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Promoting Energy efficiency to Local Organisations
through dissemination Partnerships in Europe
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Prohibit parking in agreement with the public -

Bridgend - United Kingdom

To manage the large number of holiday makers who visit its seaside resort, Bridgend drew up a travel plan to pedestrianize the town centre and relocate existing parking facilities.

Target Groups	Sector	Field
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Local authority - Decision makers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Transport 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Equipment / appliances - Information

ANALYSIS

CONTEXT

Bridgend (130 000 inhab.) is a local authority which includes the coastal resort of Porthcawl which hosts large numbers of summer holiday makers. The obstacle represented by vehicles seeking access to the town centre or the sea persisted in spite of certain developments, so Bridgend and Porthcawl decided to introduce a new traffic management system.

TIMETABLE FOR THE NEW SYSTEM

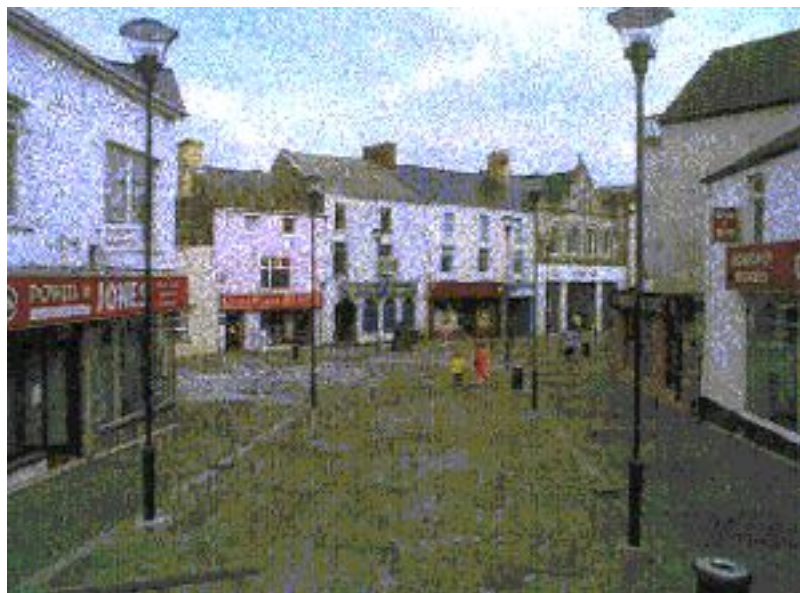
- April 95, publication of the local plan to pedestrianize the town centre;
- Early 98, completion of construction of the bypass;
- Dec. 98, first proposals for traffic management drawn up by the committee – residents consulted;
- August 99, result of the consultation – changes were made to the project;
- April 00, implementation of local parking regulations;
- Nov. 00, changes were made based on experience gained during the experimental phase.

ACTIONS UNDERTAKEN

The pedestrianization of Bridgend town centre had been proposed as part of the local plan drawn up for the district, but it was only carried out in 1998.

Since a shopping mall had been built outside the town at the end of the 1990s, this encouraged local authorities to do something to make the town centre more attractive. Three carparks were built close to the pedestrian zone to meet parking requirements. The existing town centre parking spaces are specially reserved for the handicapped and for deliveries. Half the streets were pedestrianized and a special lane reserved for buses, bicycles and taxis was set up.

Following a three-month trial period, this plan was passed. Based on the experience acquired, new developments were integrated. The distribution of some parking spaces was changed and the period during which parking is prohibited was reduced.



AFTER PEDESTRIANIZATION AND REMOVAL OF STREET PARKING

COST AND BENEFITS

EVALUATION

Generally speaking, the town centre pedestrianization has been very successful and the parking prohibition accepted by the local population. However, parking in spaces reserved for the handicapped has proved very difficult to control and a large number of people have contravened the regulation. Henceforth, parking in pedestrian zones is prohibited for the handicapped. This is a real problem for the 11 000 handicapped drivers, but it is clear that if a waiver, destined to help those most in need, is granted to too many people, the benefit it was intended to confer is lost.

PARTNERSHIP

The travel plan was drawn up by Bridgend town council with the competent local departments, but it must be said that the local population was a major partner in this project.

The vast public survey carried out and the importance given to residents' comments as well as the changes made to the project after the experimental phase all helped to make the changes more acceptable to inhabitants.

RECOMMENDATIONS

NO PARKING IN THE SHOPPING STREET

Once the project to pedestrianize the town centre was suggested, strong opposition was raised. The project involved changing the shopping street into a pedestrian zone and prohibiting access to cars, thus removing all parking spaces. However, removing the possibility of parking in the shopping street caused a high level of indignation among residents. The population of Bridgend is rather elderly with a large number of handicapped people who opposed the prohibition against parking close to the shops. After long negotiations, a compromise was reached and finally, access to the shopping street was authorized before 11:00 and after 17:00 for deliveries and handicapped people.

IMPORTANCE OF CONSULTING RESIDENTS

Generally speaking, it will be remembered that the introduction of measures to regulate parking and access to the centre led to a disagreement which was eventually settled, so that the initiative was eventually a great success with almost all residents. The method used in Bridgend, which took into account residents' reactions to proposals, is exemplary and helps avoid major problems. Most of the suggestions made by residents were also found to be valid and the experimental phase of the project allowed the traffic manager to see how this new organization could be applied in the field.

Bridgend's experience demonstrates the importance of developing a detailed project when it comes to managing parking. Indeed, it cannot be considered without taking public opinion into account. In fact, this must be an essential part of any project intending to limit access to the town centre.

TO KNOW MORE

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USEFUL INFORMATION

List of Internet sites

[english / http://www.bridgend.gov.uk](#)

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