

**CAR PARKING ORDERS**

**(Report by the Chief Officers Management Team)**

**1. INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to enable the Cabinet to consider responses received following the advertisement of proposals to introduce new Orders governing the use of car parks operated by the Council.

**2. BACKGROUND**

- 2.1 Members will recall that as part of the on-going review of car parking arrangements, the Car Parking Member Working Party has looked at a range of issues on behalf of Cabinet, who have then considered these as part of a number of previous reports. These included recommendations to address the use of parking provision at Riverside car park in Huntingdon, controlling free parking in Ramsey and potential charging scenarios at Country Parks and in St. Neots as well as other minor operational issues.
- 2.2 At their meeting held on 11th February 2010, the Cabinet approved the publication on new Car Parking Orders to introduce changes to car parking charges and other matters. This decision was subsequently confirmed on 16th March 2010. This included the scenario at Riverside Park, St. Neots of making 38 spaces available for up to 2 hours free of charge with charging being introduced to the remainder of the facility.
- 2.3 The Orders, under the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984, have been prepared and advertised in the local press. Copies of the Orders have been sent to the Town Councils of Huntingdon, St. Neots, St. Ives and Ramsey, the Council's Customer Service Centres and other bodies as prescribed in legislation.
- 2.4 Two Orders have been created to deal with the car parks. The first is for the paid and controlled car parks in the Town Centres and the Order No. 2 is for the free car parks. The Act allows a local authority to decide whether to convene a local enquiry before determining an Order. This report outlines the comments received in response to the consultation and requires the Cabinet to decide whether to determine the Orders without a local enquiry.

**3. PROPOSED NEW ORDERS**

- 3.1 With regard to the first Order, having introduced designated short-stay car parking at Riverside Car Park, Huntingdon to encourage leisure activities, there is now little overall demand for the short-stay area so this area will be reduced to eight spaces. In making this change attention is drawn to the facts that overall demand is now less than the total supply following the opening of Bridge Place car park at Godmanchester and that short-term parking will still be available across the rest of the Riverside Car Park.
- 3.2 In reviewing the principles surrounding charging for parking, it is proposed to introduce charges at Riverside Car Park, St Neots but with the provision of 38

spaces offering two hours free parking in a demarcated area in order to support its recreational use. In addition, charging will be reintroduced at Cambridge Street Car Park, St Neots because overall demand generally exceeds supply. The charges applied will be at the same rates as in Huntingdon and St. Ives.

- 3.3 Tan Yard Car Park, St Neots is now little used. To encourage greater use of this car park and to reduce demand at Tebbutts Road, usage of Tan Yard by holders of either Resident Parking Permits and / or Season Ticket holders will be permitted.
- 3.4 Whilst there is a significant level of overall parking provision in Ramsey given the total available space both on and off-street, a problem exists in Mews Close because of a lack of turnover of short-stay spaces to encourage visitors and shoppers. To control demand for off-street parking in Ramsey, some short-stay parking areas will be introduced up to a maximum of two-hours stay, together with additional provision of spaces in Mews Close, Ramsey. Car parking at Mews Close will remain free of charge.
- 3.5 There are a number of anomalies in respect of those eligible to qualify for either a Resident Parking Permit or Season Ticket. These will be resolved by the use of revised town boundaries to determine eligibility for Permits or Tickets.
- 3.6 The use of Hinchingsbrooke Country Park Car Park is heavily impacted upon by people visiting other local facilities, particularly Hinchingsbrooke Hospital. This is likely to be exacerbated by the introduction of on-street waiting restrictions nearby at Christie Drive. As a result a six-hour restriction on length of stay will be introduced together with charges in order to deter full-time worker parking. Users will be able to purchase season tickets, subject to meeting eligibility criteria, and parking will remain free of charge for users of the conference facilities and in the evening.
- 3.7 The purpose of the No. 2 Order is to ensure the car parks referred to are used for the purpose for which they are provided and to control any abuse of the car parks, which might otherwise arise.

#### **4. OBJECTIONS AND COMMENTS RECEIVED**

- 4.1 As a result of the advertisement of the Orders, representations have been received on Order No. 1. These, together with commentary, are summarised in the attached Appendix.
- 4.2 No objections have been received to Order No. 2.

#### **5 ON-STREET CAR PARKING CHARGES**

- 5.1 Cambridgeshire County Council has responded as follows:

Cambridgeshire County Council's policy for the cost of on and off street parking needs to take account of the level of local bus service fares, as far as is practicable, to encourage greater use of public transport.

Cambridgeshire County Council will introduce on street parking controls where necessary to assist the flow of traffic, improve road safety, manage demand or meet strategic transport objectives. The introduction of new

charges or increased charging for off street parking places, is likely to increase demand on street, and I would ask that the District Council are mindful of this when considering their management of car parks. Any increase in charging is likely to impact on street in adjoining areas, which is likely to raise traffic management or possibly safety issues.

Cambridgeshire County Council are currently reviewing their on street parking provision in the Market towns. Part of this review will also assess the levels of provision, to secure a reasonable balance of parking needs for motorised and non-motorised vehicles, including charging levels.

The level of on street charges will take account of the level of any off street parking charges in the area. The relationship should normally encourage the use of off street facilities in the wider interests of the highway users, and charges will be levied accordingly. The cost of on street parking should normally be set higher than for any off street parking in the area, to make more use of off street parking more financially attractive than on street parking in the general interests of road safety and access.

