


Bromsgrove
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SCRUTINY REPORT

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# CAR PARKING

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**Task Group Report –**
**Scrutiny Steering Board**
**March 2007**

**ANDY JESSOP - Committee Services Officer**

# BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

## SCRUTINY STEERING BOARD

## 6th MARCH 2007

## CAR PARKING TASK GROUP

| | |
|---|---|
| Responsible Portfolio Holder | Councillor Mrs. M.A. Sherrey J.P. |
| Responsible Head of Service | Mike Bell, Head of Street Scene and Waste Management Services |
| | |

## 1. MEMBERS

Councillors G.N. Denaro (Chairman), Mrs. R.L. Dent, G.H.R. Hulett, D. McGrath, N. Psirides J.P., S.P. Shannon and C.J. Tidmarsh.

## 2. TERMS OF REFERENCE

At the meeting of the Scrutiny Steering Board held on 1st August 2006, it was agreed that a Task Group should be set up to look at issues relating to car parking, and the Task Group's terms of reference (see Appendix 1), which were compiled by the appointed Chairman, Councillor G.N. Denaro, were approved by the Board at its meeting held on the 5th September 2006, subject to the proviso that the Economic Development Officer be included on the scrutiny exercise scoping checklist as an officer to be invited to give evidence. At its first meeting, held on 3rd October 2006, the terms of reference were reiterated and approved.

## 3. BACKGROUND AND FINDINGS

Following the Council's original decision to increase charges for Parking Permits, and to introduce parking charges for the disabled and persons over 65, the Leaders of two Opposition Groups on the Council produced independent reports on these issues, and copies of these reports are enclosed (see Appendix 2 – Note: In addition, Councillor G.H.R. Hulett, a member of the Task Group, has also prepared a report on the concept of "the disabled" and a copy of his report is also appended thereto).

It was evident from the outset that, with an over-subscription of Members wanting to serve on the Task Group, the subject would be a difficult and emotive one to scrutinise, given all the different aspects involved, and Members would like to place on record their thanks to the many organisations, individuals and officers who either wrote, e-mailed or gave us their views individually, face-to-face. The Group were also aware of the

need to view Car Parking as a service, not an income stream. It is therefore pertinent to quote the Strategic Aims from the Council's Car Parking Strategy document, as follows:-

"The parking service is operated at no overall cost to the Council, with any surplus being used to fund the CCTV and Shopmobility functions.

The Council will review the parking service (and any charges for that service) annually in line with occupancy patterns, customer satisfaction surveys, income, and strategic aims.

The Council will work in partnership with the County Council and Police in the adoption and management of on-street parking enforcement.

The Council will seek to improve the operational efficiency and security of car parks.

The Council will enforce Car Parking Orders by regular and active management patrols of all parking places.

The Council will work with the County Council to introduce residents parking zones."

It was conceded that some of the areas under discussion were worthy of further review but which did not come under the remit of the Group, e.g. Cost of CCTV and Camera Renewal; Incidents recorded by Car Park Cameras; De-Criminalisation of Parking; Bromsgrove Town Centre Development Review, and other Car Parking spaces/issues throughout the District.

Evidence was gathered from both local and national sources, and also from Government Departments. There has been a total of ten meetings, and at seven of these the Group has heard evidence from a number of speakers, including (inter-alia) Town Traders representatives, the disabled, the elderly, the general public (see Appendix 3), and, from the Council, the Acting Chief Executive, Corporate Director (Services), and the Economic Development Officer, and copies of all other written representations received are appended in the following Sections of the Report.

Having collated and considered all the above information, members set an initial list of priority areas for recommendation, and charged the Council's Transport and Engineering Officer with the task of "costing up" these proposals in consultation with Financial Services, and, over the Group's last two meetings, members re-examined and refined a number of these proposals with the benefit of the additional detailed financial information.

It should be noted that the Chairman reminded Members of financial restrictions, but a majority of the Group were adamant that recommendations should go forward without any restraint. Accordingly, estimated costs are given at each recommendation without comment, although recognised as a best estimate of a likely effect.

## 4. SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

**1 (a)** That, as the bulk of evidence received by the Task Group was overwhelmingly in support of this proposal, and as we are aware of other collected evidence also in favour, **the car parking charges recently introduced for the disabled be abolished.**

The question of charging for the Disabled was undoubtedly the most contentious issue the Task Group had to deal with. It is perhaps unfortunate that guidance from the Department of Transport is silent on this issue. Practice varies wildly but a recent survey of Blue Badge holders in Telford on this question brought a response rate of 66%, ( 332 drivers) who were against the suggestion that Blue Badge holders should pay a set charge- however, 23% were in favour, with 8% undecided (see Appendix 4). Despite the charges being imposed to support Shopmobility, which has been successful, the majority of comments received were in favour of the recommendation, and this has been re-inforced by a Petition recently submitted to the Council with many signatures attested.

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Costs: | Change Signage | £8k |
| | Loss of Income | £50k |

**1 (b)** The difficulties faced by disabled drivers and/or parents of disabled children were also acknowledged, and, accordingly, it was further recommended **that Blue Badge holders be allowed double the time currently allowed in the Car Parking Order before any penalties are levied.**

The question of sufficient space and time for disabled persons to visit the Town Centre was of great concern to Blue Badge holders. All members of the Task Group were particularly concerned by the problems experienced by mothers with disabled children where time for shopping can vary greatly from day to day (see Appendix 5). Greater care should be given to the siting of Disabled Spaces, as comments made to the Group about difficulties could be avoided with a little forethought.
In view of the points outlined to us by Blue Badge holders, the Group feel this recommendation is worthy at little cost.

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Costs: | Change Signage | £2k |
| | Loss of Income | £10k? (not known) |

**2.** that, as a means of encouraging drivers to use the town centre, **Sunday charging be abolished, along with charges after 6.00 p.m. on weekdays.**

This recommendation is made on the grounds that we need to encourage more trade into the town centre, and implementation would give a boost to the town centre prior to the Town Centre Development Review.

Costs: Sunday £43.2k
Evening £88k (approx.)

**3.** It is considered that the current charging policy might encourage drivers who were over the legal alcohol limit to risk driving home late in the evening (rather than leave their vehicle overnight and have to collect it before 8.00 a.m. the following day to avoid incurring a fine for exceeding their allotted time), and, accordingly, it is suggested that the **Overnight charging policy should be reviewed.**

There was considerable confusion regarding late night parking procedures, and it was necessary for one member of the Group to feed a machine just after midnight in an attempt to clarify the situation. It should be possible to amend machines to allow a further "buffer" for people to collect their vehicles. An internal review would allow various options and costs to be evaluated (see Appendix 6).

Costs: Indeterminate at present.

**4.** That, in an endeavour to attract increased usage of the Churchfields multi-storey car park, the **annual charge for a permit for the Hanover Street car park be increased to a more reasonable amount** (i.e. somewhat closer to the actual income per space than that which is currently charged), **and that, in addition, the multi-storey car park be included in the scheme as an annual permit option for the sum of £200** (which equates to £0.83 pence per day).

At present, the Multi-Storey Car Park is very much under-used, despite being well served by CCTV. Various "solutions" have been put forward, including discussions with ASDA, which have not proceeded. Use as a Sunday Market has also been suggested. The Group's recommendation is aimed at making the Multi-Storey more attractive to all-day parkers by offering an annual season ticket at a discounted rate which equates to under £5 per week. This should free up all-day spaces at the Market Street Car Park.

Costs: Possible partial loss due to Incentives.

