

Resident Association, Petition and Ward Councillor Responses to Public Notice

1) Representations from East Bassett Residents' Association (EBRA)

Dear Mr Ivory

Consultation on Charges for Residents Parking permits in Zones 1-12 & 16

On behalf of this Association which includes Zone 9 and part of Zone 10, I make the following objections to the introduction of a charge for a Resident's First Parking Permit and the introduction of a Temporary Resident Parking Permit.

The reasons for objection are as follows:

£30 charge for first parking permit

- Nearly all of the zones covered have been created because the presence of large institutions of higher education or proximity to the General Hospital bring a high volume of traffic affecting residential streets together with obstructive on-street parking by non-residents.
- Residents within those zones with more than one car in the family already pay to park a second car near to their own homes.
- Residents within those zones have the disadvantage of needing to ensure the use of visitors' parking permits for their visitors in order to avoid a fine.
- The greatest burden of meeting costs for parking in their own street falls on houses where there is little or no space to get cars off the road, such as in the Flower Roads which form part of this Association.
- Whole swathes of the City have no restrictions placed on parking in their own streets, are free from excessive traffic and obstructive on-street parking, do not have to make special arrangements for parking when a relative or friend calls or a tradesman mends a broken window.
- The benefits of managed parking listed in paragraph 3 of Mr Harvey's letter of 16 August affect everyone using roads so managed and the cost should be shared by all rather than the burden fall solely on the already inconvenienced people living where the weight of traffic and on-street parking has necessitated the creation of parking zones in residential streets.
- Unless everyone in the City, using the public road to park a car, pays an equal fee to do so it is unjust and discriminatory to charge those who happen to live in residential streets in a parking zone created by the Council in order to maintain normal traffic flow.
- This Association opposes the imposition of a first car charge of £30.

£15 Temporary Resident Parking Permit

- Introduction of a charge would only be acceptable if payment of a fee would not lead to an increase in the number of applications.
- Concern has been expressed by members of this Association that users of temporary permits might be students and encouragement of any additional parking by use of such permits would undermine the aims of residential parking schemes in the reduction of on-street parking.
- Introduction of a charge would only be acceptable if the circumstances for issue of a temporary permit will be clearly laid down and firmly adhered to.
- Introduction of a charge would only be acceptable if it is shown that the income gained would be significantly greater than the administrative cost of collecting the money.
- Any increase in the use of temporary permits would place a greater burden on Traffic Officers which could lead to a greater incidence of unrecorded infringements.

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2) Representation on behalf of Highfield Residents' Association (HRA)

This is a provisional comment made on behalf of the Highfield Residents' Association, pending its committee meeting on 9th September. There are questions raised (in bold) below to which response is needed before the end of the consultation period so that a supplementary response can be made. **Please confirm by return that you will be providing these responses in time.**

We are encouraging members to respond to the consultation on their own behalf also, but some may not do so in the knowledge that the HRA is representing their interests. **Please therefore give this response weight that reflects the fact it represents the views of multiple residents.**

The comment is provisional because the Association's committee meets monthly - not an unusual pattern for many community groups. Your consultation period however started after our August meeting and is intended to finish before our September meeting (on Monday 9th). This is the subject of our first objection.

Our comments are:

1) The consultation period is too short for many to respond - it does not allow time for the monthly meeting cycle of associations such as the HRA to consider the proposals. Furthermore it is taking place during the main holiday period for the UK when many anticipated respondents will be away from home. If this was inadvertent then it is incompetent. If it was not inadvertent then it is cynical, as its only effect can be to deprive people who may have wanted to comment the opportunity to do so. **Please confirm by return that the consultation period will be extended until at least 16 September. Assuming that is agreed, could you please respond by 9 September to the queries we raise, to enable a return response in time.**

2) The consultation letter dated 16 August is not clear to those without a prior knowledge of the terminology used. This writer for one has no idea what 'Residents First Parking Permits' refers to. Is it the first permit issued to any particular resident? Or is it a sobriquet describing the fact that residents are meant to come first in the allocation of permits? Or some other meaning? What is a 'Temporary Resident Parking Permit? Is it a permit for a someone who intends being resident only for a short time in the area? Or is it a temporary permit for any resident? And is it valid only for 3 months, or only in those areas where currently no charges are levied. How does this relate to the visitor parking permits that residents have to enable friends etc to park nearby for a day or so? Is it the same thing? If so, why have they only got a life of 3 months, when what is needed is a supply that can be used as and when over a much longer period? **Please respond to these queries.**

3) The Council's logic for the schemes being self funding and not being subsidised from other budgets is understandable. However the main cause of the need for the parking schemes in the HRA area is the University. Before its expansion over the last 20-30 years there was no need for parking controls on residential streets nearby. It should thus be the University who is responsible for the funding the parking schemes, not residents.

