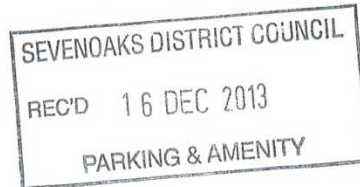


Public Consultation Comments Received by Email and Post



Sevenoaks
TOWN COUNCIL

The Parking Services Manager
Sevenoaks District Council
P.O. Box 183
Argyle Road
Sevenoaks
Kent, TN13 1GN



13th December 2013

Re: Car Parking Charges within Sevenoaks Town Consultations (on and off street)

Dear Mr Connor

Sevenoaks Town Council considered the consultation for both on and off street parking charges for 2014 / 2015 at the Planning Committee meeting held on the 9th December 2013. Town Councillors wished to reject the premise of another increase in parking charges, as motivation for the increase appears to be for Sevenoaks District Council's budgetary reasons rather than concern for the wellbeing of residents, visitors and local businesses within the Town and District.

In para 2.3 of a recent central government consultation on local authority controlled parking it states:

"... the Government is aware of concerns that some local authorities appear not to be using their powers to meet the best interests of road users, communities and businesses in their area. There are concerns about over-zealous parking enforcement and high parking charges driving people out of Town Centres, pushing up the cost of living and making it harder for people to park responsibly and go about their everyday lives."

The Consultation goes on to announce the Government's intention to amend certain elements of local authority parking policy including *"re-emphasising that parking charges and fines cannot be used as a means to raise revenues"*

The message from Central Government is clear; that parking charges should not be increased to a level which would have a detrimental impact on the Town Centre's vitality in order to balance the local authority's budget. The Town Council would therefore request that Sevenoaks District Council reassesses its financial position and investigate other means to balance the 2014/2015 budget which do not involve a further increase in car parking charges.

Yours sincerely

Hugh D'Alton
Planning Committee Clerk
Sevenoaks Town Council

cc: Dr Pav Ramewal, Chief Executive, Sevenoaks District Council (by email)

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INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

Town Clerk

Westerham Town Council Reply to Car Parking charges for 2014/15 Consultation

1. SDC seek to increase charges by 10% whilst being restricted by Government to less than 2% in respect of their domestic rate increases.

Government's restriction is, amongst other things, for the purpose of controlling costs emanating from the State that have to be borne by the public at a time of considerable economic hardship.

Under these economic circumstances and the lead from Government, there is no justification for a 10% increase which will impact on both business and domestic budgets.

SDC should be assisting both business and domestic communities by a freeze on any increase or at worst, no more than the 2% restriction already applying.

2. It is evident from the detailed survey carried out by the Westerham Town Partnership, (WTP), and the excessive fines history from SDC statistics, that the current tariffs are a barrier to trade in the retail community.

3. Westerham Town Council support the WTP analysis and therefore the principle of free and revised charge periods as set out in OPTION 5.

4. OPTION 5 reflects SDC's desired percentage cost increase, which we object to under point 1 above.

Adjusting the charges to reflect a nil or two percent overall increase is without difficulty and is the recommendation of WTC.

5. Sunday charges.

These would be a disaster in congesting unticketed areas given the weekend attraction as a tourist location and the large and growing junior sporting activity on Sunday at King Georges Field.

Town Clerk Westerham Town Council

The Westerham Society
10th December 2013

RE: Westerham Parking Charges Consultation

May I introduce myself as the Chairman of the Westerham Society. The Society is a very long established heritage and community group focused on the history and future development of Westerham. We work very closely with the Westerham Town Council, the Westerham Town Partnership and the National Trust, along with many other groups and individuals.

We have seen the paper, prepared by the Westerham Town Partnership, in relation to proposed changes to the car parking charges in Westerham.

We would like to go on record as fully supporting the proposals outlined in the paper. It is our belief that a significant review of current charges needs to be implemented.

Westerham is a significant town in the West Kent area and attracts numerous visitors to both itself and the surrounding countryside and other towns/villages. We must recognise that the vast majority of such visitors will come by car and Westerham must be an attractive and economic destination.

The proposals in the Town Partnership proposal outline the many excellent reasons as to why the parking charges, and availability of parking, need urgent attention.

In any event, we would add our objection to an increase in parking charges during these hard economic times.

