

Measure title : Experience of parking management at 11 UK workplaces
Country: UK
City: Various

A1 Objectives

This case is actually a number of cases from large UK workplaces that implemented parking management. The objective was to show how they did so and the impacts that resulted.

A2 Description

The case study is based on empirical research (surveys and interviews) carried out at 11 UK workplaces that already charge staff to park and it considers the process that was adopted to implement the charge; the barriers faced; the schemes ultimately implemented; and their effects.

B Costs and who paid them

In all cases the implementation costs of parking management on site were paid by the organisations themselves using existing resources. The parking charges introduced then generated an income stream that in the main was used to cover operating costs and to improve the quality and security of the car parks and associated traffic management, although in some cases also to fund alternative transport. In a few cases, the costs of on-street parking management around the site were paid by the local authority (municipality).

C Project objectives, indicators, data and impact/results

All the cases reviewed had a problem with parking, and paid parking at their site(s) was introduced in order to solve this problem. Typical problems were a shortage of parking for certain user groups, and congestion and safety problems on site caused by too many vehicles looking for a parking space, and/or vehicles parked inconsiderately. In terms of the actual impacts of the measures after implementation, very few measured changes in travel patterns. Their main concern was whether their problem had been solved. The table below summarises which organisations did what. The cases date from 2002-2004 so the costs and charges should be considered in the light of this.

The term “big bang” implementation in the table refers to the parking management scheme being introduced in one go, within a very short period. Whilst the implementation period may have been short, this was in many cases preceded by a long period of planning and consultation. It can also be seen that, in a minority of cases, schemes were modified after implementation. The term “overspill” refers to parking that shifts from the site before charges are introduced to streets around the site once charging starts.

Case study summaries

Years in place	Reasons	Speed of introduction	Length of intro	Install. Costs	Staff charge	Visitor charge	Income related charge	Exemptions?	Part of wider TP?	Modifications?	Overspill?	Use of funds?
4	n/k	Big bang	1 yr	Low	£16/mth	n/a	FT/PT	Disabled	N	Y	Slight	n/k
10	Congestion on site	Incremental	1 yr	n/k	40p/day	60p/hr		Disabled; vols.	Y	Y	Y	Parking; TP
6	Congestion on site	Big bang	6 mths	n/k	£55/yr	£1/hr	FT/PT	Disabled; vols.	Y	Y	YY	Parking; TP
6	Congestion on site	Big bang	1 yr	n/k	60p/day	60p/hr	N	Disabled; vols.	Y	N	YY	Parking; patients
3	Lack of parking	Big bang	1 yr	n/k	£135/yr	£2/day	N	Disabled	N	N	Slight	Parking; security
2	Lack of parking; planning	Incremental	1 yr	£300k	70p/day	70p/day	Y	Disabled	N	Y	YY	Parking; security
N/k	Parking congestion	Big bang	18 months	N/k	50p/day	50p/day	N	Cleaners	N	N	N	Parking; security
0.15	Lack of parking; planning	Big bang	2 yrs	£160k	£1.50/day	£1.50/day	N	Disabled; car-sharers; essential users	Y	N	YY	Parking; TP
3	"Wild" parking	Big bang	18 mths	£280k	£80/yr	n/a	N	Disabled	N	N	N	Parking; security
3	Raise funds	Big bang	1 yr	£300k	£80/yr	£1/day	Y	Disabled; vols	N	N	N	Parking; patients
5	Congestion on site; lack of parking	Big bang	2 yrs	Significant	£6 - £30 per month	£2/day	Y	Disabled	Y	Poss.	YY	TP; Parking; security

N/k = not known

Vols. = volunteers

TP = travel plan

D Implementation process

Some respondents said that they had extremely lengthy consultation and a parking charge took several years to implement. Others managed it in little over 9 months but the average appears to have been two years. Grampian NHS Trust was not unusual when it commented that its consultation process was “Very lengthy and complex. Charges were discussed and agreed through a strategy group which included representatives from all interested parties on site, including patient/public representatives (via the Local Health Council).”

