

REGULATORY COMMITTEE

8th OCTOBER 2003

MARLBOROUGH: HIGH STREET - ON-STREET PARKING
OBJECTIONS TO SUNDAY CHARGING

Purpose of Report

1. To consider objections to the introduction of Sunday charging for on-street parking in High Street, Marlborough, and to recommend the making of the Order as advertised.

Background

2. In September 2002, Kennet District Council resolved to introduce charges on Sunday in the off-street car parks and to request the County Council to do the same in the central area of the High Street.
3. The proposal to extend the current Monday to Saturday charging regime to apply also on Sunday was advertised in January 2003.
4. As a result of the advertisement 23 letters of objection have been received. Full copies of the letters are available in the **Members' Room** and from the Environmental Services Department prior to the meeting.
5. A report to Committee to determine these objections has been deferred to enable the District Council to advertise proposals for the off-street car parks.
6. As the proposals for off-street and on-street parking are interrelated, and the District Council carries out the enforcement, it was appropriate for the District Council, as originator of the proposals, to consider the matter holistically. At a meeting on 16th September 2003 the Community Development Policy Committee of the District Council considered the objections to both the on- and off-street parking. A copy of the report presented to that meeting is also available in the **Members' Room** and from the Environmental Services Department prior to the meeting of this Committee. Appendix B to that report which lists the objectors, and their objections, received by the County Council, is attached at **Appendix 1** for ease of reference.
7. Kennet District Council resolved that:-
 - (i) *The County Council be requested to consider the introduction of charges on Sundays and Bank Holidays (excluding Christmas Day) in Marlborough High Street, central area;*
 - (ii) *The sides of the High Street remain free, but have the weekday regulations applied; and*
 - (iii) *Charges should not be applied "off street" but that weekday regulations be applied.*

Main Considerations for the Council

8. Members now need to formally determine the objections to the on-street Sunday charging proposals advertised in January 2003.
9. There are currently no time limit restrictions in operation on either the centre or edge of the High Street on Sundays or Bank Holidays and, consequently, many of the spaces are occupied by all-day or long-term parkers, thus considerably reducing the opportunities for short-term parkers to find a space. Congestion is also caused by drivers looking for the few available spaces. The introduction on Sundays and Bank Holidays of time-restrictive pay-and-display in the centre of the High Street and the half-hour time limit on the edge of the High Street would provide these short-term parking opportunities and help reduce the congestion caused by circulating vehicles.
10. The District Council decided that not introducing charges in the off-street car parks would meet the objectors' concerns that residents and churchgoers would have to pay.
11. The retention of free non time-limited off-street parking would enable the on-street proposals to be implemented to provide a turnover of spaces for shoppers etc. and reduce circulating traffic.
12. The restrictions on the edge of the High Street are regulated by a separate Traffic Order and proposals to include Sunday time restrictions are already included in amendments to restrictions at various locations across the town, which are out for consultation at present.

Environmental Impact of the Proposal

13. There will be no environmental impact as a result of the proposals.

Risk Assessment

14. The non-introduction of the restrictions could inhibit the implementation of the joint parking strategy.

Financial Implications

15. There are no major financial implications for the County Council in introducing Sunday charging as the alterations to the signs will be funded from the income managed by the District Council which also carries out the enforcement.

Options Considered

16. To implement the Sunday charging as advertised.
17. To not implement the proposals.

Reasons for Recommendation

18. The District Council has considered the parking proposals holistically and its recommendations are considered to provide an appropriate way of meeting the conflicting needs of different groups of people.

Recommendation

19. That:-
- (i) The parking charges in the central parking area of High Street, Marlborough, be implemented on Sundays and Bank Holidays as advertised;
 - (ii) It be noted that proposals to extend the current weekday time limit on the edge of the High Street to Sundays and Bank Holidays as well are being progressed;
 - (iii) The objectors be advised accordingly.