I am available to discuss, should you wish.

Yours Sincerely Chairman

I write as Chair of Oxted Chamber of Commerce, who were in the forefront of the campaign to prevent Surrey County Council from imposing blanket on street parking charges in all small towns and villages throughout the county.

In the case of Oxted, we carried out a comprehensive impact assessment as to the damage that parking charges would do to the vitality of the town and the results of that assessment were supported by an overwhelming majority of residents and businesses.

We also conducted market research amongst local businesses, shoppers and visitors to the town to see how they felt about SCC's proposals.

Business owners (many of whom are owner managed independents) were worried that shoppers would leave the town in favour of free parking in out of town centres such as Bluewater.

Many businesses were already struggling to survive in the economic downturn and were fearful for their future, also given the level of rents and business rates.

Although shoppers wanted to support their local shops, many felt that parking charges would be a major factor when considering a shopping destination.

Oxted Chamber of Commerce has always fought for free parking and we have been supported by Tandridge District Council who have realised the importance of attracting people to the town.

Oxted now offers free on street parking in designated areas, time limited to one hour.

Free off street parking in TDC owned car parks, time limited to four hours. Unlimited at weekends.

TDC have also made available 60 long term parking spaces in their car parks for the sole use local businesses and their staff. Permits for these spaces are issued to Chamber members for an annual fee. This contributes approximately £26,000 per annum towards the cost of parking services.

I no longer come to Sevenoaks because of the parking charges. Last time I visited I was appalled at the number of vacant retail units. I also know the previous owners of two business in Sevenoaks who were forced to close because their customers were no longer coming to the town because of parking costs.

I urge you to consider the consequences of any increase in parking charges. The survival of our small towns depends on it.

Chair **OXTED CHAMBER of COMMERCE**

We are commenting on the notices in the car parks in Sevenoaks relating to proposed fee increases next year.

We have huge concerns. Whilst we appreciate the need to increase usable revenue, it is surely VERY short sighted to raise your income this way. Do you really want to continue to send people to out-of- town shopping centres and kill off the centre of our lovely town? The number of complaints we hear from people putting vast amounts of cash into the machines must surely give you a clue. There has recently been a slight upsurge of new businesses setting up in the town - please give them and other new businesses a chance.

One very important thing. Eric Pickles, Secretary of State for Environment made it clear that Councils should not try to raise their revenue through higher car park charges.

Please would you forward our comments to the January meeting.

Car Park Views Sought: Having just been made aware of consultation regarding the above- 4/12 - it appears that this has been ongoing since November. My complaints are as follows:

1. Why such a short consultation window?
2. Why haven't we been advised in writing individually?
3. Having seen the proposed car park charges and the Survey, I am lost at your logic. How can I comment on the proposed charges when the survey is completely unworkable. How can comment on an area in which you do not live?

Page 1 asks my preferred option on car park charges in Sevenoaks, Swanley and Westerham. However, whoever drew up this document hasn't a clue on what they are doing because this document is written in such a way to mislead the Constituent thus members are quite likely to complete this document without realising the implications! How can i complete it when it doesn't break down the options per town? And why such a difference in prices? One can understand that if you live in an affluent area, it may be acceptable to pay more however this isn't the case.

Another point to note is that why are you penalising those that are working? Isn't it bad enough to have inflated costs when travelling to London et al by train but to inflate costs at the stations as well is being greedy! These station car parks are not manned. They do not need excessive maintenance. The costs are not warranted.

Whilst I accept that you may wish to help recoup losses of the Iceland and Norwegian debarcle and that you may wish to jump on the Cushman Wakefield bandwagon, I do think that you are underestimating your constituents feelings. By increasing town car park charges you are forcing people into the large shopping centres. Do you want to make these towns ghost towns or is that the object? Pushing through a 'silent' planning application in order to build houses in these towns thus maintaining the quota as set by the Government?

I have lived in Westerham for many years, and have therefore seen the evolution of the Town and its growing traffic problems over the past half century.

I strongly support the Westerham Town Partnership's proposals, resulting from their recent survey, which seem to me to provide a balanced view of the current situation together with their parking charging proposals. I agree with their view that if local shops are to flourish, vital to encouraging tourism with all the wealth their combined activities create, a more visitor friendly regime is necessary. Otherwise Sevenoaks Council is in danger of killing off the goose which lays the golden egg.