Consultation took different forms most notably: surveys, consultation meetings, focus groups and in the case of certain respondents, formal negotiations with Unions. All interviewees stressed the importance of consultation to the process but also recognised that it would not resolve all opposition before the scheme was implemented.

Whilst two sites introduced their charges incrementally (one from a very low rate of 20p per day initially¹), the majority had implemented charges in one go. This did not mean that charges could not rise further. Robert Gordon University, for example, notes explicitly in its guidance to staff on parking charging that it reserves the right to increase charges. In some cases, charges were introduced at different times at different sites, or for different car parks, but at the same level of charge as in other areas.

As noted above, in the majority of the case studies, the parking charge was introduced in response to a problem, where there had been no parking charge before. Thus any introduction of charges and major re-organisation of parking management was likely to be perceived as a “big bang” approach; but it can also be argued that a non-incremental approach was necessary to solve major parking and congestion problems. Nonetheless, several respondents made the point that they were likely to increase parking charges further.

Key lessons that can be drawn from the implementation process were as follows:

- Manage consultation meetings must be carefully managed.
- Good communication at the planning, implementation and operational stages is crucial.
- Those implementing the charge should be ready for opposition and have prepared counter arguments to key objections.
- Staff should be treated equally with regard to having to pay for parking.
- Working in partnership with the local authority can help to avoid difficulties, such as parking overspill, before they arise.
- Use common sense not least in terms of not trying to achieve too much in the first instance since it will cause a “knee-jerk reaction” and you need to make sure you get the support of the staff. This may involve a charge in the first instance which is not too much of a disincentive so as to get the principle of a charge in place and then you “can look at the rates”.
- Having clear and transparent criteria for issuing permits is crucial.
- Implementation and acceptance can be eased by selling the benefits such as “you are going to get CCTV and ...” and “we found that since we introduced a parking charge car theft has reduced by 75 per cent and frequently publicise that car crime has gone down”.
- Accept that the parking charge may not be a deterrent to car use.

¹ It was stated that “if we’d introduced 40 pence and 50 pence to start with it would have created some difficulty”.

- Being open and transparent about the purpose of charging, how it will be implemented, and how its impact will be monitored – treat it as a “major change initiative”.
- Offering alternatives to driving to work and paying the charge.

D2 Barriers

The main barrier to the implementation of charging was opposition from staff, as might be expected. This opposition was never fully overcome – there has to be an acceptance that some staff will always remain opposed to the idea of paying for parking that was previously free to use – but it was much reduced by the following means:

- Widespread and sometimes lengthy (over years) consultation with staff and unions.
- Making the scheme simple to understand and use.
- Use of the money raised to fund improvements in the quality of remaining parking.
- Making everyone eligible pay, with no exemptions for example for senior staff, and in some cases by making charges related to income, so that staff on higher pay paid a higher charge.
- Allowing greater access to parking for those with less good alternatives to driving – those living away from good public transport, and/or those with caring responsibilities, for example.
- Publicising good news stories, for example about the reduction on on-site car crime after the introduction of charges.

In addition, it was obvious from all cases that opposition to the scheme reduced to a low level after it was introduced, once people became used to it and could also see that it reduced on-site congestion and made it easier to find a parking space.

D3 Drivers

The main driving factor was the severity of the parking-related problem on the site. This was so severe that not charging was not an option. Secondary drivers were the management support for parking charging that was observed at each site (however, this was a product of the severity of the problem); and the dedicated site management staff who were in most cases key actors in designing and implementing the scheme. Had they been less skilled or perseverant in the face of considerable staff opposition, the scheme would have had few chances of successful implementation.

This case study is based on and in some cases uses text from the following paper. The case study is written by Tom Rye, one of the paper's authors.

Rye T and Ison S (2005) Overcoming Barriers to the Implementation of Car Parking Charges at UK Workplaces, Transport Policy, Vol 12, 2005 pp. 57–64.