



EARLY MAY BANK HOLIDAY 2026

We appreciate residents' frustration following the bank holiday weekend. Some concerns raised are understandable. However, a number of claims being circulated are factually incorrect and, in the interests of accuracy, we feel it is important to address them.

West Wittering Estate does not have legal authority to direct traffic on public highways, enforce roadside parking, introduce temporary traffic regulation orders (TTRO'S), deploy traffic wardens, or control police resources. If we were legally treated as an "event" venue, such as a football stadium, different powers and agency support arrangements would apply. We are not.

Despite this, our teams worked exceptionally hard across the weekend, with staff working very long days managing traffic on site, marshalling arrivals, cleaning the beach and village, supporting safety operations and dealing with significant visitor demand. At no point did the Estate "give up" or stop managing the situation.

West Wittering Estate has repeatedly engaged with the relevant authorities regarding wider traffic management solutions. This has included offering to fund additional enforcement / warden presence, undertaking public consultation and surveys, and putting forward a number of serious proposals aimed at improving traffic flow into West Wittering and reducing impacts on residents. These have included proposals such as a mini roundabout arrangement, suggested traffic management measures, and offers to fund or install physical deterrents to prevent verge and grass parking in problem areas, similar to measures already used elsewhere locally. To date, a number of proposals have not secured the necessary authority approval or support required to proceed.

Unfortunately, many of the powers and decisions required sit outside the Estate's control. Suggestions to simply halve visitor numbers or reduce authorised parking availability also ignore a key reality: many visitors still travel to the area whether the car park is sold out or not. In our experience, visitors arriving without bookings and attempting to gain access are often a significant contributor to congestion and village impacts. Restricting authorised parking without wider enforcement and highway measures risks increasing displacement onto local roads rather than reducing it.

For clarity, the recent booking system issue affected Tuesday only. The bank holiday Sunday and Monday booking position had already sold out before the technical issue occurred. Tuesday experienced traffic broadly as expected, with comparatively little fly parking and limited associated issues.

On sold out days, as pressure eased later in the afternoon and vehicles began leaving site, operational adjustments were made to allow some non booked vehicles into the car park in order to help relieve pressure building elsewhere in the village and avoid unnecessary queueing and circulation on surrounding roads.

Beach safety also remained fully managed throughout the period by West Wittering's own professional lifeguard team. Despite exceptionally busy conditions, lifeguards dealt with a very high volume of preventative interventions, missing person incidents and water assists, while maintaining active beach observation, public engagement and safety education throughout. The vast majority of water incidents were resolved early through intervention before escalating into serious emergencies.

The Estate has made major operational changes over recent years, including pre booking, materially reduced capacity, removal of pay on entry queues through free flow operation, extensive traffic management measures, significant staffing commitments, safety management and proactive communications.

We recognise that none of this removes the impact residents feel on very busy days. However, the suggestion that little has changed, that nothing is being done, or that the Estate simply has powers available which it chooses not to use, is incorrect.

We remain committed to working constructively with residents, councils and agencies to find practical, lawful and workable solutions.