I have therefore voted in favour of Option 5 in your survey questionnaire.

I am writing to give you my views on your proposed parking increases, as requested by your notices on the pay machines in the car parks in Sevenoaks. I have completed the survey on your website

I live in Sevenoaks - TN13

My argument that by keep increasing the parking fees, people will not use the town but use the out of town supermarkets and stores, thus leading to a decline in the economic activity in the town, with more shops closing and the sites either being taken over by charity shops etc. or left empty and ugly - like broken teeth in spoiling a happy smile.

I volunteer frequently at both The Stag and Sevenoaks Library, so I do play my part in keeping local community costs down. Surely we need to encourage people to use our local facilities, both for business and for leisure and 'knowledge exchange' - not deter them by increasing charges at car parks next to these facilities. People do make comments to me both at the Stag and in the Library about the cost of parking in Sevenoaks, so I can assure you that members of the public feel they are already paying enough to use these facilities.

So please don't put the parking costs up - rather do all you can to encourage people to come to our lovely town and to make the most of all it has to offer.

Website Parking Survey Comments

- I feel very strongly that we need to allow visitors to come and browse the shops in Westerham, perhaps stop for coffee and lunch and they should not be charged ridiculous amounts for parking. For instance, Oxted High St, Surrey, and off the smaller roads has free parking for 2 hours, they have a car park which currently charges in the week before 9.30am and after that up to 3 hours for free. The weekend, no charge for up to 3 hours. Oxted High Street is always busy, the shops have a good revenue. I believe Westerham needs to take a leaf out of their book and encourage people to use Westerham, as it has a good range of useful and unusual shops. Surely up to 3 hours everywhere should be free, there onwards is another matter. I do understand that if you are an employee etc working in Westerham then they should have a season ticket offering them a substituted parking fee (this would be located in the King George Playing Fields/Darent).
- I tend not to agree with any parking charges. Am annoyed that the swanley shopping cents car park is now charging fees. I know these car parks are run privately, but just wanted to mention it. It will stop people coming to swanley to shop. As the centre has more tenants now, surely they can't be pleased that they will lose business and might leave?
- I am mostly concerned with Westerham parking facilities. I see little point in allowing just the first 15 minutes free parking. You would be hard pressed to get in and out of one shop or post office say and back to your vehicle in 15 minutes. Generally speaking I find Darent car parking reasonably priced but by making it cheaper or giving periods free might ease up spaces within the town centre for people who cannot walk up from Darent. There is no way elderly people or those with disabilities could climb up through the churchyard and the lighting, or lack of it, is not good. Businesses in Westerham need support. I have seen people dash out of shops to get back to their vehicles for fear of over zealous parking attendants. Yes parking attendants should use a bit more discretion, a 5 or 10 minute grace.
- In an area whichever depends on visitors and those travelling in for its economy, it is vital that parking charges should support economic development, rather than being a revenue source for the District Council. A few miles over the board into Surrey, parking in Oxted is free up to 4 hours. This is a big attraction to shoppers. The District Council needs to look at these competing areas and understand the deleterious effect their parking charge proposals would have on business. I fully support the Westerham option
- "Swanley Centre has now started charging for parking. Sevenoaks DC would provide a huge level of assistance to Swanley's traders by introducing a 30 minute free period. Not a good idea to increase the evening charge in Sevenoaks. Bromley is MUCH better as a town centre and only charges £1."
- "i fully support the alternative proposal for westerham....as a resident but living one mile outside I probably have to visit westerham for a quick shop or quick visit to either post office or bank three times a day and it is very stressful wondering if one is going to come out to find an over eager parking warden about to produce a ticket after only a couple of minutes.such a situation actually occurred at 08.31 one saturday morning when in the local butchers and my request for just two minutes was met with a reach for the fine padI had to rush out and drive off and return later to the butchers. This proposal will surely help avoid such distressing events and be a positive help to local traders."