4) The implementation of the scheme in the Battle roads/Highfield Road was paid for by the University as part of the planning agreement for the Avenue Campus permissions. That agreement should have included a commuted sum for ongoing maintenance/management of the scheme. If it did not, that was a failure of the officers who drew up the planning agreement/Panel who agreed it, for which residents are now being asked to pay. If it did, then there is no legal justification for charging residents, at least within the Avenue Campus hinterland. **Please clarify the position on this matter.**

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5) Similarly, many recent developments such as Boldrewood, the new buildings either side of University Road and redeveloped halls of residence should have been subject to s106 planning agreements and a DAS which should have explained what transport arrangements were being made for the additional activity generated by those buildings. The inevitable result of the increased activity and what is presumed to be sustainable transport encouragement would have been known to be the control of on-street parking in the area to manage the effects of the inability/unwillingness of the developer to meet the full anticipated parking requirements on its own land. For this there should have been s106 monies required by SCC of the developer to finance not only specific works, but the ongoing cost of managing the schemes. If these monies were not required by SCC then this is a failure of its responsibilities for which residents (already inconvenienced by the destruction of family housing areas through the creation of HMOs - its self a result of the failure of the University to meet the accommodation requirements of the additional students that result from its expansion plans) are being asked to pay. In other words, are residents are being asked to subsidise the business cost of the University because SCC has failed to apply its statutory powers effectively? If commuted sums have already been taken to administer residents' parking schemes, then the current proposal is of suspect validity and could mean that the University could apply in the courts for return of previously paid monies. **Please therefore confirm by 9 September the position on s106 requests and payments for transport/parking (including management of residents' parking schemes) in association with planning permissions granted to the University over the last 20-30 years.**

6) If there have previously been insufficient or no monies received from the University towards the administration of residents' parking schemes, has the University been asked to make an adequate contribution voluntarily, given that it is the sole cause of the need for schemes in the Highfield area? **Please confirm the position.**

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3) Representation by Newtown Residents' Association with Petition (146 people)

Dear Mr. Ivory,

Re: Consultation on Charges for Residents Parking Permits in Zones 1 – 12 & 16

Your letter seeking residents' views on the proposed introduction of new charges for residents' parking schemes was brought to the Annual General Meeting of the Newtown Residents Association on 20th August 2013 for consideration by attendees.

Please note that the letter was sent on the 16th of August, however the residents in this area did not receive the letter until approximately 4 days later. This did not give the full 21 days consultation period, however following discussions amongst those present, the decision voted for was to reject both the proposed £15 for Temporary Resident Parking Permits charge, valid for three months, and the £30 per year charge for the Residents First Parking Permits.

Their reasons stated are as follows:

Resident First Parking Permits

Many people are required by their jobs to be car owners & drivers and some local households have one vehicle only. This resident and car owner already pays road tax and their council tax and has no alternative, in a terraced homed street with no front garden area, to park the vehicle anywhere except the road.

There is no security in parking in the street, and absolutely no guarantee for the resident that they will be able to park in their own street.

Due to visitors to the local hospital, businesses and places of worship all located in this area, the resident may be obliged to park several streets from their home.

This uncertain parking arrangement is reflected in increased premiums on car insurance.

Insurance companies realise the likelihood of damage to a vehicle not parked on the residents' property and not within view of the householder, is greatly increased through on street parking.

The residents therefore object to being penalised by yet further charges imposed on First Parking Permits holders.

Temporary Resident parking Permit

A resident may have to change their vehicle. In the period of time spent waiting for the vehicle log book and documentation to come through, the resident/ driver takes time out of work to go to Gateway and request a temporary parking permit. If it takes about a week for documentation to come through, this will mean the car owner will have paid twice: £15 for the temporary permit followed by £30 for the permanent parking permit, on top of having to take time out again to return to Gateway and go through the process of applying for a permanent parking permit.

Newtown Residents Association members wish to declare their objections to:

- the proposal of First Parking Permit holders being charged to park somewhere in their Zone and
- to the proposal of £15 being charged for Temporary Resident's Parking Permits on top of the fact that visitors permits now cost £6 per book of 10.

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In times when people's work requirements so often necessitate having a vehicle, and when petrol costs are higher than they have ever been, the proposal of more charges for no extra service to the resident/ car owner is not considered to be acceptable and could be unviable for those already on very limited household income.

An example of those who may find this unviable are the many care workers amongst our residents. In many cases they are the main source of household income due to unemployment in their household. Care workers wages are not high and their working day is often very extended due to the nature and timing of their work. Care worker agencies pay extremely low car mileage and the introduction of First Parking Permit holder charges on a single car and often single wage household will have a detrimental impact on earnings.

The Newtown Residents Association wish to recommend that Southampton City Council reconsiders these new charge proposals.

4) Representation from a Trustee of the Portswood Resident Gardens Trust

Subscribers make up nearly 90% of the households in the Portswood Resident Gardens Conservation Area (PRGCA) which includes a number of the roads within Zone 12.