**5.** Currently**, ticket machines do not give change** and, with Pay-on-Foot costs too prohibitive in the present financial climate, other options could include (i) **allow machines to give full value of time paid**, even if it exceeds the time limit (i.e. a ticket costing £1 would give 100 minutes, not 60); (ii) **consideration should be given to "remote payment" by mobile 'phone** (which would cut handling costs, over time). In this regard, it was felt **that a review should be carried out in relation to the number of hours available on certain car parks.**

Costs: £10k (approx.)

**6.** It was considered that, with a growing and ageing population, and with a finite number of parking spaces, the present system was not sustainable (see Appendix 7), and in view of the changes to the state pension age and recent equality and diversity legislation, the **Concessionary Permits system be reviewed by officers with a report to Executive Cabinet to follow in due course.**

The following types of permit are available at present:-

| Name | Cost (£) | Valid for | Valid On |
|---|---|---|---|
| Concessionary | 30 | 12 months | All Car Parks |
| Annual | 300 | 12 months | All Long Stay Car Pks |
| Quarterly | 75 | 3 months | All Long Stay Car Pks |
| Annual (Stourbridge Road) | 200 | 12 months | Stourbridge Road |
| Quarterly (Stourbridge Road) | 50 | 3 months | Stourbridge Road |

Costs: Loss of Income of approx. £300k (at present).

**7.** That, in an effort to improve the accessibility of the Market to short stay shoppers at the Hanover Street car park, (where traders have complained that regular customers could not park as long stay parkers were occupying available spaces), **discussions be held with Bromsgrove School with a view to possibly utilising additional parking facilities at the old Perry Hall Hotel site, and that, if successful, consideration be given to the removal of long stay parking at this site.**

The Group were concerned to receive reports from Market traders on the unavailability of parking spaces both for loading/unloading and subsequently for customer parking due to the take-up of the all-day/long stay bays (see Appendix 8). Complaints were also received from coach passengers (particularly the elderly and the disabled) travelling into neighbouring towns in the late afternoon/evening, that they could not park conveniently for the Bus Station, (i.e. in the Recreation Road South Car Park) due to the hours restrictions. Perhaps these could be extended after 5 p.m., for example?

**8. That every effort be made to continue and improve the Shopmobility service currently provided by the Council despite restraints due to facility size.**

Resulting from a discussion on this issue, it was agreed that a sign would be erected adjacent to the three dedicated Shopmobility parking spaces drawing attention to the fact that Blue Badge holders were permitted to park in these spaces outside of the normal operating hours. **Consideration should also be given to the possibility of using additional, volunteer assistance** on the scheme, although it is accepted that numbers will be restricted due to accommodation problems.

## 5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

Possible amendment(s) to Car Parking Order.

## 6. CORPORATE OBJECTIVES

The objectives meet the Council's Vision, Values and Objectives insofar as there has been Community influence, and accords with the Council's priority of Customer Service, Reputation and Performance.

## 7. RISK MANAGEMENT

Significant loss of current income.

## 8. CUSTOMER IMPLICATIONS

See Report.

## 9. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

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|---|
| Procurement Issues: None |
| Personnel Implications: Possible |
| Governance/Performance Management: None |
| Community Safety including Section 17 of Crime and Disorder Act 1998: Reduced risk of confrontations between Offender and Parking Attendant |
| Policy: None |
| Environmental: None |
| Equalities and Diversity: Yes |

## 10. OTHERS CONSULTED ON THE REPORT

| | |
|---|---|
| Portfolio Holder | Yes |
| Acting Chief Executive | Yes |
| Corporate Director (Services) | Yes |
| Assistant Chief Executive | No |
| Head of Service | Yes |
| Head of Financial Services | Yes |
| Head of Legal & Democratic Services | Yes |
| Head of Organisational Development & HR | No |
| Corporate Procurement Team | No |

## 11. APPENDICES

See Report.

## 12. BACKGROUND PAPERS

None.

## CONTACT OFFICER

Name: Andy Jessop
E Mail: andy.jessop@bromsgrove.gov.uk
Tel: (01527) 881406

APPENDIX 1

# SCRUTINY EXERCISE SCOPING CHECKLIST

This form is to assist members to scope the scrutiny exercise in a focused way and to identify the key issues it wishes to investigate.

When the Board decides to set up a Task Group to scrutinise a particular subject, the appointed Chairman of the Task Group should complete this checklist. Completed forms will be considered by the Board and by the Task Group as a whole at the Task Group's first meeting.

- General Subject Area to be Scrutinised: Car Parking Charges
- Specific Subject to be Scrutinised: To examine the Council's Car Park Policy with particular reference to dispensations in the context of the Council's medium term financial plan and with a view to making recommendations for improvement. The Task Group will take particular account of the effects of car parking policy on the economic well-being of the town centre and the needs and expectations of all those in the community.
- Should the relevant Portfolio Holder(s) be invited to give evidence? (YES) ~~NO~~
- Should any Officers be invited to give evidence? (YES) ~~NO~~

  If yes, state name and/or post title:
  Transport and Engineering Officer
  Head of Financial Services
- Should any external witnesses be invited to give evidence? (YES) ~~NO~~

  If so, who and from which organisations?
  Initially - ASDA / Age Concern / Bromark (Bromsgrove Marketing Partnership)
- Should the Task Group receive evidence from other sources other than witnesses? (YES) ~~NO~~

  If so, what information should the Task Group wish to see and from which sources should it be gathered?
  Department of Transport Consultation Document Responses
  Other Councils' policies
- Should a period of public consultation form part of the Scrutiny exercise? (YES) ~~NO~~

  If so, on what should the public be consulted?
  Ask for comments/suggestions/recommendations

- Have other authorities carried out similar scrutiny exercises? YES/NO

  If so, which authorities? TELFORD / RUSHCLIFFE

  What were their conclusions and what can we learn from them? TO BE OBTAINED

- Will the Scrutiny exercise cross the District boundary? YES/NO

  If so, should any other authorities be invited to participate?

- Would it be appropriate to co-opt anyone on to the Task Group whilst the Scrutiny exercise is being carried out? YES/NO

  If so, who and from which organisations?

- What do you anticipate the timetable will be for the scrutiny exercise?

  3 months approx

- Approximate number of Task Group Meetings? 6

Signed: Denaro

Chairman of behalf of the: CAR PARKS Task Group

Date: 18/08/06

Please return completed forms to:
Miss D. McCarthy
Committee Services Officer
Legal and Democratic Services
Bromsgrove District Council

**APPENDIX 2**

# Leader of the Oppositions Report

## Calling upon the Scrutiny Steering Board to set up a Task Group to investigate the reinstatement of free parking permits for the disabled and senior citizens

Background and Methodology

Until May 1st 2006 the position regarding parking permits were a £5.15 charge for those between 60 and 64 and free parking for the disabled and those 65 and over.

The council through its budgetary process put forward many proposals for raising finance and saving money. One of those proposals was to charge the disabled and senior citizens for parking permits: the proposed charge £30.

In addition, a full charge of £30 is applied when residents change their vehicle and have to re-register.

The Council did not consult with the relevant organisations as part of its budgetary process and failed to consult with the relevant organisations until the 14th June 2006, some six weeks after its introduction.