- over night parking should be permitted in carparks. As a resident of Westerham (Quebec Square) if I have family to stay overnight they are unable to park.
- The new parking charges in the car parks by the back of Asda are ridiculous. I agree there should be a charge for people using the site past say 1 hour but we need to encourage people to shop in Swanley and charging them to park is not going to do this. Also both doctors surgeries are there and you should not have to pay to park to see your doctor. Short stay (60 mins) should be free in Doctors car parks every day except Wednesday due to the market. On a Wednesday the doctors should be able to issue short stay permits to patients only.
- I don't understand why Westerham has been given what appears to be special treatment. It is an affluent area and should be kept in line with similar inflationary charges as Sevenoaks.
- I accept charges have to increase but why on earth is Westerham being offered free parking. This is extremely unfair to the other areas
- Every area needs an independent parking regime which help support its local economy. There is no point in frightening people away, it just ruins the local economy and is totally demotivating for all local enterprises.
- The parking meters should give change, especially as the charges are all odd amounts rather than rounded to the nearest coin. ie 50p or £1.
- Westerham needs to be treated as a special case as parking is the lifeblood of the village and parking is a very sensitive subject and if there are any increases it can affect the footfall of the town! Remember that people always have a choice of where they shop and that may end up being somewhere like Bluewater where parking is FREE!
- The present evening charge results in indiscriminate on-street parking and parking in St Nicholas Church car park which is heavily used by church activities.
- I am a resident of Westerham and am particularly concerned that the parking charges adversely effect trade of retailers in the town. There should be more areas free of charge for a short period, particularly close to the shops.
- Get rid of CCTV cameras so that you are able to lower parking charges. Parking charges prevent people coming into the town, especially in the evening. CCTV cameras do nothing to prevent crime.
- "The charge in the evening deters me from going into Sevenoaks for a meal or the cinema as it increases the cost of a night out. I prefer out of town options. I think that Sevenoaks parking is expensive and puts off people going in to Sevenoaks for shopping."
- Darent car park is inconvenient and usage needs to be encouraged with an expanded overflow ares.
- We would like 3 or 4 hours parking in Westerham so we could have a meal and then look at the shops, currently you cannot manage both! The parking wardens always seem to be in Westerham watching the meters so even if you are 2 mins late you get a ticket, doesn't encourage people to visit Westerham.

- I believe the charges are already high enough and should not be increased further. People will end up being put off coming to these places and go to where the parking is free
- I think that it is key that you retain free Sunday parking. The town centre car parks are used by many church goers and allow those less able church goers to make use of the small on-site church parking facilities. I also think that short term parking fees of up to 1 hour should not increase at all as these fees are often paid by people popping into town for one thing and probably only staying 15 mins.
- As a resident and permit holder in the centre of Westerham I am tired of the business owners lobbying both district and parish councils to favour parking arrangements for 'their' customers, and then abusing any extension to parking time or reduced costs by using the spaces for themselves and staff who are too lazy to use the main town car parks. On a daily basis I witness meter feeding and non-payment of parking charges as they watch for the enforcement officers. This is a particular problem in the Fullers Hill car park - I assume it is the case throughout the town. Perhaps the council could consider permits for businesses and workers in the town to park in the main car parks which would encourage them to adopt the habit of parking and walking the short distance to work (as many of us do in other towns), leaving the on-street parking and smaller car parks with a decent turnover to suit both residents and genuine customers.
- I am a student studying with an apprenticeship. I travel to Sevenoaks four times a week to work at an accounts. I am on an apprenticeship wage which is roughly £150 a week, if the prices continue to rise, I will not be able to afford to come and work over here. I love Sevenoaks town and prefer it to where I live (Maidstone), I feel you will deter people from coming to the town by rising the prices. Not all of us are affluent and can only just afford £4.20 a day on top of petrol to travel here.
- Weekend parking in Azalea Drive Swanley should be free otherwise people who want to use Swanley station will be parking in residential roads, parking up on pavements immediately outside front doors and in private parking areas which will cause problems for residents.
- I rarely shop or go out in Sevenoaks because the parking is so expensive. Other towns present better value. Sevenoaks needs to make itself more attractive, or it will continue to lose out.
- I think the individual town councils should take control of parking. General parking charges are too high and there is a need to make it easier for people visiting the smaller towns such as Westerham for longer. Parking problems and charges are crippling our towns
- Why have the council introduced charges in the Swanley centre behind the post office no consultation was given about these charges it was just introduced one Monday morning nobody had any notice that this was going to happen why was this.
- Appalling plan, please stop killing Sevenoaks with parking charges. Start trying to make it an appealing place to use, otherwise it will become a dead commuter town and we will all go to out of town shopping centres to visit shops and cafes. It's not just the cost, but the inconvenience of paying each time you want to pop into the post office to pick a letter, or buy some stationery. The more annoying you make it the more I forget the town centre exists and use Amazon, or drive to a retail park somewhere else.

