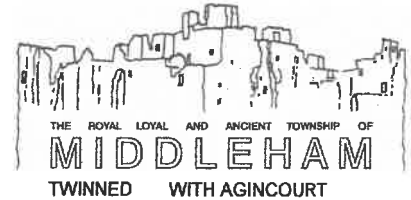


MIDDLEHAM TOWN COUNCIL



Town Clerk's Office, Middleham Key Centre, Park Lane, Middleham, DL8 4RA
Telephone 01969 625225, Email: middleham-council@btconnect.com
Website: www.middlehamtowncouncil.co.uk
Normal Office opening hours: Tuesday, Wednesday & Thursday 9 am until 4 pm

21 February 2019

Dear Resident

Car Parking in Middleham

As you may be aware, Middleham Town Council is the sole trustee for the Charity for the Benefit of Inhabitant Householders of Parish of Middleham (registered charity 506048) which owns the so-called 'manorial lands' on behalf of the whole community of Middleham. These areas comprise the High and Low Moors, the Busks, the Plantations in the West End and most of the cobbled area within the Town that is known as the Town Wastes. These lands were purchased in 1925 and are held 'for the benefit of the inhabitant householders of the Parish of Middleham'.

This letter is being sent to all households to summarise the Council's approach to parking on the Wastes. For ease of reference, we attach a map of the Wastes. The areas bounded in red belong to the Charity.

Car parking space within the town is limited. Some years ago the Council looked into the possibility of purchasing additional land, but none was available that would have been easily accessible from the town centre.

A few years ago, yellow lines were painted in Kirkgate and East Witton Road where it was considered appropriate to prevent further highway obstructions and assist pedestrians walking into Middleham. The Council has sought to avoid painting further yellow lines within the conservation area as these can be unsightly and might even further restrict the available options for parking. It has also not requested visits by parking wardens, believing that it is preferable to avoid complex rules and rely instead on people parking considerately and safely - and avoid implementing penalties for non-compliance. The Council also believes that, for most of the time, there is sufficient parking space within a reasonable walking distance of everyone's property provided cars are parked sensibly and considerately.

Accordingly, the general rules for parking on that part of the Wastes owned by the Charity are:

- Parking on the Wastes is free of charge, although an honesty box is located in the main square, the proceeds from which will be used to supplement the Charity's income to be spent within the town;
- The Council permits people to park vehicles on the Wastes on the basis of free and equal access to parking and spaces are available to motorists on a 'first-come first-served basis';
- Parking is not a right and is by kind permission of the Charity;
- No areas are restricted for parking by particular homes or businesses (although, as permitted by the 1925 conveyance of the manorial lands, the Charity is entitled to raise income from rents for trading in the market area. There are agreements in place with various hospitality businesses that rent space for outside furniture as part of their business.

- Vehicles should not be parked on the more narrow sections of the cobbles where they may block the pavement and leave inadequate room for passers-by. This is particularly the case on the narrow and busy stretch of road close to Central Stores where badly parked cars may force pedestrians, particularly any pushing buggies or wheelchairs, to walk into the road.

On occasions, tubs and troughs appear to be placed outside homes so as to reserve spaces for their exclusive use. 'No parking' notices and traffic cones have also appeared from time to time and these have no authority. No resident has a right to try to reserve an area on those parts of the Wastes that are owned by the Charity, even if it is adjacent to their property or you always seek to park there. If you are such a household, you must remove any such items and signs that are placed with the intention of restricting parking. You may receive a separate letter from the Council on this matter.

Council occasionally receives reports that some motorists exercising their legitimate right to park on the Wastes have been informed that they should move their cars and park elsewhere. As set out above, Council has not granted anyone an exclusive right to park on the Wastes where all spaces may be occupied by any vehicle, resident or visitor, on a 'first come, first served' basis. If Council receives reports of attempts to prevent lawful parking on the Wastes it will take action to prevent such attempts, which may be in liaison with parking enforcement authorities. The Council may remove any items that are not taken away following an instruction to do so.

Please note that these rules do not apply on areas of the Wastes that Council does not own. A small number of householders do own the area in front of their property and they are entitled to place signs, bollards etc. and to ask you to park elsewhere. These properties are Sundial House, Waterford House, Rose Mount and Jasmine House in Grove Terrace.

In adopting this approach, which has been the same for very many years, Council is seeking to balance the varied needs of residents, visitors and business. Whilst the Charity must act for the benefit of inhabitant householders, it recognises that visitors and businesses generate income and create employment which helps to sustain Middleham as a viable community. The Council also believes that a priority parking scheme would be difficult to organise and enforce and might possibly make matters worse by encouraging ongoing disputes.

Lastly, the Council undertakes the following activities to maintain the Wastes for everyone's benefit:

- It liaises with Richmondshire District Council and North Yorkshire Police to remove abandoned vehicles, which may be reported to the Town Clerk in the first instance;
- Three times each year, its contractor sprays weeds and moss on the Wastes;
- The Wastes are regularly inspected by Councillors and a contractor makes necessary repairs to keep the cobbles in good condition.

I trust that this letter is helpful in setting out the Council's approach to parking on the Town Wastes.

If you have any questions about parking or any other matters relating to the town, please contact the Town Clerk.

Yours sincerely



Clr Sue Fairhurst
Mayor