Findings

There was no evidence that a Risk Management Assessment had been carried out. Had there been the following would have been highlighted:

- The distance disabled people have to walk to get to the parking meter.
- The drop in trade to local businesses.
- The increase in Blue Badge Holders parking on double yellow lines.
- The need to put notices up warning Blue Badge Holders as they enter the car parks. Not doing this has led to a number receiving fines because they were not aware of the changes.
- Only three spaces for disable to park when using the Mobility Scheme

The Councils approach has highlighted their complete disregard in relation to quality and diversity.

- Those in wheelchairs find it difficult to use public transport, thus free bus passes are of no use. Hence they have been discriminated by having the equivalent taken off them.
- Guilty of ageism in selecting this clientele group to raise finance distinct to others.
- Never recognised as a service
- Economically putting pressure on a selective group to go elsewhere.

Requested the following on 22nd May 2006:

1. How many residents between 60 and 64 years of age (numbers if possible of disabled separate) over the last three years purchased parking permits (each year separate).

2. The number of those 65 and over who received free parking permits (numbers of disabled separate if possible) over the last three years (each year separate).

3. How many permits were applied for in the month of May in the last three years (disabled separate if possible) and 2006 May.

This information was not obtainable: *"it would appear that we do not currently hold all this information". (K Dicks)*

This gives weight behind the claim that no research was carried out into the consequences of such action, but more importantly the fact that the decision was not base on any quantative or qualative analysis.

Support for the withdrawal of the charges:

1. Stoke Parish Council have called upon the Council to withdraw the charges.

2. 'SPIN' were not consulted and feel the charges discriminate against senior citizens' and specially the disabled who are in wheel chairs and cannot use public transport (buses)

3. Age Concern – Not consulted

4. Thousands of people have signed a petition to have the charges withdrawn.

5. Access – not consulted and feel the charges should be withdrawn. They emphasise that the disabled now have 'Zero Choice' as many cannot use public transport.

Conclusion

1. The Council never carried out any sort of analysis and acted without any evidential support.

2. It introduced charges to raise monies, although, it admits it had no idea of the number of permits issued. Therefore, it was ill thought out and made on the hoof.

3. It failed local residents in its complete disregard in relation to quality and diversity.

4. It fails to recognise that this is a service; it just sees it as an opportunity to raise money from the most vulnerable clientele group.

5. No regard for the local economy and in particular to ASDA who have experienced a drop in sales since the introduction of such charges.

The Leader in the press has stated: "the pain of making the books balance should be spread across the whole of the community". This surely is a contradiction in terms.

The Council is out of touch with the local communities and cannot communicate in any meaningful way. The Council has failed to recognise that this clientele group are in receipt of low incomes and cannot afford the full charges.

Bromsgrove has a high number of residents without pensions because of the closure of Garringtons, and ex Rover employees are having reduced pensions, yet the Council seems to be in denial on this point.

Finally, residents have made it clear that they feel the decision was petty, spiteful, unnecessary and singled out the most vulnerable to punish for the Council's failings in keeping their house in order.

Councillor P. M. McDonald

"The true test of a civilised society is how it treats its less fortunate members."

## The Motions:

**1. "That this Council supports a request to ask the Executive Cabinet to rescind the recently imposed charges relating to the holders of Car Parking Passes for the Disabled."**

**2. "That the Executive Cabinet be asked to withdraw the recently imposed 'Administrative Charge' for the issue of car parking permits in respect of appropriately qualified pensioners within the District."**

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**Background:**

Up until May 2006 the parking permit administration charge was fixed at £5.15 for those between the ages of 60 and 64. Those aged 65 and over as well as the disabled enjoyed free car parking. There are currently 21,500 Bromsgrove District residents who are over 60, approximately 24% of the district's population. This is the second highest figure in the county. About 6,000 permits have been issued – most of which are renewed annually.

**Main discussion:**

The proposed hike from £5.15 to £30 will increase the council's income by a maximum of £150,000 – assuming all 6,000 present permit holders do renew, but at what social cost ? In addition the disabled will have to pay the going rate for the time their vehicle remains stationary in one of the council's car parks. It is not possible to estimate the additional revenue that this charge will generate. In taking these decisions the Cabinet has failed to consider the following issues:

1. The authority did not consult adequately. Indeed it has been claimed that various old people's organisations had been consulted and agreed to the proposals. Which organisations are these? Echoes of turkeys voting for Christmas perhaps ! It is confirmed that Bromsgrove Age Concern had not been consulted.

2. Many of the more severely disabled are physically unable to use public transport and are therefore forced to meet the parking charges.

3. It is generally accepted that the supermarket mostly affected by these charges, ASDA, has seen its turnover go down year on year, since the last lot of parking charges were introduced. These new charges will further add to this downward spiral.

4. Charging the disabled to park makes a mockery of the "caring" image the council is trying to foster after spending nearly £15,000 to provide a Shopmobility facility with the purchase of a number of electric scooters, and powered and manual wheelchairs. This figure excludes the cost of housing these wheelchairs etc. and it excludes the staff costs and running costs of approximately £50,000 pa.

5. Accusations of Ageism and disregard of the "Equality and Diversity" issues can be legitimately made against the council as well as hitting hard those who are financially disadvantaged.

6. The financially disadvantaged are a very real issue and may well be more numerous in Bromsgrove than elsewhere. We need to take into account the Garrington and Rover closures, which produced pensioners with either reduced pensions or no pensions at all.

7. By its actions, and its decision to impose parking charges on the disabled as well as increasing the permit fee sixfold this council sees the provision of car parking as a fund raising activity – pure and simple. It does not see the provision of car parking as a service to the community as whole. Car parking provision is not seen as a means of encouraging residents to patronise local businesses and it is not seen as a service to the most vulnerable in our society.

   The plethora of letters, which appeared in the local press when these decisions were first announced included the following comments:

- Free car parking facilities in Rubery, Merry Hill, Redditch on Sundays and elsewhere attract shoppers away from Bromsgrove town centre.

- Real deprivation being caused by these increases to people with very tight budgets.

- The indignity of having to prop oneself up against the machine to feed it with coins when one is totally reliant on walking aids even to stand up.

  Trying to remember the registration number and having to walk all the way back to the car, whilst suffering from a chronic heart condition – itself restricting the distance that can be walked - to check that the correct information is punched into the machine.

  The advantage of having ASDA in the town centre – keeps the town centre alive. Any threat to ASDA packing up, as a result of ever increasing car parking charges, will be a serious threat to the viability of the town centre.

- Making up for the financial shortcomings of the council by hitting the elderly and the most vulnerable.

- Blue Badge holders have been fined as many are unaware of the changes. This is blamed on the inadequacy of warning notices – telling everyone of the new arrangements.

  The introduction of these charges to the disabled have been compared with the ease in which councillors awarded themselves the recent 'obscene' increases in their allowances as one correspondent put it. There appeared to be no difficulty in raiding the reserves to accommodate the councillors' increases but no such thought had been given in taking the same action to rescind these new charges.

**In conclusion:**

Most of the above points have been reinforced by callers at our monthly surgeries in the town centre.
One severely handicapped lady – who has to rely on two walking aids to stand up - was in tears, when she described her predicament to us.