We object to the proposed introduction of new charges for the residents parking scheme in vicinity of the PRGCA for the following reasons:-

1. The RPZ 12 was extended early in 2012 to include Abbotts Way and Russell Place. The improvements to access and health and safety for residents has been welcomed and residents have accepted they must pay a charge if they require more than the first permit. However, the imposition of a charge for the first parking permit is now seen as another unwelcome tax by the Council, particularly when many households are under financial pressure. The imposition of this charge is particularly unwelcome in the PRGCA as most residents consider the problems caused by non-resident parking are mainly generated by the University of Southampton failing to manage the demand for parking facilities by its staff and students.

2. The Council has in the past recognised the importance of the management and control of all day parking in residential areas by non-residents and, until now, have maintained the principle of first Residents Permits being free of charge. This approach has been welcomed by residents and should be maintained. The imposition of the charge for the first Residents Permit is particularly contentious in the PRGCA where the majority of households are paying Council tax in band F, G or H.

3. We are also concerned that the consultation period for this proposed change is too short and has not been sufficiently well advertised to allow those household that will be affected by the proposed charge to become aware of the proposal and respond within the consultation period.

4. The principle that the parking scheme should not be an additional financial burden on the Council's already strained resource is understood. However, there is a strongly held view that as the main cause of the problem of non-resident all day parking is caused by the University, it is the University that should be required to meet the cost of a parking scheme to mitigate the problem it has created and failed to manage effectively.

5. Given the recent developments at the University such as Bolderwood, the new buildings either side of University Road and the redeveloped halls of residence, there has been ample opportunity for the Council to negotiate terms by means of s106 conditions in the granting of planning permission whereby appropriate parking

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arrangements and ongoing financial contributions could be required as a condition of the planning permission. Failure to obtain such mitigation and safeguards to offset the increased demand for parking reflects poorly on the competence of the Planning Department. Furthermore, it now appears a proportion of the cost of this failure is being imposed on local householders through the imposition of these charges for first parking permits.

These additional charge should not be imposed on local residents and household. The University should, as a condition of granting permission for future development, be required to provide sufficient funds to effectively manage the parking problem they have created in the PRGCA and RPZ 12.

I look forward to hear that this proposal to impose a charge for the first Residents Parking permit is withdrawn.

5) Representation by Coxford Ward, Councillor Thomas and Councillor Morrell

Consultation on Charges for Residents Parking Permits in Zones 1-12 and 16

We wish to jointly object to the proposed charges for residents' parking permits in Zone 7 (Coxford).

We trust that, although the consultation period has just ended, our objection will be registered.

Residents' parking zones were created in Coxford Ward because of the parking pressures caused by the close proximity of the General Hospital. Patients, visitors and staff were using neighbouring roads to park in order to avoid the cost of parking on the hospital site. Prior to the introduction of parking permits residents had to put up with wholly unacceptable levels of street parking, made worse by the fact that many houses in Coxford do not, and cannot, have off-road parking. Despite the introduction of parking restrictions, residents still have to contend with 'illegal' parking even during the periods the restrictions are in force.

Councillor Simon Letts was quoted in the 'Daily Echo' on 6 September 2013 as saying "The council subsidises parking permit schemes across the city, and that costs £230,000 a year to do. This scheme will fund half of that. We're currently asking ratepayers across the city and not in permit zones to fund a service they don't receive, and we think that the balance is right that the council should charge a relatively small sum which seems a fair compromise."

Councillor Letts, assuming he is quoted correctly, seems to be saying that the residents of Coxford are receiving a 'service' which other residents across the city do not receive. The residents living in parking zones in Coxford had to put up with their roads being used as overflow car parks for the General Hospital. Parking restrictions were introduced in recognition of an intolerable situation. In no way can that be interpreted as a 'service'.

To suggest, as does Councillor Letts, that the City Council is acting equitably in that City ratepayers are being relieved of a financial burden by placing it onto the residents of Coxford, is disingenuous. The people who use residential roads in Coxford to park up while they are at the General Hospital, for whatever reason, come from all over the city and from outside it. Coxford residents should not be financially penalised for the failure of the Hospital authorities to provide adequate parking on-site at a reasonable cost to staff, patients and visitors.

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Obliging Coxford residents to pay more for the privilege of (possibly) parking outside their own homes is unreasonable and unfair and is penalising them for having the misfortune to live in close proximity to a very busy hospital.

Councillors Keith Morrell and Don Thomas Coxford Ward

6) Petition from residents of Dale Valley Road

DALE VALLEY ROAD RESIDENTS' PETITION

We, the undersigned, being residents of Dale Valley Road, Southampton, hereby register our Objection to the City Council's proposal to introduce new charges for residents' parking permits.

We do not believe that the City Council has stated any relevant or good reasons to introduce any new residents' parking scheme in this area and therefore any new residents' parking charges are improper and unjustified.

233 signatures