

RESIDENTS' PARKING ACTION GROUP

Friday 16th May 2008

Conor Murphy MP MLA,
Minister, Department for Regional Development,
Clarence Court,
10-18 Adelaide Street,
Belfast,
BT2 8GB.

Dear Minister

We are the Residents' Parking Action Group brought together to represent the five districts of Barrack Street, Donegall Pass, Sandy Row, Brown Square and the Markets affected by the proposed implementation of Park Permits/Parking Meters scheme recommended by your Department. We have held meetings regarding these proposals and, by an overwhelming majority, decided that they are neither applicable nor workable within our communities.

We consider that the over-reliance on outside consultants, without the residents from these areas having any input, shows the indifference to the wishes of the people most affected. Our political representatives have shown complete apathy to the problems and difficulties that this scheme, if enforced, will bring to these areas.

You should be aware that there is total opposition to the proposed "system" of permits and parking meters. Listed below are just some of the concerns of the residents

- Disabled access 'dropped kerbs' being blocked
- Footpaths being inaccessible to pedestrians - including those with disabilities, senior citizens, persons with prams and young children
- Residents' driveways being blocked
- Access being denied to essential and emergency services
- Increased health hazards attributable to commuter traffic

Furthermore the cross-community Residents Parking Action Group consider that:

- Affected communities residential streets should be reserved for parking for residents only;
- Areas agreed for designation for “public” parking should be confined to the peripheries external to community residential streets;
- All lay-bys should be designated for use for residents only – as they were clearly designed for the use of residents whose dwellings do not have driveways;
- The plan “mixed parking” proposals do not clearly and unambiguously indicate which areas are to be designated as “pay and display” and those as residents only zones;
- Clearly defined residents parking zones in areas described as “shared services” should have painted line designated residents near parking areas;
- Any Residents Parking Scheme should be implemented by agreement with the affected community and at no cost to residents;
- If “visitors permits” are to be issued they should be free of charge and not limited.
- Any mixed area’s parking fees should be higher than the going rate of parking fees in the city centre.

The Residents’ Parking Action Group awaits your response with interest - and calls for a meeting to take place, as soon possible, aimed at formulating an alternative scheme to suit residents.

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