

Pay on Foot at Avenue de Chartres Car Park - Consultation 2016

Introduction

In January 2015, the Chichester District Council Parking Services Team introduced a Pay on Foot system at the Avenue de Chartres Multi-storey car park. The Pay on Foot system allows users to pay for the time they have parked at the end of their visit, rather than when they first arrive. The system also includes automatic number plate recognition which reads number plates on entry, matches them to a database of season ticket holders and allows holders to enter the car park without a ticket being issued. The same system allows season ticket holders to exit the car park without being charged. A survey was designed to find out the impact Pay on Foot has had on those who use the car park.

The Corporate Information Team conducted a consultation project on behalf of Parking Services in January 2016. The consultation asked for people's views and experience of the Pay on Foot in the Avenue de Chartres car park since Pay on Foot has been introduced. The survey also included a number of questions about general car park use and payment options for all parking areas in Chichester City.

Methodology

The survey was issued online, with paper copies being made available on request. The survey was promoted on the CDC website, on Facebook and on Twitter. The survey link was sent by email to people who hold a season ticket for Chichester City car parks and who Parking Services hold email addresses for. There was also some local press coverage of the consultation. Members of the Corporate Information Team and Parking services also visited the Avenue de Chartres multi-storey car park at various times of the day and interviewed customers at the car park using iPads. In order to shorten the survey for mobile interviews, some questions were not asked to people completing the survey at the car park.

Some questions in this survey are repeated from a 2012 survey of ADC car park users, which achieved a similar level of response (449 responses) with a very similar methodology. This survey was issued prior to the introduction of Pay on Foot parking and season ticket holders represented a smaller proportion of respondents. Where possible, comparisons have been drawn with the results from this survey.

Executive Summary

- In total, 455 responses to this survey were received. Most of these were submitted online but 67 were completed on iPads in the Avenue de Chartres car park. Almost 2 thirds of respondents (64%) said they had season tickets for Chichester City car parks. Season ticket holders were seen as a large, key group of regular car park users so they were targeted specifically with an email inviting them to complete the survey.
- The most popular long-stay car parks were the Avenue de Chartres, Northgate and Cattle Market car parks. Around half of respondents used these occasionally and around a third used them most days.

- Although some people did say they use the ADC car park because it is pay on foot, these did not surpass the long-standing reasons for using this car park. Specifically, its location relative to shops and places of work and its size.
- Around a quarter of respondents are taking advantage of the new payment options introduced with pay on foot (notes and credit/debit cards). According to survey results, the popularity of paying with coins has decreased since 2012, but the new payment methods have not come close to surpassing the popularity of season tickets.
- Respondents were asked what other payment options they would like to see in Chichester's car parks; debit card machines were very popular and respondents were keen to see these in more car parks. Payment by mobile phone (including apps.) was also mentioned by around a quarter of those who answered this question.
- Opinion was very divided about the signage for the pay on foot system in the ADC car park. Around a third of respondents thought the signage was excellent/good, another third thought it was adequate and the remaining third thought it was poor/very poor. Those completing the survey in the ADC car park (who did not tend to be season ticket holders) were more likely to rate the signage as poor.
- Respondents were generally happy with how easy the pay on foot payment machines are to use; 56.6% of them rated this as good or excellent. However, the number and location of the machines came in for some criticism with more than a third rating these aspects as poor or very poor.
- Generally, respondents said that pay on foot had not changed the amount of time they stayed in Chichester City. However, 39.2% of those who completed the survey in the ADC car park (and who did not tend to be season ticket holders) said they stayed longer in Chichester City because of pay on foot.
- Overall, 37% of respondents had had issues using the pay on foot system. This figure was higher (46.5%) among season ticket holders and lower (25%) among those completing the survey in the ADC car park.
- The most common place to experience issues was the barrier when leaving the car park, although the barrier when entering and the payment machines were responsible for almost as many issues. The most common issues were payment machines not working, barriers being stuck and the system not recognising season ticket holders.
- Most respondents who had issues, had also used the intercom system to ask for help and the vast majority (71.7%) were satisfied with the service they received.
- 62.9% of respondents rated their satisfaction with the pay on foot system at 7 or more out of 10. Improvements that were suggested mostly concerned addressing problems with the existing system rather than adding new features. Popular suggestions were more payment machines, more/better signage to help people find the payment machines and more reliable payment machines and barriers.
- There was extensive familiarity with pay on foot systems; more than 3 quarters (77.7%) of respondents had used pay on foot systems, even if they hadn't used the ADC one. The ADC system compared favourably with respondents saying it was easier to use or the same as other systems respondents had used.

- Around 60% of respondents said they found pay on foot parking more convenient and that they generally preferred it. There was slightly less certainty that pay on foot systems are easier to use, although almost half (47.8%) still said they thought it was.
- When asked about the Pay on Foot system. 60 respondents said they liked the system as it was much more flexible than pay on display, although 29 respondents did report their issues with the system, mainly problems at the exit barrier.
- 20 respondents also mentioned that they feel parking in Chichester should be made cheaper.

Respondent Profile

In total, 455 responses were received to the survey; 388 online and 67 completed on the iPads at the car park.

Almost half of respondents (48.6% - 221 respondents) said they had a single 'X Roving' season ticket. This is a season ticket issued for one car only that allows the user to park at any of the 3 long-stay car parks in Chichester City (Avenue de Chartres, Northgate and the Cattle Market). A further 15.4% (70 respondents) said they had a shared 'X Roving' season ticket – the same ticket but shared between 2 or more cars, who cannot use it at the same time. Respondents who completed the survey on iPads in the ADC car park were far less likely to be season ticket holders – season ticket holders represented just 11.7% of this group while 86.7% of these respondents had no parking pass at all.

The high numbers of responses from season ticket holders can be attributed both to the popularity of season tickets among those who work in Chichester and the email that was sent to them specifically, inviting them to participate in the survey. Since season ticket holders are a large group of regular car park users, their views on the pay on foot system were seen as particularly important. One of the aims of this survey was to determine whether or not season ticket holders are more likely to have problems with the pay on foot system than more casual car park users so it was important these respondents were identified.

5.5% (25 respondents) said they had another kind of season ticket. Further information about what kind was not captured but could include season tickets that are issued for specific car parks (eg. 'B' season ticket, valid in the Avenue de Chartres car park only). Around a third (34.6% - 144 respondents) said they had no season ticket and just 2 respondents (0.4%) said they had a blue badge. The type of parking pass (or lack of one) that a respondent holds has been used throughout this report to analyse their responses to other questions.

7 respondents in 2016 gave an 'other' response for this question. 4 respondents said it was cheaper, 2 said they used it because it is pay on foot and 1 said it was close to Jury Service.