- "Beavan place in Swanley is very underused by locals or commuters. Increasing 'all day parking' by 20p to £3.90 will not make much of a difference. If commuters are wise they will all flock to parking in Swanley town centre. They are now charging '£3 all day'. This is much cheaper than the £6 charged by the station and the £3.70 the council currently charges for parking in Goldsell road. It looks as if the owners of the shopping area want to close all the shops down (Asda excluded) and turn it all into a commuter car park. Are the council doing anything about this?"
- If all day parking is increased it will surely mean even more people will use the Town Centre car park which is less expensive. Rather than look at parking charge reviews time would be more effectively spent doing whatever is needed to revoke the charges put in without consultation and predictably are causing problems especially for the two surgeries. Blue badge holders also have to pay. The firm operating the car park on behalf of the centres management company purport to belong to a recognised British parking association which is incorrect. How did this happen?
- "Alter the NEW car park charges for town centre car parks in Swanley. Allow 2 hours FREE, 4 hours small charge, All day at higher charge (for station and employees). - Since the new charges have been added these car parks are hardly used - all it is doing is making the other car parks busier and leaving a lot of empty space in the chargeable ones for people travelling by train."
- The more you up the price of parking the more people will go to Bluewater etc. Car owners are not cash cows!!
- Please consider the local traders who need people to come to keep them in business.
- As a business owner in Westerham I think we need to encourage people to come into Westerham and not increase the parking.
- I oppose any increase and in fact desire a decrease in your parking charges so as to encourage visitors to your shopping areas which is surely a greater benefit to Sevenoaks bank balance than encouraging people to go to Bluewater from which you receive no benefit. A Loss of shops = a loss of business rates to you.
- I feel the charges for Westerham are reasonable
- No further comments
- Bartlett Road in Westerham needs resident permit parking
- Far from seeking to increase parking charges in the Westerham area, these should be completely abolished. The council's cynical money-grubbing approach to taxing local residents and motorists is disgraceful.
- "It is frustrating (and disingenuous) that the machines do not give change. Public transport into Sevenoaks , particularly bus is so poor (starts too late finishes too early) that using a car is the only option."
- Listen to the Westerham Town partnership and go with their parking charge plan please.

- WE HAVE JUST MOVED FROM POYNTON, CHESHIRE, WHERE THE COUNCIL HAVE REMOVED ALL PARKING CHARGES, SO THEY CAN COMPETE WITH LOCAL FREE SUPERMARKET PARKING. THE LOCAL SHOP KEEPERS HAVE SO FAR REGISTERED AN INCREASE IN BUSINESS OF OVER 100%, WITH MANY SHOPPERS COMING IN FROM OTHER AREAS WHICH CHARGE FOR PARKING. COME ON SEVENOAKS AND AREA, WAKE UP, DON'T LOSE OUT TO THE SUPERMARKETS!
- It would be very beneficial to both traders and residents, to introduce a free period of parking in the town. A 15/30 minute pop in time in the centre of town is great to allow people to nip into the convenience shops, currently the lack of parking & requirement to park for just 5 minutes deters people. As a resident quite close to the town centre I would also like to deter visitors parking outside residents houses which is causing lots of problems, especially for local works who park all day. I was unaware of the very reasonable offer for the annual pass for the car park and this should be advertised more. We have a beautiful town and we encourage tourists to visit to support our local traders and appreciate all that Westerham has to offer, the parking should be something that attracts people, not puts them off.
- Westerham parking needs to be reviewed as not supporting traders and small business, it also needs more parking.
- Why do there have to be any increases at all?
- Would also like to see the Long stay car park made solely for people wishing to park long term only and not allow short term parking in there as well or the other alternative is to make all the car parks long and short stay as well.
- If you wish Sevenoaks to survive as a place to go for shopping or other 'High Street' like activity then parking must be free. Car is the only viable means of getting to the town. If the car parks were not charged then no rates could be charged, maintenance could cease, no expensive machines would be needed or people to see if a ticket had been bought.
- "A lot of the charm of Sevenoaks is the smaller 'independent' shops that have character and are useful, like Patmores, Hardware Centre, Shoe shops, Art shops, Butchers, Robert Dyas, florists, clothes shops, jewellers, chemists and others. Gradually this type of shop is being eroded from our town centre and being infilled with bigger stores and restaurants. This could have a 'good' side to it if this brought more visitors into the town and kept local people shopping there also, to support the shops. However, whoever you talk to whether it is the local shop keepers or local people, there is always one gripe - that is the parking in Sevenoaks. There is just not enough and now there is the added threat of increased prices. Has anyone seriously tried to provide more car parks - even make some existing ones two storey e.g. near the Leisure Centre? Surely if the parking space is doubled, yes it would cost to build initially but then it must provide double the income eventually.
- Regarding Swanley, special consideration should be given taking into account the recent introduction of parking charges imposed without consultation with SDC/STC, managed by a third party operator County Car Parks from 7th November of:- 50p for the first hour, £2 up to 3 hours, £3 to park all day. If SDC impose an increase now, its rather like jumping on the bandwagon and adding to the financial ramifications already experienced by OAP's, workers and general public of reduced circumstances. I think Swanley should be excluded from

