



Cllr Rory Love

Councillor for Harvey West Ward, Folkestone,
Shepway District Council.
Cabinet Member for Revenues & Benefits



Cllr George Bunting

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To: Harvey West Ward Residents near Folkestone West Station

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Dear Resident,

Folkestone West Residents' Parking Scheme

You may be aware that the Council is proposing a residents' parking scheme around Folkestone West station to reduce the problem of commuters parking in your roads.

You may have seen in our recent *In Touch* ward newsletter that we have a number of concerns about the scheme as it is currently proposed. We have expanded on those concerns in this letter to residents in the area affected by commuter parking.

We set out below our position on a number of issues together with our reasons. If you have reached different conclusions, we would like to hear your views and your reasons so we can accurately reflect your views when the Council makes its decision next month on whether to introduce the parking scheme.

We have delivered this letter to some residents just outside the area covered by the proposed scheme, and would draw those residents' attention to question 12.

Our overall theme is that the Council should only intervene the minimum amount necessary in order to protect residential streets from commuter parking.

You can write to us at the above address or e-mail us at: parking@cllrorylove.org to let us know your views.

Yours sincerely,

Cllr Rory Love

Cllr George Bunting

1. Should there be a residents' parking scheme around Folkestone West?

Our position: We support residents' ambitions to keep their roads free from commuter parking, and so agree with the principle of a residents' parking scheme.

Reason: We have been lobbied by local residents over the last year or so to urge the Council to tackle the problem of commuters parking in residential streets by introducing a residents' priority parking scheme. We are therefore supporting residents who have made such a case to us, especially as this problem is likely to worsen with the arrival of the high-speed trains in December

2. What should be the operating hours of the scheme?

Our position: We would prefer a one-hour scheme to minimise inconvenience to residents, but we recognise that patrolling and enforcement may require a two-hour restriction.

The Council originally proposed 8.00 am – 10.00 am as the hours of operation. We successfully argued for alternative hours of 9.00 am – 11.00 am to be included in the consultation, and these are our preferred operating hours.

Reason: By not starting the scheme until 9.00 am, many residents will already have left for work, and so may escape the need to purchase permits at all. By extending the scheme until 11.00 am, the first “leisure” travellers who take advantage of the cheaper fares will also be prevented from parking in residential areas. This will therefore help keep the roads free from more rail travellers.

3. Is the proposed £25 per year charge reasonable?

Our position: We believe that if the scheme is to be introduced, it must be funded by those it will benefit, and must not put a burden on taxpayers outside the area covered. We have sought and received assurances that the charge is intended to cover the scheme costs, and not generate a profit for the Council.

Reason: If the scheme is going to be introduced and is going to be enforced, then there will be a cost of introducing and operating it. This is a new cost, and will therefore require new funding. We cannot justify asking taxpayers throughout the District (many of whom have their own parking problems) to pay extra council tax to cover a scheme that will benefit a small part of Folkestone.

4. Should residents have to buy a permit for each car they own?

Our position: The Council first proposed that permits would be valid for only one car. So households with two cars would most likely need two permits.

We have argued against this. Our view is that if a resident household owns two cars, but was only ever going to park one of them on the road at any one time, then the permit should be able to be swapped between the two cars. Only if they wanted both cars parked on the road at the same time would they need two permits.

Reason: It is of no consequence to the Council which car a resident parks on the road; only the number of car spaces occupied. If a resident has purchased a permit, then that should entitle him/her to park any car on the road. Residents should also be entitled to use their permit for a hire car, a company pool car (which may change frequently) or a courtesy car without any inconvenience or additional charge. Residents should not, though, be able to sell permits to commuters.

5. Should residents be permitted to park in front of their own driveway?

Our position: We disagree with the Council’s current view that yellow lines should be painted in front of driveways, which would prevent anyone (including the residents themselves) from parking in front of driveways during the operational hours of the scheme. Our view is that we should retain the maximum amount of road space for parking, and cause the minimum possible inconvenience for residents.

Reason: The problem this proposal seeks to tackle is obstruction (usually by commuters) of the driveway. But if a resident chooses to park a car, or asks a visitor to park a car, in front of his own driveway, then there is no obstruction, and no reason for the Council’s parking attendants to be involved.