**On behalf of the Independents I would strongly urge the Scrutiny Board to refer back to the Executive Cabinet for the reconsideration of the twin issues covered by these two motions.**

- **Firstly to cancel the sixfold increase of the annual permit and reduce it to its former level – of £5.15.**

- **Secondly to scrap the car parking charges for the disabled forthwith.**

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Sources:


1. Planning & Highways Committee 12.02.01
2. Policy & Resources Committee 22.02.01
3. Executive Cabinet 03.12.03
4. Executive Cabinet 26.10.05
5. Executive Cabinet 22.02.06
6. The Bromsgrove Advertiser 21.06.06
7. The Bromsgrove Standard 23.06.06 and 30.06.06


N.Psirides.
18.07.06

# THE BLUE BADGE DISABLED PARKING SCHEME.

REPORT TO TASK GROUP. OCTOBER 3rd 2006

## THE ETHOS

The Peoples general conception of " disabled " in relation to parking is one of being wheelchair bound, they have very little understanding of how being disabled affects ones ability to walk any reasonable distance , which is the supreme test of all applications for a Blue Badge. There are many causes of a medical nature that warrant The provision of the Badge, many being less than obvious, there are also some misconceptions one being that the Badge relates to the car, not so, it is purely the person who holds the Badge which of course means that to exercise their right to park in a disabled bay, or where appropriate, on yellow lines they only need to be a passenger in the car.
Some of the medical reasons relate to Heart Conditions, Breathing problems, Arthritis in all its forms, Prosthetics, Impaired sight, Mental disorders, these are just a sample of Blue Badge Provisions.

The duty of B.D.C. in providing disabled parking is to make sufficient spaces available as close to the principle shopping areas as is possible to reduce the distance disabled persons have to walk, the Council has made significant moves to do that, but the decision to charge the disabled and over 60's to park has at one fell swoop hugely increased the time and distance they must walk in addition to the cost. In an effort to highlight that the following is a typical example of a visit to the town using the MULTI STOREY Car Park and not having a permit.

Enter car park find disabled space on ground floor, one available to the far right of park facing A.S.D.A. put Badges on dash walk to far end to parking ticket machine Acquire ticket return to car put it on dash, walk to the store put pound in shopping trolley walk around store complete shopping walk trolley to car unload trolley take trolley to nearest and only trolley bay at the far end of park retrieve pound return to car, completely Knackered.

If there is a need to then walk to the High street shops Banks etc: one is in too much pain to summon up the will to do so, of course one can then drive to another car park which is then full and still some distance to walk.

GEOFF HULETT.
COUNCILLOR CATSHILL.

# Bromsgrove District Council Car Parking Consultation October 2006

**Opinions expressed by Age Concern Bromsgrove & District clients during the period 09/10/06 - 19/10/06**

**Time limits** - 2 hour maximum and abolition of short time tickets in some car parks

"1 hr is too long for simple jobs such as going to the bank or PO, 2 hrs is too short for say a solicitors or hair appointment. It would be better if you could buy a 30 minute ticket at all car parks and the maximum stay was 3 hours not 2"

"The maximum time you can park doesn't take into account how long it takes to get out of my car, get my wheelchair out get to the machine get a ticket, get back to my car and so on , all before I can actually start to do my shopping"

"The new charges have just forced people to park on the streets – there are some roads around Bromsgrove that you almost can't get down now because of parked cars. There are also more people parking on double yellow lines than before"

"late night fees [up to 10.00] are an absolute rip off – other places I go the charges stop at 6.00 or 7.00"

There are places where blue badge holders have to buy a ticket but can then park for 1 hour longer than the time on the ticket"

" At New Street station you get 20 minutes free and then can pay for another 20 minutes if you need it but you have to get a ticket when you first park. If they can do something like that then why can't Bromsgrove"

**Bureaucracy**

"they say the charge is because it costs to set someone up on their computer system. But when I get a new pass next year I will already be on the system so why should it cost the same again"

**Location of machines and related information**

"the regulations should be much clearer and they should be where you drive in and not just by the machines"

"The Dolphin car park in particular is very steep and difficult for disabled people who have to go backwards and forwards to get a ticket and place it on their car"

"How does someone with a blue badge know whether the charges apply to them or not - there is nothing about this on the information boards by the machines. If I go to Pershore it says quite clearly that 'these charges do not apply to blue badge holders', even if it said the opposite at least I would know"

**Passing tickets on**

"Once I have paid for a ticket for a certain amount of time that time is paid for. I should be able to pass that ticket on to someone else to use until the time is up"

**Cost of permits**

" the jump from £5.15/£0.00 to £30.00 for everybody is too big a jump and discriminates against older people. And why £30 anyway for a simple admin job, it could have been say £15 or even £20 and it would have still caused problem because no body likes charges to increase, but it wouldn't have been so bad. It would have been better if they had kept different levels say 60 - 65 say £15, 66 - 75 say £10, over 75 say £5 that would have been fairer"

"charging another £30 for a new pass if you change your car during the year is wicked, I know its been changed and you don't lose the other months now but it still means that you have to pay out £60 in the one year"

"Parking in Bromsgrove is a lot more expensive than in Redditch"

**Drop in trade**

"there are 11 empty shops in the High Street already, even the charity shops are closing"

"previously it used to be hard to find a parking space at ASDA now I can always find one. That must mean that less people are using it. The same thing applies at the Market car park"

"I've been told that at the Wolverhampton ADSA and at Waitrose in Droitwich there are free disabled bays, if they can do it why can't Bromsgrove"

"My family and I have changed my shopping now we go to Morrisons or Sommerfield. If other people are doing the same surely that must mean that the high Street shops will have fewer people who will go to them as well as the supermarket"

"Sunday parking is free in Redditch and there is a far better selection of shops so it is worth driving over there. The same applies to Rubery on a Saturday"

"I no longer shop at ASDA because of the charges, I'd rather drive to TESCO in Redditch"

"The shopping selection in Bromsgrove is already not good. Having to pay more for parking just makes people think even more about shopping some where else. In Kidderminster and in Birmingham I can park free with my Blue Badge"

"I've heard that at least one Support Group that used to meet in Bromsgrove are looking to meet somewhere else because they are 'livid' about the new parking charges. That means even more people who might have shopped in Bromsgrove while they were here"

**Bus Passes**

"People say that instead of paying for a parking permit you can have a bus pass free. But a bus pass is no use if the buses go at the wrong time or there aren't any buses at all"

"If you are fit you can have a free bus pass. If you are disabled and can't use a bus easily then you have to pay for a parking permit, that's not fair"

*Keith Sherman, Chief Officer, Age Concern Bromsgrove & District, 51 Windsor Street, B60 2BJ*
*Tel: 01527 871840, Email: acbromsgrove@tiscali.co.uk, Website: www.acbromsgrove.org.uk*

# CAR PARKING CHARGES IN BROMSGROVE

Taking into account all that's been written and said, and bearing in mind the Council's need to increase revenue in a manner fair to all, that will be easy to implement, I offer for consideration the following.

1. Discontinue all permits.

2. Allow long stay on all Car Parks

3. Make the Recreation Ground, and the Market Car Parks, Pay on Foot 'Shoppers' Car Parks. Allow free parking for the first hour but load the charge after four hours to discourage all day parking.

4. To accommodate those who park all day 5 or 6 days a week, 'sell' them allocated and marked parking places. These could be on all the other car parks the. The spaces would marked eg. R.R. 01, a notice of authorisation to park in that space would given to the purchaser this would be displayed, a very heavy fine would be made on unauthorised parking, possibly towing away or clamping !

5. For disabled drivers, free spaces would be made available on all suitable car parks. For pay on foot car parks, only the first hour would be free. The marked spaces should be close to the pay station.

By adjusting the level of charges for each car park you could effectively 'manage' car parking, for example out of centre car parks could be charged less.

Such a scheme, if implemented, would require less labour from car park attendants and council staff, but could raise the required revenue in a 'fair' way.

