**From:** Evans, Marc - Corporate Services
**Sent:** 30 November 2020 14:58
**Subject:** Free parking at Oxford's park and rides during Christmas period

**Free parking at Oxford’s park and rides during Christmas period**

**Read the story on the OCC website** [**here**](https://news.oxfordshire.gov.uk/free-parking-at-park-and-rides-during-christmas-period/) **or below:**

Shoppers and people planning to support hospitality businesses in the run-up to Christmas are being encouraged to do so safely and avoid the busiest times.

Oxfordshire County Council and Oxford City Council are providing free parking at Oxford’s five park and ride sites from Saturday 5 December until Sunday 27 December, to support businesses and help reduce congestion. The councils are also asking people who plan to use the service to travel outside peak times if possible.

**Councillor Liam Walker, Oxfordshire County Council’s Cabinet Member for Highways Delivery and Operations, said:** “I’m really pleased we’ve been able to work closely with Oxford City Council to reintroduce free parking at our park and ride sites. Having this in place proved really popular in August to support the Eat Out To Help Out scheme and it makes sense for us to do the same now to support jobs and local businesses across Oxford during a busy period ahead of Christmas.

“We are keen to play our part in helping to reduce congestion in the city centre during peak times and we have recently been working closely with the Westgate Centre to help achieve this and we will be putting measures in place, which will now be complemented with free parking at the park and ride sites.

“Ultimately, we want everyone to be able to travel around safely, enjoy their visiting experience, and reduce the congestion on our roads and this is a great way to help achieve this. We urge all those planning to visit Oxford over the next few weeks to take advantage of this festive gift from both councils.”

Oxfordshire will be in the high alert level (tier 2) from Wednesday 2 December, when lockdown ends. The government has updated its safe travel advice, including for those walking, cycling, and travelling in vehicles or on public transport. You can read the latest advice [online](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-safer-travel-guidance-for-passengers#walking-and-cycling).

Oxford Bus Company, which operates services from the five park and ride sites – Pear Tree, Redbridge, Seacourt, Thornhill and Oxford Parkwa­y – is supporting the initiative by running a '£4.80 per car maximum charge’ promotion. This will mean that any more than two adults in the same car will get their bus journey for free. Children will go for free too.

By making parking free all week at all five sites, Oxford City Council and Oxfordshire County Council also aim to reduce peak-time congestion on routes into the city and around city centre car parks.

**Councillor Tom Hayes, Oxford City Council’s Cabinet Member for Green Transport and Zero Carbon Oxford, said:** “With Oxford now entering tier 2 restrictions, we are encouraging people who plan to shop here or support our hospitality businesses to think carefully about the best times to do so. Oxford City Council and Oxfordshire County Council, working together, have made parking at our five park and ride sites free from 5 to 27 December inclusive to help people to do that.

“We know people are determined to get behind our local businesses at this incredibly difficult time, and this initiative is a way they can get into the city centre easily, safely, and sustainably by bus or by walking or cycling. Free park and ride parking will also help to unblock Oxford’s congested roads at what are proving to be the busiest times.”

Park and ride sites are also a good stopping off place to cycle or walk into Oxford. Visitors can get on a bus and head into the city centre, or visit Summertown, Jericho, Headington, Cowley Road, or other nearby shops and hospitality venues.

**Ends**

Marc Evans

Communications and Media Officer

Oxfordshire County Council

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