## **6. PETITIONS**

- 6.1 In addition to his comments, which are reported below, Mr M Cornish, Editor of the News and Crier Series in Huntingdonshire, has submitted a petition on this matter. The petition has been signed by 645 individuals and makes the proposition that “[w]e, the undersigned, object to any changes for parking at the Riverside car park in St Neots”.
- 6.2 A further petition has been received in which the signatories “call upon Huntingdonshire District Council to keep the two out of centre Car Parks on Cambridge Street and at the Riverside Park, free of charge”. This petition has 1,548 signatories.

## **7. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 7.1 Notwithstanding the information now reported, the financial scenarios relating to increased income from car parking, including the introduction of charging to current free car parks at Hinchingsbrooke Country Park and in St. Neots, remains unchanged as set out in the current approved Medium Term Plan.

## **8. RECOMMENDATION**

The Cabinet are recommended to consider the objections received and to determine the Orders, as advertised, either with or without holding a local inquiry.

## **BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

The District of Huntingdonshire (Off Street Parking Places) Order 2010 Order No. 2. Report of the meeting of the Cabinet held on 13th March 2008.

Responses received to consultation.

**Contact Officer:** A Roberts, Central Services Manager 📞 (01480) 388004.



## APPENDIX

Name/Organisation	Representations	Comments
Celia	<p>Please, please do NOT charge for single mums who are already seriously struggling to spend a day at Riverside.</p> <p>We need to know there is somewhere green and free to spend a full day especially during the long Summer holidays without having to pay OBSCENE petrol prices.</p> <p>I pity residents near Riverside as we will all end up having to find somewhere nearby that is free so we can afford to spend an affordable day out(unlikely to be a mere two or three hours even if we get a free slot.)</p> <p>Please do not punish us for wanting to enjoy and support our town</p>	<p>The charging for Riverside Park St Neots is consistent with the principle of charging for car parks elsewhere in St. Neots as well as Huntingdon &amp; St. Ives. Allowance has been made for 38 free parking spaces of up to 2 hours for users of the park.</p>
Mr & Mrs M Golding	<p>The Riverside Park is an out- of- town amenity and people who wish to enjoy it should not be discouraged by having to pay a fee.</p> <p>The differential car parking charge of just 5p per hour will not influence shoppers and shop workers from the west from driving into the town car parks. This will greatly add to traffic in a highly polluted High Street and cause excessive demand on the Waitrose and Tebbutt Road car parks. The Waitrose car park is already completely full at times, such as Saturday morning.</p> <p>This congestion and inconvenience will adversely affect trade in already difficult market conditions. The provision of 38 free spaces is absurdly inadequate and likely to be taken up immediately by workers.</p> <p>We have already seen the effect of railway station parking in the surrounding streets. Parking fees at Riverside are likely to have a similar effect on streets close to the west side of the bridge, such as The Paddocks, Mill Road and Crosshall Way.</p> <p>We urge you to reconsider your decision.</p>	<p>Riverside Car Park is used by shoppers and workers from the town as well as Park users. If it was kept as a free car park, people would likewise travel through the town from the east as the only free town car park.</p> <p>The 38 free spaces will have a 2-hour limit on them and controlled so that workers or long-stay users will not be able to use them.</p> <p>If on-street parking were to occur to the detriment of highway safety, on-street waiting restrictions could be investigated in partnership with the County Council.</p>
Peter Dawes 160 St Neots Rd Eaton Ford St Neots PE19 7AD	<p>This is not just a car park it is a PARK. It is an important amenity for the Town and its residents. It is used for fishing, boating, cycling, a children's play area, dog walking, just walking, music, games etc. It has a</p>	<p>Comments as above</p>

	<p>snack bar and ice creams. It is so much more than a car park.</p> <p>In addition to providing parking to facilitate use as a park, the car park aids those who wish to shop and those who work in the Town. It is a great asset. The car park keeps traffic out of the Town, which is jammed up enough. It keeps traffic off the local streets.</p> <p>Why do you need to charge, no one likes paying Council tax but this is something I would happily contribute to.</p> <p>Human nature being what it is, if you charge, people will look for other free parking. There will be more traffic in the Town looking, there will be cars parking in local streets blocking residents and disturbing the status quo. Why do we need to go there and what will be the inevitable consequence - yellow lines spoiling everything for everyone. Why? Why? Why?</p> <p>Leave this amenity alone.</p>	
Bridget Hale	<p>Any scheme that allows free parking for a few spaces for a fairly short time is unhelpful and will just cause chaos in the car park as people try to find the free spaces. Its impossible to get to the end of the town and back any actually browse the shops and spend money within the space of 2 hours.</p> <p>The publicised option that you appear to be turning down of all spaces being free for 3 hours and charging for over 3 hours is far more appropriate. This would allow people to enjoy the park, do some shopping and attend local events like the free summertime concerts (if they still exist). It would also mean that people who park for the whole day (often a problem on a Thursday) would make a contribution to the town.</p> <p>I feel particularly concerned that HDC has spent so much time on the front pages of the papers during the last few months. Parking and toilets are important to everyone and no one wants to lose these amenities.</p>	<p>The 2 hour spaces are primarily for park users and not shoppers. Those wishing to spend longer in the town have a range of charged car parks available to them in addition to the planned charges at Riverside.</p>
Mr J Barrett 40 Grasmere Huntingdon	<p>I wish to comment about the proposed introduction of parking charges at Hinchibrooke Country Park. I feel that 100p for the first hour and 200p for between</p>	<p>Parking at Hinchibrooke Park needs to be controlled as it is being used by</p>