[redacted]

**From:** Fiona Scott
**Sent:** 02 November 2006 12:22
**To:** Scrutiny@bromsgrove.gov.uk
**Cc:** [redacted]
**Subject:**

I had a phone call from [redacted] this morning. He wanted me to forward his views to the Car Parking Task Force.

"I am a resident of Bromsgrove and although I am only 53, I am disabled with congestive heart disease which limits my mobility considerably, hence I am a Blue Badge holder.

I am very disgruntled about the introduction of parking charges for Blue Badge holders in the Bromsgrove District – my sister is 62 and able bodied and can get about easily but qualifies for a £30.00 a year parking permit, whereas I, with my mobility difficulties have the inconvenience of getting to a pay machine and queuing up to pay. The alternative would be to buy a permit for £305.00 a year – that's from £0.00 to £305.00! I discussed this with Steve Martin, The Transport and Engineering Officer who said I could apply for a £30.00 a year permit but only if agree to be means tested which I find insulting and demeaning!

"The Bromsgrove District is the only District within Worcestershire County which has introduced these charges and I understand that the revenue raised is to fund the cost of the Shopmobility Scheme which runs from the Asda site. I would like to know who was asked about what disabled people like me want, whether we need free parking or mobility vehicles?

"I want to stress that the introduction of these charges makes me less likely to visit Bromsgrove and spend my money here – I have always shopped at Asda but now will be inclined to go elsewhere to shop."

Fiona Scott
Equalities Assistant

**Tel:** [redacted]

[redacted]
**Bromsgrove**
**Worcestershire**
[redacted]

Councillor Geoff Denaro
Bromsgrove District Council
The Council House
Burcot Lane
Bromsgrove B60 1AA

14 August 2006

Dear Councillor Denaro

**Car Parking Charges**

Firstly, please accept my apologies for writing directly to you in this matter but in this instance I feel there is a need to put pen to paper which is unusual as I normally adopt the C'est la vie approach.

I was very pleased to see that the council has eventually decided to set up a Task Group to look at the issue of car parking charges again with particular reference to elderly and disabled drivers. In my opinion, the press coverage has generally concentrated on the issues being experienced for the over 60's who now have to purchase a permit for £30 although this was previously free or cost £5.15. However, it does appear that the position of disabled individuals **under the age of 60** has largely gone unreported

Accordingly, the reason for writing to you is to raise the profile for individuals under the age of 60 (and hopefully, the discussions regarding this category) that hold Blue Badges as they are disabled. You will no doubt be aware that previously free parking was provided and in my opinion the current situation is deplorable for the following reasons:

- To target what can be considered to be the most vulnerable people is scandalous and clearly goes against the recent initiatives or legislation to help the disabled integrate more fully into society.
- The council has offered no alternative in these circumstances but insists that the normal car parking charges must be paid or a £300 annual permit must be purchased. Simply put, either way this is an enormous increase in charges and far exceeds the widely reported increase of up to £30.
- The district council has totally ignored the physical and financial constraints that disabled people face. Furthermore, some disabled individuals have very challenging behaviour and therefore, the previous arrangements to park quickly and safely was essential for them and their carers.
- It ignores the detrimental impact to Bromsgrove and the businesses still trading.

Having queried the situation with the council the response was simply, this is the position although you can always park on double yellow lines, in accordance with the guidelines laid down, which seems a very strange suggestion bearing in mind that Bromsgrove is getting more and more gridlocked.

Thank you for taking the opportunity to read this letter and needless to say, should you wish to discuss this matter further then please do not hesitate to contact me. Also, may I wish you every success in resolving what can only be considered a 'poison chalice' task .

Yours sincerely

[redacted]

**My name is [redacted] I have worked for Bromsgrove council for the past 18 months as car park attendant. When I tell people what I do as a career they think ALL you do is book people and make comments like I don't know how you sleep at night or have you no conscience. What they do not realise is that giving people an excess charge is only part of our job.** I do want to Stress these are my feelings and have not been influenced by any other source.
**So I am here today to try and explain some other duties carried out by the dreaded car park attendant.**

KEEP CHECK ON CARS IE CRIMINAL DAMAGE ACCIDENTS DOGS LEFT IN CARS

REPORT TO CCTV ANY PROBLEMS AROUND TOWN EG MANHOLE COVERS MISSING, SMASHED WINDOWS ALARMS GOING OFF ON CARS OR BUILDINGS

HELP PEOPLE TO USE MACHINES

IF MACHINES NOT WORKING TRY AND SOLVE PROBLEM IF CANT RING ENGINEER
HELP PEOPLE CARRY SHOPPING BACK TO CAR IF STRUGGLING

HELP ELDERLY OR LESS ABLED ACROSS ROAD

HELP FIND VEHICLES IF CANT REMEMBER WHERE PARKED THEM

WE GET A LOT OF ELDERLY PEOPLE WANT TO STOP AND TALK TO US AS THEY LIVE ON THEIR OWN AND GET LONELY

GIVE DIRECTIONS

I ALWAYS TRY AND WALK AROUND CARPARKS WITH A SMILE AS IF I LOOK HAPPY IT MAKES OTHER PEOPLE HAPPY I ALSO TRY AND BE WELL MANNERED AND WELL DRESSED AT ALL TIMES

INSTEAD OF SEEING A PERSON LEAVE A CAR FOR EG HAS PARKED OVER 2 SPACES I WOULD GO UP TO THE PERSON AND TELL THEM SO THAT THEY COULD RECTIFY THE PROBLEM THIS WAY THEY GO AWAY HAPPY AND I DON'T HAVE TO BOOK THEM
If See permit nearly out of date. will tell person.

I have had an experience Today with front of Market.

I WILL ALWAYS GIVE THE PERSON THE CHANCE TO BUY A TICKET IF THEY RETURN TO THE VEHICLE BEFORE I HAVE WRITTEN OUT THE EXCESS CHARGE.

. WE ALSO WORK WITH THE POLICE IN AN EVENING SOMETIMES DUE TO THE PROBLEM OF BOY RACERS ON CAR PARKS WHICH UPSET RESIDENTS

AS WE ARE ALL AWARE SINCE MAY WE HAVE HAD A LOT OF BAD PUBLICITY OVER THE CAR PARK CHARGES .I HAVE MADE A LIST OF THE MAIN GRIVIENCES OF THE PEOPLE OF BROMSGROVE

SUNDAY/PAYMENTS;- NO SHOPS OPEN ONLY USED FOR CHURCH GOERS AND DOLPHIN CTR AND ASDA THIS IS OUR WORST DAY FOR ABUSE AS PEOPLE GET ANNOYED WHEN THEY CAN GO TO REDDITCH AND HAVE FREE PARKING AND HAVE THE SHOPS OPEN

EVENING CHARGES GOING TO THE PUB HAD TO MANY DRINKS WANT TO LEAVE THE CAR UNTIL TOMORROW IF THEY BUY A ALL DAY TICKET AT 21.55 @ £2.10 IT WILL ONLY GIVE YOU 5 MINS PEOPLE SAY IT SHOULD GIVE THEM 12HRS

JUST POPPING IN FOR 5 MINS PEOPLE GET QUITE ANNOYED WHEN THEY JUST WANT TO POP TO THE TAKEAWAY OR THE LOTTERY WHICH IS ONLY GOING TO TAKE 5 MINUTES

CHANGE GIVEN BY MACHINES OR EXTRA TIME GIVEN I DO TRY AND CARRY CHANGE WITH ME BUT BY THE END OF THE DAY IT IS RUNNING A LITTLE LOW PEOPLE HAVE SUGGESTED WE SHOULD GIVE EXTRA MINUTES FOR MONEY GIVEN I DO TRY AND CARRY CHANGE BUT BY THE END OF MY SHIFT I AM STARTING TO RUN LOW.