We believe there are currently alternative solutions to tackling the obstruction problem (and under new legislation there will be even greater powers without the need for any line in front of a driveway).

For example, if the whole road was designated as a permit parking area (including the space in front of the driveway) then no commuters could park there. In the unlikely event that a neighbouring resident causes a persistent obstruction, they should be able to have their own permit withdrawn. They would also be likely to be committing an offence under the new legislation.

6. Should there be a double yellow line in the turning circles in Herdson and Wellfield Roads?

Our position: We disagree with the Council's current position of painting a double yellow line in the turning circles. We believe these lines are currently unnecessary.

Reason: We are not aware of a major problem caused by occasional parking in these turning circles. We remain open to the views of residents on this matter, but no-one has ever contacted us to complain of problems caused by obstruction in these circles. We take the view that the Council should tackle problems only where there is evidence that they exist, and not look for problems that do not exist.

7. Should there be a single yellow line along the whole of one side of Herdson and Wellfield Roads?

Our position: We disagree with the Council's current position of painting a single yellow line along one side of these roads. We believe these lines are unnecessary.

Reason: This restriction would mean that residents (as well as commuters) are unable to park throughout the whole length of one side of their roads during the restricted hours. However, outside those hours, anyone would be free to park there. This position is inconsistent. If parking is permitted outside the operational hours then it should also be permitted for residents within the operational hours.

We also believe that it would be highly inconvenient for residents, requiring them to move their cars at a time when any spaces will already have been taken, and would be highly divisive between residents on different sides of the roads.

8. Should there be a double yellow line along the whole of one side of Broadfield Crescent and a single yellow line on the whole of the other side?

Our position: Broadfield Crescent is a particularly narrow road. It is rarely parked on both sides and all residents live on the north side. We are therefore content with the Council's proposal to paint double yellow lines along the whole length on the south side.

However, we disagree with the Council's current position of painting a single yellow line along the north side of Broadfield Crescent. We believe the single yellow line is unnecessary and the north side should instead be available for permit holders.

Reason: If parking is permitted outside the operational hours then it should also be permitted for residents within the operational hours.

9. Should there be any single yellow lines in Audley Road and Shorncliffe Road?

Our position: We see no reason for any single yellow lines in the section of these roads in our ward. We would wish all spaces to be made available for resident permit holders.

Reason: If parking is to be permitted outside the operational hours then it should also be permitted for residents within the operational hours.

10. Should the signs and lines required for the scheme be kept to a minimum and positioned discreetly?

Our position: Yes.

Reason: We believe the scheme covers a residential area with a suburban theme, a view endorsed by some residents who have contacted us. We do not want a proliferation of signs and lines to change the appearance to that of a town centre location. We recognise that there are legal requirements to be met, but we are pressing the Council for a minimalist approach to the signs and lines.

11. Should there be any additional double yellow lines under this scheme?

Our position: In general, no. We recognise that some lines may be necessary for a few yards on each side of a junction to preserve visibility and ensure safety. However, we disagree with the Council's current position of extending the double yellow lines in Audley Road south of Croft Lane (which will increase parking pressure on roads in our ward), and in Shorncliffe Road east of Wellfield Road.

Reason: We believe that in general double yellow lines should be restricted to ensuring safety and preserving the movement of traffic. We do not wish to see residents inconvenienced by unnecessary restrictions on parking.

12. Should other roads be included in the scheme; for example Baldric Road, the north side of Shorncliffe Road as far as Ravenlea Road, the western leg of Broadfield Road, or part or all of Welson Road?

Our position: We believe there is a case to include Baldric Road and at least the western end of Welson Road in the scheme if residents wished this, and we would encourage residents of these roads to let us know their views on this. Some residents have already asked us for these roads to be included, and we understand they have made a similar case to the Council in the recent consultation.

We believe that a case could be made to extend the scheme along Shorncliffe Road and to include the western leg of Broadfield Road, but no residents have asked us to support such an extension. We would not press the Council for these extensions in the absence of support from residents.

Reason: Residents have commented on the increase in commuter parking in Baldric and Welson Roads, and some have expressed a preference to be included in the scheme.