	<p>1 and 8 hours is too expensive. Anyone visiting Hinchingsbrooke Park would normally stay for over one hour so a it would always cost £2 per visit. These prices will deter people from visiting and enjoying one of the best green spaces in our town. I am not opposed to paying a reasonable fee for parking and I understand the hospital overspill issue but I think these proposed charges are excessive and not in keeping with the other car park charges in the area i.e. it is cheaper to park in town than at the park. Please consider reducing the prices.</p>	<p>may people that do not use the Park The proposed charges are £1.00 for the first 2 hours and £2 for a maximum for 6 hours. It is planned that this will stop people working locally using these spaces to the detriment of Park users, particularly since the introduction of on-street waiting restrictions at Christie Drive.</p>
<p>Anne Hall Little Paxton</p>	<p>Please note that my husband and I strongly object to any parking charges being imposed at the Riverside Car Park in St. Neots. It is the only place I can take my niece to in relative safety and play in the park. To have a limit of 2 hours would be ludicrous. Further, when shopping in St Neots we always park there as we enjoy the walk across the bridge. If we have to pay to park this far out then we will be shopping away from St. Neots. As a consequence, many shops will suffer with a loss of trade.</p> <p>If people have to pay to park this far afield then they will queue to park in the town resulting in more pollution</p>	<p>There is not a 2hour limit in the car park, this is just the extent of the free stay. After this the car parking is charged at a relatively low rate and there is no evidence to suggest that this will deter either shoppers to the town or visitors to the park, especially when compared to the overall cost of owning and running a car.</p> <p>Likewise, the argument that this will force shoppers elsewhere is not a sustainable position given the far greater cost of driving elsewhere when compared to the proposed charges.</p> <p>It will still be considerable cheaper to park at Riverside than within town centre car parks.</p>
<p>Matt Cornish Editor News and Crier Series Huntingdonshire</p>	<p>Please find attached a petition, signed by 645 people, objecting to any charges for the Riverside car park in St Neots.</p> <p>I would also like to make my own objections, in the strongest possible terms, to this proposal.</p> <p>I firmly believe that any charges at this car</p>	<p>See comments made above.</p>

	<p>park can only harm businesses in St Neots.</p> <p>The town has clearly been harder hit than any other area in Huntingdonshire, a fact proved by the district council's own footfall survey.</p> <p>It is scandalous that elected representatives from outside the town are prepared to do considerable damage to St Neots' economy in exchange for a relatively small and short-term economic gain.</p> <p>While the district as a whole may enjoy a very a small tax cut per person - a matter of pence per household - if shoppers are deterred from coming to the town, the effect on the livelihoods of individual businesses could be devastating.</p> <p>And in the longer run, the council's profit from this move may be further affected by loss of business rates as shops may be forced to close.</p> <p>There is also the argument that this car park serves a vital leisure facility to the town. Something St Neots - despite being the largest town in Cambridgeshire - has comparatively few of.</p> <p>This has caused considerable anger across town, with local representatives of both main political parties against it. Indeed, we have yet to come across any individual or business who thinks it is a good idea.</p> <p>I implore the elected representatives to listen to St Neots, reject this plan and help dispel the strong feeling in the town that St Neots as a whole gets a raw deal from Huntingdonshire District Council.</p>	
Sharon Brown	<p>I would prefer there to be no parking charges as it is better for the town in so many ways. Gives people the opportunity to stay in town longer - perhaps spending more. Encourages families to use the park facilities. Stops some of the traffic going into the centre. Provides town centre workers somewhere to park.</p> <p>However this is the real world and too much of tax payers money has been spent elsewhere - sometimes by local councils and sometimes by government. So I guess we end up paying the price - again.</p>	See comments above

	<p>If you are going to make a charge - keep it small - but keep it consistent. Don't faff (technical term) around with a few free spaces for a limited time etc. Either you charge or you don't.</p> <p>It has been reported in the local press recently that the footfall in St Neots is the smallest in the region - we should be encouraging people to our town not putting them off. I suppose it is too much to ask that if the council decides to make charges it would promise to look at reversing this decision in the future.</p>	
<p>Roger Brittain FCA.</p>	<p>I am a resident in The Paddock, Eaton Ford and have been since the development of the site in 1975. Also for 42 years I practised as a Chartered Accountant in the town of St Neots. I am very disturbed by the proposed parking fees for the Riverside Car Park. From a personal point of view, it will almost certainly mean that people will park in our narrow roads in The Paddock rather than pay your charges. Car parking charges must be very high on the people of Britain's hate list and they will do anything to avoid paying them. Already on a Thursday (market day) we have considerable parking in the Paddock, which makes it somewhat difficult to access our properties. It would be far worse and happen every day if the charges go ahead.</p> <p>I acted for many of the town's businesses when I was in business. St Neots is a very difficult place to make a satisfactory profit and further car parking charges will drive more people out of the town, which will cause more retail outlets to shut with the loss of council tax to you.</p> <p>I am also Chairman of St Neots Indoor Bowling Club in River Road. Our members are very worried that the public will be parking on club's car park free of charge instead of the Riverside car park, with the result that members will have no room to park when they come to play bowls. Although we could fence off our park, this is an expense we can well ill afford and should not be expected to carry out.</p> <p>As a retired accountant, I appreciate that you have to try and balance the books. Obviously the first priority in to cut costs,</p>	<p>See comments above.</p> <p>The effect of any displaced car parking will be monitored and discussions held with the highway authority if this becomes a highway safety problem. Any obstruction of the Highway will be a matter for the police.</p> <p>Any mis-use of the Bowling Club car park is a matter for that body to take action.</p>