PENSIONER PERMITS MOST PENSIONERS STILL NOT HAPPY MOST PEOPLE DO NOT RETIRE NOW UNTILTHE AGE OF 65 SO PERHAPS COULD PUT AGE FOR PERMIT UP TO 65

THEN SHOULD NOT PAY FOR A PERMIT BUT IS ONLY VALID BETWEEN SUN – THUS IF WANT TO USE CARPARKS ANY OTHER TIME MUST BUY TICKET

DISABLED PARKING SO MANY PEOPLE ARE AGAINST THIS AND I SOMETIMES FEEL SO GUILTY WHEN I SEE SEVERLEY DISABLED PEOPLE TRYING TO STRUGGLE TO MACHINES, IF I AM AROUND I WILL ALWAYS HELP BUT THIS IS NOT ALWAYS POSSIBLE

THE PROBLEM IS THIS SERVICE HAS BEEN SO ABUSED THAT A LOT OF PEOPLE ARE USING BLUE BADGES WHICH ARE FOR RELATIVES EVEN WHEN THE RELATIVES ARE NOT IN THE CAR. IF I DO MEET PEOPLE WHO LIVE IN BROMSGROVE AND REALLY ARE HAVING PROBLEMS WITH THERE DISABILITY AND GETTING TO MACHINES OR CANNOT AFFORD THE FULL PAYMENT OF A PERMIT I WILL GIVE THEM STEVE MARTINS ADDRESS AND TELL THEM TO WRITE AND EXPLAIN THE SITUATION TO HIM AND IF HE FEELS THEY HAVE A VALID CASE THEY MAY BE ABLE TO GET A PERMIT AT A REDUCED RATE.

I WOULD JUST LIKE TO FINISH THIS TALK BY SAYING THE PEOPLE OF BROMSGROVE ARE THE NICEST FRIENDLIEST PEOPLE I HAVE EVER MET. EVEN THOUGH I AM A CAR PARK ATTENDANT I GET PEOPLE STOPPING FOR CHATS, BEEPING HORNS AND WAVING AS THEY GO BY

.THE MARKET AT HANOVER STREET IS LIKE A COMMUNITY IN ITSELF IF YOU GO THERE ON OPENING DAYS EVERYBODY GOES JUST FOR A CHAT AND A CUP OF TEA IT DOESN'T MATTER WHO YOU ARE THEY WILL ALWAYS MAKE YOU WELCOME. I FEEL A REAL PRIDE WORKING WITH THESE WONDERFUL PEOPLE WHO STILL HAVE TRADITIONS WHICH ARE NOW NOT EASILY FOUND.I HAVE HEARD A LOT OF PEOPLE SAYING BROMSGROVE IS 20 YEARS BEHIND EVERYWHERE ELSE BUT THIS IS WHAT VISITORS TO BROMSGROVE LOVE I HAVE

MET A LOT OF PEOPLE WHO ARE IN THE TOWN LOOKING FOR PROPERTY IN THE AREA AND THEY ASK ME WHATS ITS LIKE I ALWAYS SAY IT IS WONDERFUL PEOPLE STILL HAVE RESPECT FOR EACH OTHER AND WORK TOGETHER AND I AM VERY PROUD TO BE PART OF IT.

WELL THAT IS THE END OF MY VERSION OF HOW TO BE A CAR PARK ATTENDANT I HOPE I HAVENT OFFENDED ANYONE WITH MY HONESTY.AND WOULD LIKE TO THANK EVERYONE FOR THEIR TIME AND FOR LISTENING

**Q12: The car parks owned by the Council are expensive to maintain. What contribution should Blue Badge holders make towards these costs?**

| | Strongly agree | Agree | **Total agree** | Neither agree nor disagree | Disagree | Strongly disagree | **Total disagree** | Don't know | Total | **Net agreement score** |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | % | % | % | % | % | % | % | % | | |
| Blue Badge holders should pay the set charges | 4.5% | 18.7% | **23.2%** | 9.6% | 44.0% | 22.3% | **66.3%** | 0.9% | 332 | **-43.1** |
| Blue Badge holders on low incomes should pay a reduced charge | 21.7% | 33.9% | **55.7%** | 10.4% | 20.5% | 13.1% | **33.6%** | 0.3% | 327 | **22.1** |
| Blue Badge holders on low incomes should not be charged | 37.3% | 31.9% | **69.3%** | 11.9% | 14.9% | 3.0% | **17.9%** | 0.9% | 335 | **51.4** |
| Council owned car parks should be free to all users and funded purely through Council Tax | 42.7% | 23.0% | **65.8%** | 10.4% | 15.6% | 5.8% | **21.4%** | 2.5% | 365 | **44.4** |



EXTRACT FROM TELFORD QUESTIONNAIRE — APPENDIX 4

APPENDIX 5

**Steve Martin**

**From:** [redacted]
**Sent:** 02 October 2006 11:56
**To:** Steve Martin
**Cc:** External Margaret Sherrey
**Subject:** Disabled parking

Hi Steve,

Here are my concerns regarding disabled parking in Bromsgrove:

- The disabled parking fee was introduced to support funding for the Shop Mobility Scheme, which at present, does not serve the whole disabled community; especially the children. The shop's range seems more suited to the elderly who are competent enough to drive the scooters and adults who need to be pushed in wheelchairs. There are no smaller wheel chairs for children or any other type of trolley with a chair, suitable for an older child to sit in.
- The change in time limit to 2hrs short stay car parks, particularly Parkside being the nearest to the shops, is simply not enough time to get around with a wheel chair and a child/adult who may have challenging behaviour issues. This puts added pressure and stress on their carer to clock watch for fear of a fine.
- If you purchase an all day ticket you should be able to freely move between car parks to suit your needs without having to re-pay regardless of short/long stay conditions (time concessions would be required for blue badge holders)
- Being disabled is not just about getting around there can be mental/learning difficulties, behavioural/emotional issues as well as the more obvious physical disabilities and it is about looking at the bigger picture and thinking of carer's needs as well

I appreciate that this is a rather delicate matter that needs to be handled with a degree of sensitivity by the council. Many parents and carers are not only battling with life but also their own issues and acceptance of their child/relatives condition. They can be struggling with many roles; parent, partner, colleague whilst also providing valuable care which often goes un-noticed until there is a problem. If a child/person is severely disabled they themselves may be unaware of any changes and it falls to their carer's to now remember to get the ticket. I feel what I am trying to say is that it's not just about the council collecting in money it is about taking a responsible look at the consequence of these actions and to reflect on whether they are actually benefiting the people they are trying to serve.

