

# Chock-a-block car parks 'show the need for transport package'

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'Full' signs have been appearing at car parks in the centre of Bath as shoppers and visitors pile into the city.

Long queues have been seen around the Charlotte Street and Avon Street car parks at times in the past week.

Bath and North East Somerset Council, which runs the car parks, says the queues underline the need for its controversial package of transport improvements.

A council spokesman said drivers had no choice but to travel into the centre once park-and-ride sites on the edge of the city reached their capacity.

He said the Government-funded Bath Transportation Package would ease the congestion by increasing the number of spaces at park-and-ride sites.

More than 2,500 new spaces will be created as sites at Newbridge, Lansdown, and Odd Down are extended and a new one built at Bathampton.

The spokesman said: "The council welcomes the fact that thousands of people are coming to Bath to visit our shops, restaurants, and tourist attractions.

"The main reason why there are queues outside car parks is because the council's park-and-ride sites at Newbridge and Lansdown are full by midday and Odd Down is approaching capacity.

"Motorists who see these sites full will just continue into the city centre and look for car parking spaces or park in residential streets. This happens all year round.

"The council's joined-up plan to help tackle traffic congestion more than doubles the number of park-and-ride spaces to 4,510 spaces by increasing capacity at Newbridge, Lansdown, and Odd Down, and provides a new



**SIGN OF THE TIMES:** the popular Newbridge park-and-ride site

PICTURE: Lloyd Ellington

park-and-ride east of the city. This will reduce the pressure on our car parks and help reduce queues."

Meanwhile, city centre councillor Andy Furse (Lib Dem, Kingsmead) is calling for improvements to residents' parking in the city. He said ever since the parking charges in the city car parks were continued beyond 6pm to 8pm, motorists visiting Bath for the evening had begun looking to park in empty residents' bays.

He said this was resulting in residents paying for permits but having nowhere to park.

He is now urging the council to press

on with plans to extend policing of residents' parking zones to 8pm and also raised concerns about the impact of a planned new hotel, which would not have its own car park, at Green Park.

Cllr Furse said: "Too often, residents return from work and cannot park anywhere near their street, let alone at their home.

"Increasing the parking zones to 8pm will bring it in line with local car parking charges."

■ Foster on BRT, page 10; new South-Gate car park, page 14

## Line up for charity dance

**BATH:** Line dancers will be taking part in their favourite hobby and raising money for a worthwhile cause this weekend.

On Saturday, dancers from beginners to the experienced are invited to dance the night away at Bath Pavilion, to help raise money for the Multiple Sclerosis Society.

The event will run from 7.30pm to 11pm and is organised by line dance group CC Stompers, which was formed in 1996.

The group has raised thousands of pounds for charities since it began, and classes are held at Culverhay School, the Pavilion and Corston Village Hall

Tickets are £7 on the door or £6 in advance.

They are available from 01225 316280.

## Lost a badge?

**COMBE DOWN:** A badge belonging to a service veteran was found after Combe Down paid its respects to First World War hero Harry Patch earlier this month.

The badge bearing the phrase HM Armed Forces Veteran was found after people lined the streets of the area to watch Mr Patch's coffin being taken for burial at Monkton Combe.

It has now been handed into the lost property section at Bath police station.

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