	<p>which is very much the subject at this present time in view of the General and Local Elections. I am all in favour of a public sector pay freeze as suggested by the Conservatives. However I realise that you will probably also have to increase your income and my preferred way is by a further small increase in Council Tax rather than hitting the motorist once again, especially the motorists in St Neots.</p> <p>I believe the above points should be taken into account in your further deliberations.</p>	
David Skipper	<p>I live in The Paddock and I am totally in agreement with the five points which Councillor Jennifer Bird made in her e-mail of 19 April in relation to proposed charges for parking at St. Neots Riverside Park.</p> <p>I suggest you consider the position at St. Neots Railway Station where parking is charged for and as a result the people in the close neighbourhood are in the difficult situation of having their streets intolerably full of cars. As the Riverside car park is in a turning off The Paddock, we would undoubtedly find ourselves in the same situation with people driving around looking for a space from early morning till late at night!</p> <p>You will have noticed that The Paddock is a quiet cul-de-sac and not suitable for general parking, but drivers would no doubt come to look for a space anyway.</p> <p>Further, due to the narrow width of the road in The Paddock, we already have problems with visitors to neighbours parking in the road too close to our driveway or opposite our drive which makes it extremely difficult for me to drive out.</p> <p>The present system seems to work very well and it would be a great detriment to the traders in the town and to the general public to bring in charges.</p> <p>Thank you for your consideration of these points,</p>	See comments above
Celia	<p>PLEASE do not introduce charges at Riverside, St. Neots. I have a deaf son and other children, but receive no badge for free parking and cannot afford to pay any more fees. Market Day in St. Neots is a nightmare already and will become even more congested and miserable if fees are</p>	<p>See comments above.</p> <p>The proposed charges are set at a relatively low rate when compared to the overall cost of owning and running a</p>

	<p>introduced. There is too much hardship already for families with disabilities let us have SOMETHING free for a change or else widen the restrictions on getting a disabled badge!</p>	<p>car.</p> <p>The Council is no responsibilities relating to blue badge eligibility.</p>
<p>St Ives Town Council</p>	<p>At the Planning Committee considerable concern was expressed at the proposal to introduce car parking charges at Hinchingsbrooke Country Park as this is greatly valued as a local free facility. Members appreciated that the car park is frequently used by visitors/patients of Hinchingsbrooke Hospital and that rather than introducing parking charges at the Country Park the Committee suggested that the District Council should consider negotiating with Hinchingsbrooke Hospital to achieve more appropriate charges at their own site, particularly in terms of charges for short stay visits.</p>	<p>See comments above</p> <p>The District Council Overview &amp; Scrutiny Panel (Environmental Well-Being) has carried out its own investigations into car parking charges at Hinchingsbrooke Hospital.</p>
<p>Nigel Appleton 23, The Paddock Eaton Ford.</p>	<p>I am writing to express my deep concern over, and my objections to, the proposed imposition of charges for the use of the Riverside Car Park in St. Neots.</p> <p>Firstly, I should like to point out that there does not seem to have been made easily available any financial justification for this imposition - it would be useful to know the projected income and the calculated costs of the meter or meters, together with those of the personnel needed to maintain and empty them; and to know of any non-monetary benefits foreseen.</p> <p>Secondly, it appears to many residents of St. Neots that this remaining free car park is one of the few factors attracting visitors to the town; which is notorious for its traffic congestion and the resulting air pollution as well as a general lack of amenities, disappointing in such a large town so well situated.</p> <p>The free parking is also a boon to the young families using the play areas - upon which so much money has been spent, it has to be said with excellent effect. It would be a shame to discourage the very people for whom these facilities were erected - yet young families are generally those with least money to spend.</p> <p>Naturally, as a nearby resident, I am also</p>	<p>See comments above.</p> <p>Financial justification was considered by the Council as part of its Medium Term Plan budget considerations, which is publicly available.</p> <p>There is no evidence to suggest that the proposed relatively low level charges will deter visitors to the town, especially when compared to the overall cost of owning and running a car.</p>

	<p>concerned about the inevitable use of the surrounding streets for car parking if charges are imposed, with the attendant crowding, obstruction, and noise. I trust the emergency services have been consulted about the possible effects on them of on-street parking.</p> <p>Most of all, I am concerned that St. Neots, already in so many ways suffering from lack of imaginative town planning (and from the worst traffic-flow management policy I have ever seen and suffered from) will suffer even more from the withdrawal of one of its few amenities. I think I need hardly point out that business owners will be only too ready to reconsider the desirability of relocating if "footfall" reduces much more.</p> <p>Lastly, I should like to remind ALL our elected representatives that we look to them to be finding ways of improving the quality of life of local residents and visitors, rather than to be for ever finding more and more small ways in which to make that life more irritating, difficult, and expensive. I am not alone in finding it very hard to see that the potential net income from car parking charges mitigates the disadvantages such an imposition would bring.</p>	
Eric Goddard	I know at least twice before the question of charging for parking in Riverside Car Park has been discussed. May I be so bold as too suggest that you all do a little soul searching and remember that you have been elected to represent the local community So before you decide to make this a chargeable facility take a good look into the future and try and estimate the damage you will be doing locally. This is not a temporary scheme it will once introduced will be here for ever, so please search your minds and if you truly believe it will be good for the town then go ahead and just make another political blunder a sincere local resident.	See comments above
George Isaacs 12 Park View Court The Paddock Eaton Ford St Neots PE19 7SD	<p>I live in an apartment overlooking Riverside Car Park in St Neots and I would like to take a few moments of your time to describe what happens in and a round the car park on market days.</p> <p>The first thing one notices is cars driving round the car park looking for a space as the car park fills by mid morning.</p> <p>The second observation is the congestion in The Paddock which is the road that feeds</p>	See comments above

