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Planning and building

## **Free passage at last: underground car park at Europaplatz opens after refurbishment**

**160 parking spaces, including facilities for e-mobility and barrier-free parking // Modern security technology including comprehensive fire alarm system**

The wait is over: after a technically demanding refurbishment and the completion of all necessary safety checks, the city of Bocholt reopened the underground car park under Europaplatz to traffic this Friday afternoon. With the reopening, 160 bright, barrier-free and centrally located parking spaces are now available. Parking is free this weekend, including on Sunday when the car park is open for business.

The completion marks the end of a complex large-scale project. The building, originally constructed in 1982/83 as a civil defence bunker, was completely gutted and transformed into a modern park infrastructure. The fact that this process - from the removal of the massive bunker substance to the installation of state-of-the-art building technology - took longer than originally planned is due to the special challenges of the existing building. Finally, the fine-tuning of the new security technology took even more time.

"It was, figuratively speaking, a difficult birth, but the result is something to be proud of", explains city planning officer Dave Welling. "We didn't just renovate here, we brought an underground car park from the 1980s up to date. The technical hurdles, right up to the fine tuning in recent weeks, were high. All the more reason for us to thank the people of Bocholt, especially the retail trade, for their patience."

The result is a contemporary parking infrastructure covering 6,400 square metres. Formerly frightening spaces have been eliminated; a new lighting concept ensures brightness and clarity. The parking space concept takes account of the change in vehicle sizes: in addition to standard spaces, there are ten parking spaces with a width of 3.00 metres and six spaces with a width of 3.50 metres. A new, wheelchair-accessible lift and newly constructed access buildings ensure accessibility for everyone. Six parking spaces are specially equipped with charging points for electric vehicles.

With immediate effect, the usual tariffs for the city centre area apply (1.00 euro per hour or part thereof).



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*City planning officer Dave Welling removes the last posters that still refer to the closure of the underground car park.*