

THE DOWNS COMMITTEE

Clifton and Durdham Downs (Bristol) Act 1861

Report of the Parking Task and Finish Group

15 January 2024

1. Parking on roads

The Parking T and F Group suggests that the Downs Committee's principal aims with regard to parking on roads should be to stop daily commuter parking, long term car parking (e.g., by Bristol University students) and van dweller parking on Downs so as to facilitate short stay parking for visitation by Downs users, which should be free for a reasonable period, say 3 hours. The Parking T and F Group also notes that van dweller parking reduces amenity for Downs users and materially increases Downs management expenses because of the cost of additional year-round refuse management.

2. The Parking T and F Group acknowledges that the Downs Committee has no power over the Downs roads so recommends that the Downs Committee resolves to ask the Council to apply and enforce a 3-hour parking limit. This need not involve payment for parking.

3. The Parking T and F Group also suggests that the Downs Committee consider resolving to pursue a long-term aspiration to close Circular Road to vehicles, other than emergency vehicles and those transporting people with disabilities and school parties, to improve the general amenity of all Downs users.

4. The Zoo North Car Park

The Parking T and F Group recommends that the North Car Park be retained in the long-term as a car park for Downs visitation in accordance with the terms of the Court Order which settled Mrs Carter's litigation. Such parking provision will be vital once the Downs Wildlife Hub, to be delivered as part of the redevelopment of the Zoo, is operational. In the meantime, it will support general Downs visitation, including school parties, and the Downs and Avon Gorge Wildlife Project, and provide useful income for the Downs.

5. The Council have indicated that they are not interested in managing the North Car Park, and in any event if they did, they would not be permitted to hypothecate income to the Downs Committee, so the Parking T and F Group recommends the implementation of a management agreement with a commercial operator. Such an arrangement would normally see the operator covering the capital costs of ANPR equipment, dealing with enforcement, and paying the Downs Committee a percentage of parking revenues.
6. If the Downs Committee resolves to implement this recommendation the Parking T and F Group suggests that the Finance and Events sub-committee be tasked with negotiating and concluding such an agreement.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. To ask the Council to apply and enforce a 3-hour parking limit on the roads around and within the Downs
2. To pursue a long-term aspiration to close Circular Road to vehicles, other than emergency vehicles and those transporting people with disabilities and school parties, to improve the general amenity of all Downs users
3. That the North Car Park be retained in the long-term as a car park for Downs visitation in accordance with the terms of the Court Order which settled Mrs Carter's litigation
4. To task the Finance and Events sub-committee with negotiating and concluding a management agreement with a commercial operator for the period until the Downs Wildlife Hub is operational.