	<p>into the car park as vehicles park on the street. The congestion often tails back to impinge on traffic using the roundabout access to the bridge.</p> <p>Next one notices residents vehicles trying to enter or leave their homes and having great difficulty as they intermingle with vehicles entering and exiting the cark.</p> <p>Ones eyes are then drawn to pedestrians as they seek to cross a congested road darting in between the cars parked in the street. Now add to this school holidays and I hope you can see as I do a scene approaching chaos.</p> <p>Mr Monks, Riverside Park has been described as St Neots "Jewel in the Crown". It's car park is extensively used for recreation and massively used by shoppers. The requirement for parking space is going to grow as the town's population grow. It would seem to me that as planners you must plan for worst case and market day during the school holidays in a growing town is just that The proposal to charge for parking inevitably will force more vehicles into street parking not just in The Paddock but all the adjacent streets. I cannot think of a single more damaging proposal for the Eatons and St Neots, I urge you to reconsider</p>	
<p>Helen &amp; Tim Lee Eaton Ford</p>	<p>We are writing to strongly object to the proposed parking charges at the Riverside Car Park.</p> <p>We cannot believe that the option for 3 hours free parking, which would have been an equitable compromise has been rejected.</p> <p>Further to my earlier email I would like to submit the following for consideration at the Council's Cabinet on 17th June, regarding the proposed charges at St. Neots Riverside Car Park.</p> <p>My comments are based on being a resident of the town for 20 years.</p> <p>Whilst I would choose to walk to town wherever possible, the Riverside Car Park serves many of the residents of Eaton Ford and Eaton Socon. It reduces the impact of</p>	<p>See comments above</p> <p>There is no evidence that the relatively low level of proposed charge will force shoppers to other towns given the far greater cost of driving elsewhere when compared to the proposed charges and the charging levels in place within nearby towns and cities.</p> <p>The proposed 38 free spaces will be enforced by the existing Street Ranger service.</p>

	<p>traffic going into the town via the road bridge. Anyone who lives in St Neots, would know how congested this route can become.</p> <p>I believe that the availability of free parking also ensures a better foot fall in the town centre, which in turn ensures that local businesses are supported. If there was no such incentive the option to go to out of town or local city shopping centres would be greater.</p> <p>Many people use the Riverside Car Park for parking not only for town but recreation, such as the cafe and children's play area.</p> <p>As residents we would rather have paid a small amount extra on our council tax and retain this valuable amenity. At the very least the option of 3 hours free parking would have been a reasonable compromise rather than the paltry number of free places that are being proposed and will be completely unworkable in practice.</p> <p>I would like to know how much of our Council Tax has gone on building the lavish new HQ in Huntingdon for the Council, rather than putting the money back into the community. I feel that Huntingdon Council rarely represents the people of St Neots and this is just another example of this.</p>	
Stuart Gallagher	<p>I would like to add my support to the e-mail sent by my Town Councillor Jennifer Bird concerning the proposed charges at the Riverside Car Park.</p> <p>Whenever the police put no-parking signs out in the Paddock, the signs are ignored and sometimes thrust aside! Motorists also park on the pavement forcing pedestrians on to the road.</p> <p>Will there be special arrangements made for the market traders? They always use the Riverside Car Park. Will they be parking in the Paddock?</p> <p>If this proposal goes ahead and the Paddock becomes a car park, can we look forward to a reduction in our council tax?</p>	<p>See comments above.</p> <p>Any abuse of temporary 'No Parking' cones or illegal parking on footways are matters for local Police enforcement.</p> <p>The proposed Orders allow the Council to issue parking permits for market traders.</p>
Councillor David Harty	I wish to comment on the issue of car parking at Riverside Park, St Neots.	See comments above.

	<p>The current proposals are not acceptable to residents in St Neots and I would advise Cabinet that 38 free spaces for 2 hours is meaningless and a nonsense.</p> <p>And why pay? Surely we don't have to be consistent throughout the District Council. It is important to review local issues and understand the concerns. The car park – in addition to serving the attractions of Riverside Park:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>provides a park and walk into the Town Centre</li> <li>reduces congestions in the Town Centre</li> <li>and reduces high levels of air pollution currently in High Street.</li> </ul> <p>If the proposal is introduced, it will continue to reduce footfall in the Town Centre, harm the local economy and spread car parking into adjacent streets.</p> <p>Councillors in St Neots are seeking to build harmony and understanding with HDC. We must retain free parking at Riverside Park and I would ask Cabinet to reconsider at the next opportunity and ensure the future of a sustainable community in St Neots.</p>	<p>There is no evidence to suggest that the relatively low level of proposed charge will deter users and that the car park will continue to provide a park &amp; walk facility, a sustainable alternative to town centre car parking and to continue to assist reducing levels of pollution by providing cheaper car parking to that within the town centre.</p>
<p>C and J Leahy Slepe Lodge Ramsey Road St Ives</p>	<p>While we understand the reason for the proposed car park charges at the County Park we feel this is a retrograde step which will become an entry fee to the park.</p> <p>We are particularly concerned about the effect on the extended improved café. No longer can we go for a walk and a lunch without constantly looking at our watches and paying extra on the bill.</p> <p>Could not the charges be offset against café purchases with arrangements as exist with Waitrose and Sainsbury? This would encourage use of the café.</p> <p>A further possibility is to consider free parking for the Friends of the Country Park. Not only would this encourage membership but also bring in more money to the park.</p> <p>Please have a rethink about the whole concept.</p>	<p>Season tickets at a reduced cost are available for friends of Hinchingsbrooke Park. The Café will be able to offer refunds if it wishes to do so.</p>
<p>Pauline Wells Ford Farm The Green</p>	<p>I would like to point out my objections to charging for parking in the Riverside Park:</p>	<p>See comments above</p>