'current' potential parking increases until their legal enquiries into the rights of privately introduced charges have been clarified!

- Cut costs rather than increase charges. Too many staff???
- "They impediment of charges to rural perusal and usage could seriously off set economic recovery and effect commercial regeneration Sunday parking charges are penal and effect social participation Swanley is suffering economic hardship and could do with assistance to shoppers who in effect are penalised and will vote with their feet if difficulties are placed on them. - result fewer shops paying no rates followed by degregation and higher social amd economic civil costs."
- "Please continue to allow annual season card holders for Sevenoaks Leisure Centre to reclaim their parking (up to 2 hours) when they use the facilities. On street parking charges should be extended to all roads surrounding Sevenoaks station that are being used by commuters to park free."
- THERE IS ONE SECTION THAT APPEARS TO BE MISSED THI IS THE PARKING AREA IN FRONT OF SACKVILLE PLACE, THIS HAS NOT BEEN REINSTATED SINCE BUILDING FINISHED AND IS A LOSS OF INCOME TO THE COUNCIL.
- "The parking charges must be killing the town and the shops. I drive to Bluewater where you can shop for as long as you like without a time limit, thus spending much more money in the shops. I cannot tell you how many times I would have spent a lot more money in Sevenoaks if my parking hadn't run out and it's so extortionate that, on principal, I won't put in a great deal of money and I very often don't have enough change anyway. I can't believe the exorbitant parking charges aren't counter productive. The poor shop keepers."
- Please consider re-instating the full discount for parking for leisure centre users. The leisure centre is often poorly used and paying to use it and paying to park outside it is a further disincentive.It runs against many of the aims of the council to improve the health of the residents.
- When considering charging for parking in the council office on Saturday, please consider the number of vehicles which do not have to go into the main congested areas of Sevenoaks.
- If anything parking charges should be scrapped. If the only justification is that it pays for CCTV - then do away with CCTV.
- Rather than increasing car parking charges every year, SDC should prepare options that would show the impact of providing free short stay parking in the centre of Sevenoaks, Westerham and Swanley. These options should make it clear what savings would need to made in other areas of expenditure or what increases in Council Tax or other charges would be necessary to compensate for the loss of short stay car park revenue. Councillors could then consult with residents and vote for their preferred option.
- By allowing the onstreet parking to be three hours it will hopefully decrease the demand on the Darent carpark. Also by introducing carparking fees on the sunday, this should encourage the clubs and societies which use the Darent at the minute to look elsewhere, or contribute and not block up the carpark to people looking to shop and visit the town.