I would be happy to help further as long as my busy schedule allows and I can be contacted on [redacted]

Many Thanks

[redacted]

## Points for Consideration

- The present parking system is not consumer friendly
- Two hours is not enough time to shop at leisure
- Time limit results in stressed shoppers; clockwatching
- Short stay meters cannot be re-fed so you have to move – if one is having lunch very inconvenient
- The multi-storey car park is little known and under used

## Disability Angle

- Disabled bays have been re-painted (why and at what cost?) but there are still no signs in front of them to inform blue badge holders that they have to pay
- Carer's needs are being ignored especially in the case of learning difficulty and challenging behaviour
- New fees for disabled are to fund Shop Mobility Scheme? If so it does not serve the whole disabled community especially the children
- If disabled people have a Motability car then all their DLA mobility component is taken up paying for it so parking fees are and added financial burden
- For some disabled people (especially learning difficulty) shopping is a treat and a day out

## Possible Suggestions

- Longer stay/concessions for disabled and please do not fine them
- When people come to Bromsgrove we need to welcome them and keep them there as long as possible – good business sense
- Open and Honest – admit to making a mistake in local paper and advertise a "No fee week" week to welcome shoppers back
- Make the short stay 4 hours with some all day spaces for convenience of shoppers
- Multi-storey could be £1 a day to encourage outside use as in local staff/businesses
- Asda could have the multi-storey as their free car park
- Some supermarkets refund car park fees if customers spend over £10.00 in store
-

[redacted]

APPENDIX 6

Welcome to Bromsgrove - Or perhaps not!

It's no longer a pleasure to visit the small market town of Bromsgrove. It can only be described as a stressful experience – a constant race against the clock to ensure a £30 donation to Bromsgrove District Council coffers is not requested.

Upon arrival it's necessary to know there and then how long each queue is going to be in every shop/bank/building society. If this calculation is misjudged or you happen to meet an old friend/feel thirsty/see something unusual, the cost may be great. You only need to go over the time by a few minutes to get a car parking ticket.

Having spoken to many shopkeepers, visitors and shoppers in town the complaint is obvious and common. Becoming aware that time is running out when half way through choosing an item/eating a meal/having a drink/getting a hair cut is a huge problem for shopkeepers and customers alike. All thoughts of purchasing are abandoned and a particularly bad taste is left in the mouths of the restaurant customers.

Disabled and elderly visitors to the town have their own complaints.

Driving along Worcester Road after 6pm in the evening there are cars parked and hovering in the parking bays, on the double yellow lines and on the pavement. To pay 60p to collect a £1 portion of chips should not have to be an option. Perhaps a 15-minute free period after 6pm to allow the collection of takeaways should be considered. It would certainly be very popular and may prevent accidents not to mention damage to the kerbstones.

Evening visitors to Bromsgrove may be tempted to enjoy an extra drink or two and then take a taxi home but the thought of having to return at an unearthly hour the next day to retrieve the car may be encouraging drink driving. An option to be able to pay for the next morning would be welcomed as would a flat evening rate from 6pm or even free parking after 6pm – especially in view of the movement towards late night shopping having to be considered by many businesses.

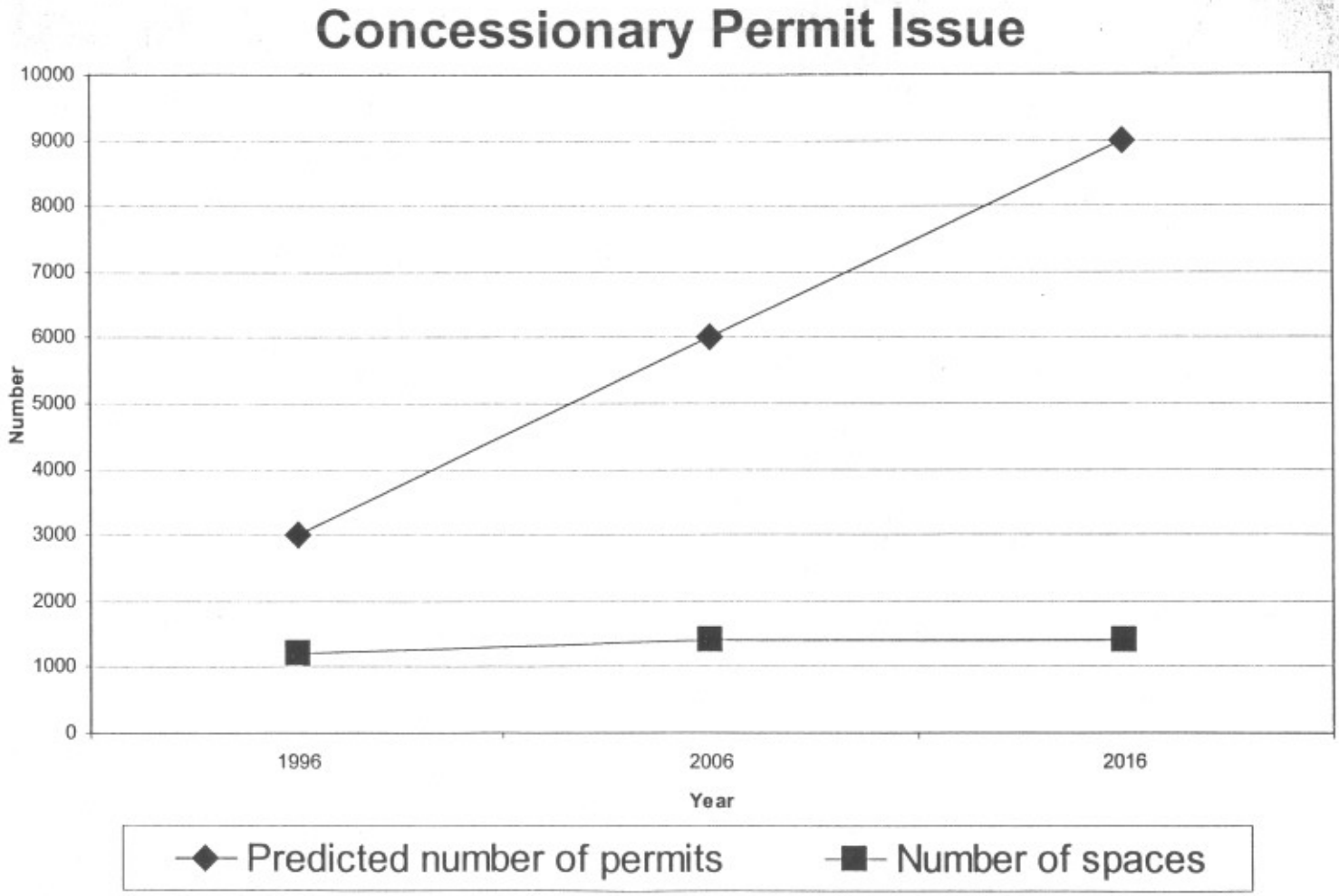
Surely we are all aiming to achieve a bustling, prosperous, thriving and popular Bromsgrove. Please do not underestimate how vital car parking is to this.

Bromsgrove needs to have, as it already does, a selection of parking options. What is currently lacking is a parking system where the shopper/visitor pays for the time used.

It is our understanding that despite the amount of money received from car parking fees and fines the funds are not available for a traditional 'pay on foot' system. Perhaps Bromsgrove District Council should lead the way and be innovative. Old traditions could be returned to – after all Bromsgrove is a Market Town. With a fresh and friendly back to basics approach tickets could be issued at a manned kiosk and time spent paid for on exit.

Let us work together to make Bromsgrove the Market Town it deserves to be.

Anita Mears
Owner/Partner The Clothes Rail Etc...
Chairperson BroMark (Bromsgrove Marketing Partnership)


Concessionary Permit Issue
10000
9000
8000
7000
6000
5000
4000
3000
2000
1000
0
Number
1996
2006
2016
Year
Predicted number of permits
Number of spaces

APPENDIX 7

APPENDIX 8

[redacted]

21. 8. 06

Dear Sir/Madam.

Ref Standard 11/8/06 Page 3 Car parking.

Out of all the confusion & bitterness of the car park charges at Bromsgrove can I just mention that we get a lot of "comment" over the new parking policy. Thus I offer my time and comment yet again....