<p>Eaton Ford St Neots</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Cars will be parked in streets locally, we already have a problem on Eaton Ford Green, because of offices in a residential area, which we objected to, cars park in the turning area and in front of the bollards, which is on the path, causing problems for pedestrians. I have asked for a 'no parking in the turning head' sign and was told there is no money. If this goes ahead we will need this sign and residents parking only on Eaton Ford Green and nearby streets.</li> <li>2. The Riverside is for leisure and brings people from local surroundings into the town. The greatly improved childrens play facilities will in effect be charged for.</li> <li>3. Trade in the town will suffer as nobody will come into the town, the only people needing to pay for parking will be the people that work in the Estate agents and Charity shops, that are all that will be left in St Neots.</li> </ol> <p>I hope you will take all objections into consideration before making your decision.</p>	
<p>J A Hay 21 The Paddock Eaton Ford St Neots</p>	<p>Please can you bear in mind that if people have to pay in the car park they will attempt to park at the entrance to the car park, making this a dangerous area (for children especially).</p> <p>Also, it will be a pity if people are put off from enjoying the amenities of the park because they have to pay. This is a consideration for some people.</p>	<p>See comments above.</p> <p>There is no evidence to suggest that users of the park will be deterred if they have to pay the relatively low level charges proposed if the proposed free spaces are not available.</p>
<p>Town Councillor Jennifer Bird</p>	<p>Please will you give the following points careful consideration before imposing charges for Riverside Car Park. Should you decide to proceed with making a charge, the predicted income from this source cannot be compared with the amount of cars currently using the car park because people will obviously look for alternative free car parking or not use the car park at all. The cost of installing a meter and having a warden to monitor the car park must obviously be deducted from income expected. If, as predicted, there were a substantial reduction in visits to the businesses in the town, this could result in</p>	<p>See comments above.</p> <p>The car park serves as a facility for a number of functions including shopping, employment and leisure.</p> <p>There is no evidence that the introduction of the proposed charges will result in people driving into the town in greater numbers given higher</p>

	<p>businesses closing and less business rates received.</p> <p>As a Town Councillor and resident of St Neots I have a deep understanding of the needs of our town. I consider the Riverside Car Park should remain free of charge for the following reasons:-</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. This car park is primarily required for the leisure facilities that the adjoining park offers.</li> <li>2. We have a town centre badly congested with traffic. It has one of the worst air quality conditions in the country caused by this problem. If HDC insist on charging for Riverside Car Park, it will encourage the public to drive over the bridge to use other more conveniently positioned car parks, which already charge.</li> <li>3. Charging for this car park will create a Health &amp; Safety problem in the adjoining streets. It is obvious visitors will prefer free parking and resort to parking in the adjacent streets. When this car park is used for the fair, the Police immediately put restricted parking in place in The Paddock because when public park on both sides of the road it becomes impossible for ambulances or fire engines to access the houses.</li> <li>4. Several traders in the town are convinced less people will come into the town if they have to pay for the privilege. If they come to this car park they will stay for the minimum time then leave without spending any money in the town, which is already struggling to survive.</li> <li>5. St Neots has been selected to take the most housing expansion required for Huntingdonshire in the next 25 years. Therefore charging for parking should be considered as an individual case. The town will need more support from HDC to accommodate this expansion therefore detrimental decisions at this time are very inappropriate.</li> </ol> <p>Thank you for taking these important</p>	<p>charges that apply. Likewise, the retention of free parking could encourage those from the east side to drive in greater numbers to seek free parking thereby contributing to an increase in traffic levels.</p>
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	<p>aspects into account when deliberating your recommendation on whether parking in Riverside Car Park should remain free of charge. Limited free spaces would <b>not</b> be a solution. Please ensure this letter is read out at the District Council meeting.</p>	
<p>Margaret and John Elstone</p>	<p>We have several reasons why we would prefer these charges not to be implemented, and would be grateful if you and your members could give this some careful consideration. Listed below are several points that we feel should be taken into account to allow this car park to remain free of charge to the people who use it.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. As you are aware St Neots is going through a very bad time with the closure of a number of businesses in the High Street. We recently visited Huntingdon and can see that there is now a thriving community in the town, which would be nice if this could happen in St Neots.</li> <li>2. There are lots of visitors who come to St Neots to visit the Riverside Park to park, and then to enjoy the amenities that are available. This area is particularly busy when the weather is good at weekends and during the school holidays, thus including lots of families. Many of these people can ill afford parking charges and will therefore gradually stop coming to St Neots, and go elsewhere.</li> <li>3. St Neots needs to encourage visitors to visit and shop in the town, as well as making use of the lovely park. The number of useful shops has decreased and we are being left with run down frontages. In the High Street are a couple of coffee places and not much else. Why are these buildings allowed to stand empty in what was a once thriving town?</li> <li>4. We are also concerned that if the parking is to be charged in the Riverside Car Park the volume of traffic parking in the side streets will considerably increase in number. As you can see from our address, we are residents in the Paddock and know that our small cul-de-sac will become congested. Already Thursdays are a nightmare if we wish to travel out in our car, caused by the double parking that takes place in the Paddock, and even last week a</li> </ol>	<p>See comments above.</p> <p>The proposed charges are set at a relatively low rate and there is no evidence that these cannot be afforded when compared to the overall cost of owning and running a car or that such levels of charge will deter visitors.</p>

