholder feedback. Both residents and Councillors opinions are being taken into account, before any proposals are taken forward to formal consultation. In the event that any substantive comments are received following formal consultation these will be addressed by presentation of a report to Cabinet requesting a decision as to whether to proceed.

5. Please will the council explain why the scheme for St Mary's Street cannot be restricted to St Mary's St residents ONLY as requested in May 22 prior to the consultation by The Residents' Association?

The more streets that are included in an on-street residents parking scheme the greater the flexibility and ability for residents to find a space to park. The officer recommendations for revised schemes in Bridgnorth was originally for only 2 large schemes one for High town, one for Low town (Shropshire already operates 2 large schemes across the town in Ludlow, this approach works very well). At the request of resident association representatives during initial discussions in 2018 the scheme proposals were broken down into smaller entities. The combination of Listley Street and St Mary's Street will give

flexibility for residents to park on the respective other street should space not be available in their street.

6. **Please will the council fully explain the reasons why Listley Street cannot have its own parking scheme for its own residents?** (the changing of one scheme costs the same as introducing another scheme)

Please refer to responses 4 & 5 above.

Question from:	David Kilby
Subject:	River Safety
Portfolio Holder:	Dean Carroll

At present there are 10 access points along the stretch of the river, between the Greyfriars Bridge and the Weir, 6 access points have gates that can be closed during times of high river levels, four do not, meaning that when in flood a pedestrian can access the towpath at the Victoria street access point and then walk through partially flooded footpaths all the way to the Greyfriars bridge, where they are then confronted with a closed gate, requiring them to either return along the partially flooded footpath they have just trodden or climb over the gate.

Does the committee agree with Shropshire Playing Fields Association that the River Severn safety Review report has failed to fully discuss the important role **gating or lack of gating has** to play in helping to prevent future tragedies occurring along the towpath between this stretch of the river between the Greyfriars bridge in Coleham and the Weir in Castlefields?

Should more consideration be given to:

- i. Installing gates at Waters Lane
- ii. Installing a gate from Victoria Street leading down to the river.
- iii. Install a gate along the footpath near Castle Walk Bridge.

You will note our correspondence on this matter of the 5th October 2012 with Tim Sneddon Environmental Maintenance Manager at Shropshire Council, the coroner John Ellery 28th February 2015, at a full Shropshire Council Meeting in December 2015, public question, and again in 2018 via telephone and 2019 in writing to Ian Walshaw Highways Manager at the time.

The River Severn Safety Review has been undertaken to determine what the most significant risk factors for people coming to harm in the river may be, and to consider what mitigation measures may realistically and practically reduce this risk.

The report notes that identifying the reasons and exact locations where casualties entered the water has been difficult to ascertain because for most cases the casualty was unaccompanied. However, based on the findings from all cases and discussion with relevant partners, the common themes identified are:

- Drugs/ alcohol and concerns about spiking
- Scarcity of late-night transport leading to the use of unsafe routes to walk home
- Use of the river as a place to urinate at night-time
- The difficulty of getting out of the river after falling in if alone and unaided
- Concerns about the use of the river for leisure swimming
- Observations of people 'tombstoning' from Kingsland Bridge and Porthill Bridge

Whilst the risks of the river during times of flood are noted in the report, this has not been found to be as significant a risk factor in the cases reviewed as those themes reference above. This may be due to greater awareness of danger during times of flood, the gating of some sections of the river paths, and the wide sharing of flood risk messages at times of flood. A fatality in December 2014 attributed to flooding is the only case where this was noted by the Coroner.

The Cabinet report recommendation is for the establishment of a Water Safety Action Group to work through the recommendations set out in the report and seek their implementation with the support of a range of key partners. These recommendations have been arrived at as the most likely means of increasing resident safety around the river in Shrewsbury.

However, I will be pleased to forward your suggestion on to the Group when established, for its further consideration.