



For Immediate Release

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Overnight car park closures to tackle antisocial behaviour in borough's beauty spots

Gates are being installed at the car parks of two popular beauty spots in the borough in a bid to crack down on antisocial behaviour in the evenings.

From Monday 19 April, Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council will lock its car parks at the Lime Pits and Crabtree Plantation overnight.

The car parks at the council-owned open spaces and play areas will be closed from 8pm to 7.30am from April to 31 October and from 5pm to 7.30am from 1 November to 31 March.

This is part of a pilot project in response to ongoing concerns from residents over antisocial behaviour at these sites in the evenings. The areas will still be accessible by foot during the car park closures.

Originally part of the Hackwood Estate, Crabtree is an important site for butterflies, woodland and grassland habitat. Visitors can follow tree trails, self-guided walks or join in conservation work. It also features a play area and links to Black Dam Ponds and Basing Common.

Once part of a private estate, the Lime Pits now provides an opportunity for walking, playing and picnicking. The site forms part of the Basingstoke Canal Heritage Footpath Trail, running across Basingstoke common and finishing at Basing House. It follows a route rich in wildlife and cultural heritage.

Cabinet Member for Planning, Infrastructure and the Natural Environment Cllr Mark Ruffell said: "These two much-loved areas are incredibly popular with residents in the borough with beautiful walking and running routes, wonderful wildlife to enjoy, and fun outdoor play equipment for families. They form part of our vision to develop a master plan for the natural environment covering the whole area between Old Basing and Basingstoke.

"Maintaining residents' safety at these sites and ensuring they can be enjoyed by all is paramount. These measures have been introduced to counter persistent antisocial behaviour by a small number of people and we will continue to have the areas visited by our community safety patrol officers. Installing the gates at both car parks and introducing overnight closures forms part of this approach to reducing and preventing incidents at both sites."

ENDS

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