	<p>bus was parked in it. We are concerned that access for emergency services would be compromised.</p> <p>5. Judging by the large number of new build housing close to the town and the expected growth over the next few years, St Neots needs to be an inviting place, bustling with shops, not one with car parking charges that will cause people to stay away.</p> <p>We hope that you will give this matter careful consideration and we look forward to hearing your comments.</p>	
Chloe	<p>Apart from the excessive parking around surrounding streets a charge will cause many pensioners who have limited means will not be able to afford it and may not be able to walk the distance if they have to park farther away. This will affect the times they can come into town.</p>	See comments above.
S Betts 1 Park View Court The Paddock Eaton Ford St Neots	<p>I am very concerned about the proposed charges for Riverside Car Park.</p> <p>It is a facility that is appreciated both by people coming to shop in St Neots and families bringing their children to the Park to use the facilities there.</p> <p>It would be a big mistake to charge for parking as people would probably not come to St Neots so much to do their shopping and so eventually shops would close.</p>	See comments above.
R F Hennell 1 The Paddock Eaton Ford St Neots	<p>I wish you to record my objections to the proposed car charging fees at Riverside Car Park St Neots.</p> <p>I have lived in St Neots for the past 28 years, and have experienced the amount of inconsiderate parking in The Paddock when the car park is closed or full to capacity.</p> <p>It seems obvious there would be a large increase in street parking nearby to the car park to avoid paying parking fees. Stupid parking would also affect access for the emergency services.</p> <p>It this proposal to charge fees for parking goes ahead, then please could arrangements be put in place for parking restrictions in The Paddock and surrounding areas be considered.</p>	<p>See comments above.</p> <p>The need for any on-street parking restrictions would be considered in conjunction with the County Council as local highway authority.</p>
Y M Davies 24 The Paddock Eaton Ford	<p>As a resident of The Paddock which is adjacent to the Riverside Car Park I am most concerned about the proposed</p>	<p>See comments above.</p> <p>The proposed Orders</p>

<p>St Neots</p>	<p>charges for parking there. Before making any decision please consider the following points:-</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. On market days the traders put their vans in the Riverside Car Park. Where would they go if they have to pay for parking as well as for their pitch and so the market may close.</li> <li>2. Many people come to enjoy the facilities in the park i.e. the play areas, the boating lake, fishermen using the river, the summer band concerts, dog walkers etc. Where are they going to park?</li> <li>3. Motorists will go to the nearest streets to find a free place and my road is too narrow for parking both sides and still allow room for fire appliances of ambulances to pass.</li> <li>4. As a volunteer in a charity shop in the town centre I know that people come from surrounding towns and villages, park in the Riverside Car Park and then shop in town. We could lose these customers if they have to pay for parking.</li> </ol> <p>Please take these points into consideration when deliberating your recommendations on whether to charge or not for parking in the Riverside Car Park.</p> <p>The Riverside Park is a wonderful facility for the town and brings people here. Do not spoil it by charging to use it.</p>	<p>allow the Council to issue parking permits for market traders.</p> <p>If none of the 38 free spaces are available, users of the Park have the option of paying the proposed low level charge.</p>
<p>Sallyann Woodthorpe, Chairman, Friends of Hinchingsbrooke Country Park</p>	<p><i>We (the Friends of Hinchingsbrooke Country Park) are unhappy with the District Council's proposal to introduce car parking charges for park users at Hinchingsbrooke Country Park.</i></p> <p><b>The reasons for our opposition are as follows:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Parking charges will have an adverse effect on the numbers using the Park. Whilst people living locally can walk or cycle to the Park to enjoy the green open spaces those from further afield have little option but to come by car. Many of the car users bring their dogs for regular walks in the Park - a park that up until now has freely welcomed</li> </ol>	<p>See comments above.</p>