We spend a lot of money advertising what is the longest-running weekly Antique Collectors Fair (27 years) in the Midlands at the Market Hall. We also run an event on the fourth Sunday every month.

If Bromsgrove wants to attract visitors they should contact the people such as ourselves who do this for a living over many years. A major blow was delivered against tourism by the onset of Sunday parking charges by the Council.

Now I notice the sign outside the Market Hall which allows unloading in the disabled spaces prior to 9 am has disappeared - any ideas?

We organised various events for many years (and still do) eg. one stately home had our organisation in an event attracting 18000 people in two days.

As someone said who came back to visit after twenty years in Canada Bromsgrove is still an ordinary market town with some charm.

Thus to attract an ever-demanding public a modicum of judgement should be used in the degree of penalising people visiting and contributing to the well-being of the town. Diplomacy and common sense in the beginning can save a lot of wasted time on forums etc with the time and effort being put to better use for an allowed better solution to the important issues CAR PARKING FEES

Yours Sincerely

BROMSGROVE ANTIQUE MARKET

[redacted]

26.9.06

Dear Sir/Madam

Your view 23rd August

Re the main letter of the 'experienced eye' can I draw attention to the unique (unmentioned) event in the Market Hall which has added to the visitor level over the last 27 years.

Bromsgrove has the longest-running, weekly Antique/Collectors Fair in the Midlands - a record unsurpassed. Thus visitors come in from Stafford Worcester, The Black Country, normally this would not occur unless they had reason to visit the area in the normal course of events.

Fifteen thousand leaflets are printed by Wanderley Fairs plus weekly/monthly adverts in newspapers in Kidderminster Halesowen Stourbridge Worcester Malvern and the huge Express & Star catchment area.

Our long-established other events also promote the Bromsgrove area - I talked to people from Australia yesterday who got our leaflet from Coleshill (Wolverhampton) Tourist Centre.

Thousands of pounds have been generated by both the Wednesday (weekly) and Sunday (monthly) Antique Fairs.

Long may it continue and with some diplomacy and forethought on such as parking charges more important matters can have some precedence.

Yours sincerely

Alan WANDERLEY

FAHFB

WANKLEY FAIR

[redacted]

5

Dear Sir/Madam, 1.9.06

1) On Sunday 27th Aug we organised the Antique Fair in the Market Hall

2) At 8.10 am two traffic wardens appeared to book (if possible) my first two stallholders. One stallholder was early having just come from hospital visiting her husband. She had been there a day for a week but made all effort to attend the Fair. She already had the requisite ticket on her car.

The other stallholder left her car for two minutes in the unloading bay (one of two by the Market) to find me to see where to park etc - not having done the Fair before. An argument ensued as the two wardens homed in to book her - she was hysterical.... I told her to move her car onto the road (away from this awful situation) in Worcester Lane to ~~take~~ calm herself down.

3) During the week we have one warden - car park full. On a Bank Holiday (quiet) Sunday we have a warden + the main warden with a total of 15 cars on the car park!!!

4) The Fair attendance has dropped by 50% since having Sunday parking. I have spoken to people going for a walk who say that they now come to Bramsgrove very rarely because the limited time spoils the occassion of the walk.

5) Months ago the Supervisor warden questioned a red notice on the market building which allowed stallholders to unload prior to 9am and then go to park (instead of having a track to unload) That notice has applied for 12 years and formerly in the 'old market as well. In those months the sign remained even though one man said that 'he did not understand how it applied!!! If he saw 'explosives beware!' would it apply - as per 30 mph etc.

6) The red notice suddenly 'went' from the wall on the 23rd Aug approx. - vandals presumably saw

Roger Munn — who does an extremely good job as Market Superintendent

7) I asked the warden Supervisor on Thurs 27th Aug Sunday about the notice. "It was me" he said with an insolent grin of victory — in line with national guidelines" he said.

8) I was amazed then I asked about people — Roger Munn, myself being told about this and he said he told 'somebody'. Did he write to all concerned or 'somebody'.

9) Now then — I am on the 'pointed end' seeing so many people at all the venues and they expect me to be the oracle. Including all venues I have 287 stallholders and thousands of customers — as I have said we have been in the Red Lands the longest with these events

As someone said last Wednesday our events always set a vibrant tone to in this case an ordinary market town

From my point of view I have to waste a lot of unpaid time placating and keeping things afloat generally and nothing since people all round get the message.

I hope that this is the last screed I have to do on such a straightforward subject which really has dropped Bromsgrove to the bottom of the league in the eyes of a lot of people.

10) On that Sunday the (two) wardens appeared every hour to a two-thirds empty car park. Sort this situation out because it will take a lot to get rid of the stigma.

11) We are now going to Sainsburys at Blackheath — a town with a full, vibrant market and High Street no parking charges and two hours free parking.

They enforce the rules with diplomacy and care using a ~~medium~~ modicum of judgement.

Really must go now!

Thank you

Yours sincerely,

P Colmer.

Waverley Towns

From: R T SHIM
[redacted]

To: A JESSOP Esq.

[redacted]

LEGAL & DEMOCRATIC SERVICES
16 OCT 2006
REFERRED TO:-
AJ

13. 10. 06

Dear Mr Jessop. Thank you for your attention and contacting me re my BDC (a Parking (Market)

1) Really the car park area is far small to have the whole area as long stay. A large amount of trade has been lost because the casual short stay customer cannot find a parking spot.

2) From the Antique Town point of view the notice on the Market Hall allowing traders (market antique) to use the two disabled bays for unloading prior to 9 am should be reinstated. It was removed not by vandals but by the supervising Traffic Warden without instruction or formal notice to anyone - not even Roger Munn - bad manners and a retrograde move. He sign had been there 12 years

3) The Sunday Antique Town (each month) Where the whole one has suffered from parking alteration. Only 25% of the car park on Sunday is in use because there is very little to attract people into a market town on that day (which is usual)

People have stopped coming in to dine at various pubs because they cannot relax and enjoy because of the limited parking time they go elsewhere to eat and to Classic Cars etc which are myriad now.

Thus Sunday should go back to being Free Parking or very nominal per up to say three hours

4) When the Market Hall was built I was asked about views on all aspects including parking facilities and I suggested two storeys - one long & one short stay Money came into it policy but my point was that

the investment would not be 'static' but would generate payments of its outlay and have a spin-off facility bringing movement and money into the town.

Two years ago a [redacted] Senior employee said it was a pity that the idea was never brought [redacted] this ...

5) Yet again - not to be boring but Weekly and Sunday Monthly Fairs at Bromsgrove have a bit of a unique position.

Weekly the Fair is the longest-running (26 years) in the Midlands - in fact there is virtually nothing on a weekly basis in most towns and cities in the Midlands of this type.

NB We have the oldest Antique Fair on a monthly basis at Kinver, the oldest, largest Boot Fair in the Midlands (and the Country at Kinver (back 26 years) and the only Boot Fair in Warwickshire at Polwick.

6) Basically we are in something of a recession and of course morale gets low and I suggest that anything positive from B&C would be welcomed in an area which has been devastated by its surrounding loss of industry in the last few years - and of course Interest Tracking

7) Our events are advertised nationwide and with such as 'Travel Keys' in America who make Holiday routes of interest for tourists going place-to-place in this country.

We do this for a living with some long standing reputation and hopefully we can have some positive policy to provide assistance and carry on.....

Thank you

Yours sincerely

[redacted] Loveday

FCMS