- "I have left many questions unanswered because I do not think you should increase the parking charges at all - so agree with none of the options. My argument that by keep increasing the parking fees, people will not use the town but use the out of town supermarkets and stores, thus leading to a decline in the economic activity in the town, with more shops closing etc being taken over by charity shops etc. I volunteer at both The Stag and Sevenoaks libraries, and we need to encourage people to use these facilities - not deter them by making them pay even more for parking.
- None.
- I feel any further increases on parking charges will have a detrimental affect on the high street with more potential customers opting for retail parks etc where parking is free.
- Parking in Westerham was neve a problem until charging was employed. The pressure and misuse this has placed on private carparking is enormous.
- Sevenoaks appears to take the brunt of the parking charges for other areas. I live just outside Sevenoaks in Weald and have reduced the amount of times I shop in the town because of the parking charges. For instance, I used to use the butcher on a regular basis but am know more likely to pick up my meat in Tescos. Traders in Sevenoaks need to attract more shoppers to keep the town viable. Sevenoaks appears top be doing the exact opposite of what the government suggest to attract shoppers to the town. Free up parking spaces near to the station in roads that now sit empty (bar yellow lines) - install parking meters and make some sort of charge for parking. These roads can and should be used for commuter parking if properly controlled (marked out bays and small charge). Other roads in town are now resident only and sit half empty during the day. Allow free short stay parking. Short stay means residents will find spaces and shoppers more likely to 'pop' into the town for a short visit.
- "There is another option, and that is not increasing prices at all, but finding other ways of dealing with costs. It is senseless to penalise customers of town centre businesses for spending money in town. First, it is extremely disappointing that Cllr Gary Williamson has not disclosed (that I could see) his total conflict of interest on parking charges in the town centre as he, apparently, receives free parking along side his shop. Quite what a red Mazda MX5 has to do with delivering meat I do not know; but if the argument is for his van then other traders in town are at a disadvantage as they do not receive free parking. He should either stand down or pay the same as every other business for parking in town. Only then will his contribution be fair. Second, too many parking bays are closed at any one time, e.g. South Park, by the Bus Station meaning that places are at a premium. Additionally places are lost in Blighs whilst M&S is built, and on the road opposite. That should be addressed urgently. Third, I think all parking for up to 90 minutes should be free and beyond that it can start at £1 and increase per hour; that should allow enough time for most people to conduct their business and leave without a tax on shopping"
- It is already very difficult to park in Westerham so everything should be done to encourage visitors to keep local businesses thriving. If parking charges are increased this may have a very detrimental effect on these businesses, and Westerham would lose a vital part of what makes it an interesting and lively place to live.
- I rarely use Sevenoaks town centre for shopping due to the cost of parking.

- The far end of St Marys Road, Apple Orchard area has no restriction on parking. Commuters for the Railway Station park on these narrow roads and pavements all day, sometimes all week obstructing residents access. Double yellow line are in place just before the bend but allows four vehicles to park which is dangerous, having to reverse is no fun on a bend. Parking restriction would be nice.with the shopping centre now charging for parking (not ASDA) these problem stated can only get worse, people park on double yellow line now .
- "I don't see why Westerham should get special treatment for parking. Standard charges across the district would be helpful then you would know what change to have. Charges generally do not seem to be too bad compare to other arears such as Maidstone or Tunbridge Wells,"
- I believe that the car park charges in Sevenoaks are very reasonable compared to other towns in Kent such as Tunbridge Wells. The fact that the car parks are all busy would suggest that visitors do not mind paying these charges. As a resident of Sevenoaks I do not understand why Westerham should have special treatment regarding car park charges. This survey is not very easy to following."
- Sevenoaks District Council proclaims that it support local businesses. I now choose not to go into Sevenoaks unless I have to. I can park free at other cinemas, so do not need to support Stag and for longer shopping expeditions I can park free at Bluewater. Evening charges are an insult to businesses desperate for trade and to levy them on a Sunday as well would be the death knell.
- All parking should be free after 6.30 pm. Parking charges should not be imposed just to raise revenue. After 6.30 pm there is no shortage of parking and no need to ration it by price. The only effect of evening parking charges – which Sevenoaks is the only district in Kent to levy – is to discourage evening visitors to the town centre and depress demand for the cinema and local restaurants. Parking wardens could safely leave work at 6.30 and this would save money.
- I feel strongly that for people who work in Westerham and therefore use a long term car park all day, £2.90 is quite expensive already - it's more or less a half hour of working just to pay for the car park!