	<p>everyone. HDC state in 'Cultural Strategy, 2007-2010' the vision is "to enhance the quality of life and ensure that all of Huntingdonshire's residents have the opportunity to pursue a wide range of high quality sustainable cultural activities that fully reflects the diverse needs of the district." Parking charges will act as a barrier to many residents who would otherwise be able to pursue the cultural activities at the Park.</p> <p>b) Whilst income will be generated by the proposed charges we feel that they will lead to a reduction in the number of visitors to the Park, and this may affect income at the Visitor Centre café. Likewise it could reduce numbers of people supporting fundraising events organised by the Friends, and therefore our donations towards extra projects in the Park.</p> <p>c) Since the proposals have implications for the operation of our membership system it would have been useful for the Friends Committee to have been consulted before the publication of the Order and we would hope to be contacted before implementation. As the 'Cultural Strategy, 2007-2010' further states (Section 5.1)</p> <p>"Undertaking robust consultation is vitally important to ensure that this Cultural Strategy, and its associated action plan, properly meets the needs of the district."</p> <p>d) Long stay parking by non Park users, mainly hospital workers, is an increasing problem which needs dealing with, but will these proposals do so? It will surely not take long for people to realise that they can join the Friends and get a season ticket and then be able to park daily for much less than a pound per day. This in itself is problematic as we could never guarantee a parking</p>	
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	<p>space to all friends as we currently have more Friends than there are parking spaces.</p> <p><b>Furthermore we have a number of questions about the proposal and practicalities about how the scheme would operate:</b></p> <p>i) Can you clarify if the six hour limit applies to season ticket holders? if so, will they need to acquire a ticket from a machine to show their time of arrival.</p> <p>ii) The Order refers to the car park at Hinchingsbrooke Car Park, but the accompanying map appears to show both the main visitor car park and that for the Countryside Centre. Clarification is therefore needed about whether or not the Order applies to both car parks.</p> <p>iii) It would be interesting to know how it is proposed to “police” the car park, such as monitoring the length of stay of vehicles. Also where will people be <i>required</i> to purchase season tickets – is it proposed for example that they can be purchased at the Park?</p> <p>iv) Unlike tarmac car parks in town there are not marked/designated bays in the main car park at Hinchingsbrooke. On busy days at weekends and in school holidays the car park soon becomes full and vehicles are parked on verges and the tracks around the car park. Would these vehicles be viable to charges?</p> <p>v) The Statement of Reasons says that users of conference facilities will not have to pay, but the Order does not state how they will be identified. Presumably organisers of outdoor events would also be entitled to free parking? The Park is reliant on</p>	<p>The six hour limit will apply to season tickets</p> <p>Both areas will come under the Order and people will only be able to park in signed spaces.</p> <p>The monitoring equipment used by the rangers can identify time stayed in the car parks against registration numbers.</p> <p>People should only park within the marked areas, or they can be ticketed for parking out of spaces</p> <p>Permits will be issued for conference users</p>
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	<p>volunteers to help with day to day maintenance at the Park - would they get free parking?</p> <p>Finally we should point out a discrepancy in the published official notices. On Schedule 1 the scale of charges states a charge of 100p for periods of up to “<b>1 hour</b> or part thereof”, rather than “for period up to <b>two hours</b>” as in the Order. The Schedule then states a charge of 200p “For periods in excess of 2 hour and up to <b>8 hours</b> or part thereof” rather than <b>6 hours</b> (the maximum permitted stay.</p> <p>In summary we feel that the proposal has not been given proper consideration, to the extent that there are still omissions and discrepancies. We have been contacted directly by a number of unhappy Park users and I am sure this is set to continue.</p> <p>Perhaps it would be prudent to give Park users an opportunity to comment on the proposed parking charges at a public meeting.</p> <p>We look forward to hearing your response to the questions that we have raised and an opportunity for further discussion of the proposal.</p>	<p>The charge for park is to be £1.00 for up to 2 hours and £2.00 for 2 to 6 hours</p>
<p>W. Watkins</p>	<p>I am writing to you to record my concern about the proposal by the Huntingdon District Council to introduce parking charges at the Riverside Car Park. I believe this will be a retrograde step. The introduction of parking fees will only serve as a deterrent to visitors shopping in St.Neots and as a result we will see further shops closing down.</p> <p>Also as someone who lives in the Paddock, adjacent to the car park, there will be a substantial increase in street parking. The road is particularly narrow at the entrance to the Paddock and we may have a repeat(s) of a recent incidence when it was impossible for an ambulance to access the Paddock because of double parking.</p> <p>I appreciate that because of the current recession savings and cuts have to be made but I feel that this proposal will be counter productive.</p>	<p>See comments above.</p>
<p>David Tattam</p>	<p>I am writing to express my serious concerns about the proposed introduction of parking</p>	<p>See comments above.</p>

	<p>charges at St Neots Riverside Car Park.</p> <p>I live in The Paddock so clearly have personal concerns.</p> <p>There is ample evidence that when the Riverside Car Park is full or used by a fairground then drivers wishing to go into town use the (free) parking in the residential area of The Paddock and other nearby streets.</p> <p>This indiscriminate parking can be seen historically in the actions of drivers using St Neots Rail Station who for years have parked and blocked the surrounding streets rather than pay a fee.</p> <p>The police try to control this parking but to little effect. I have, on several occasions, had to report that indiscriminate parking in The Paddock has blocked the road to council refuse vehicles and local buses that use it to turn round. Clearly such uncontrolled parking would prevent the access of ambulances and fire engines should these be needed.</p> <p>Perhaps even more important those drivers parking their cars who are aware that they may block the road just park on the pedestrian footpath! On occasions I have had to use a wheelchair and there are several residents of Gorham Place in the same position. There is no safe way in which we can get in or out of The Paddock when it is being used as an overflow to the Riverside Car Park.</p> <p>There is no doubt in my mind, and that of any sensible person, that if parking charges are introduced then motorists WILL use the free parking in The Paddock and other streets rather than pay. This will very obviously create a serious health and safety hazard to residents and those who actually walk into town from Eaton Ford/Socon.</p> <p>On a general front; many residents, shopkeepers, councillors etc have all made their views quite clear on the adverse effect to the town of introducing parking charges at Riverside, St Neots. I fully concur with these views and, like others, believe that the extra income that parking charges may generate could well be lost due to the added cost of</p>	<p>Any pavement parking is illegal and can be enforced under local Police powers.</p> <p>The cost of introducing charges and monitoring the car parking has been considered by the Council as part of its Medium Term Plan.</p>
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	<p>collecting and monitoring the parking plus the added cost of policing the surrounding streets.</p> <p>Finally, I clearly recall that when the flood plain of St Neots was turned into the Riverside Park plus a parking area in the early 1970's, Councillor Cyril Childs, and others, gave an absolute promise to the people of St Neots and Eaton Socon that there would NEVER be a charge made for the use of these facilities. This promise was made when Huntingdonshire still existed and before the asset were handed over to Cambs CC.</p> <p>You, sir, represent the inheritors of the old County Council and have a duty to guide our avaricious and misguided councillors from Huntingdon that the Riverside Car Park at St Neots is a town asset and that promises made in the past should be honoured.</p> <p><b>ALL OF ST NEOTS RIVERSIDE CAR PARK SHOULD CONTINUE TO BE A FREE PARKING AREA.</b></p>	
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