GEORGE BATTEN

Director of Environmental Services

Report Author

PETER HARRIS

Casualty Reduction Manager

The following unpublished documents have been relied on in the preparation of this Report:

Letters of objection

LIST OF OBJECTIONS RECEIVED BY
WILTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Objection No.	Name	Summary of Objection
1	Marlborough and District Chamber of Commerce	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Believe the proposal will adversely affect the town's economy. 2. Sunday parking charges are not being proposed for any of the other towns in the Kennet district. 3. The proposed charges will send an appalling message to visitors. 4. Not only would the proposal affect Sunday shoppers, but also church-goers and those wishing to enjoy Sunday lunch in Marlborough. 5. Parking charges are not needed in Marlborough on Sundays. 6. The Chamber feels that the proposals are little more than a course attempt to treat Marlborough as a cash-can.
2	Mrs Joan M Davies	Objects to Sunday parking charges in Marlborough, as she occasionally helps with charity events in the town on a Sunday, and she has stated she will not help in future if it means paying for parking.
3	Mrs Jane Pierpoint	The town relies heavily on tourism, not to mention passing trade for all the retailers of Marlborough. The extra parking fees are surely going to limit the amount of people who will consider shopping, or stopping in the town.
4	B & G J Wallis	There is sufficient parking in town for tourists, shoppers and worshippers on Sunday, and it is not unreasonable that residents should have one day a week when they can park free in the centre of their own town.
5	Mrs T Wheeler	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Parking charges will impose a tax on churchgoers, especially those attending St Mary's Church. 2. It is a very long walk from George Lane Car Park to St Mary's Church. 3. Marlborough is the only town in Kennet District to which the charges are going to apply. 4. If this is for traffic management purposes, there does not seem to be a problem.
6	Details to be kept private at request of objector	With churches doing their best to gain larger congregations, charging for parking on a Sunday would be a major factor in discouraging potential worshippers from attending Sunday services.
7	Mrs M J Hill	Concern for churchgoers.
8	Details to be kept private at objector's request	Does not believe if charges are to be introduced, they should penalise those who attend Sunday morning services at the church. Also not pleased that we are treating Marlborough as a cash-cow.
9	Details to be kept private at objector's request	Churchgoers will be penalised as well as Traffic Wardens, who would have to work on a Sunday.

Objection No.	Name	Summary of Objection
10	AMM Maclachlan	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A consequence of parking charges being introduced will be that motorists will migrate away from where the charge applied. He has noticed that in Marlborough, residential districts which before charges were introduced, were virtually deserted, have now become congested such that residents are hard pressed to find spaces for their cars. 2. It is during the weekend, and Sundays in particular, that families and friends visit, and it seems only reasonable that they be able to park close to their house. 3. There is little support for Sunday parking charges, because traders do not seem hope for traffic turnover as enhancing business.
11	Kate Twisk & John Sumner	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. There is no evidence that the tourists who visit Marlborough on Sundays are causing a lack of space for residents and locals, and they believe that Local Authorities seeking to cash-in on the success of retailers who open on Sundays. 2. The local people coming into town for top-up shopping or to worship at the churches, will be forced to play musical car parking to avoid a ticket, and the local retailers will surely suffer a down-turn in trade. 3. The people going to church do not all live near enough to walk to Sunday morning services, especially the elderly. The question is, will the faithful be expects to cough up to hear the word of God?
12	Kate Twisk & John Sumner	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Surely Kennet District Council does not expect Marlborough to help it face the cash crisis that has been caused by central Government policy. 2. Many residents will now, if they cannot park for free, go to Swindon instead, believe that traffic management is just an excuse and revenue is the real reason for this proposal. 3. A petition which was drawn has already raised well over 200 signatures against the proposal. Over half of these collected by just 2 people outside Somerfield for ¾ hour.
13	Details kept private at the request of the objector	Objects on the basis that if these charges were introduced, this could have a great impact on local residents who could find 2 hours insufficient to attend church and any associated activities.
14	Councillor W B Cavill – Marlborough East Ward	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The proposal discriminates against Marlborough parkers as there are no Sunday charges in the rest of the KDC area. 2. The proposal conflicts with the Human Rights Act, as it discriminates against local residents, especially churchgoers at the town centre churches. 3. The residents of Marlborough, as shown in a recent survey, that 82% of them are against the proposal.

Objection No.	Name	Summary of Objection
		<p>4. The proposal is being put on the grounds of road safety and traffic management. There are no reasons to believe that either of these problems occur on Sundays that will justify this, as on Sundays, the High Street traffic is lighter and the shopping hours are considerably less.</p> <p>5. Residents in the High Street have enough problems of parking their cars.</p>
15	Marlborough Town Council	The Town Council believes a more efficient and fairer way to improve traffic management would be to guarantee that all off-street parking remains free of charge for the use of long-stay parkers, including shop workers and residents, and to allow the first 2 hours parking in the High Street to be free of charge. This would ensure a constant turnover of spaces which would encourage and help with the vital tourist industry, and would hopefully reassure the people and traders of Marlborough that they are not being treated unfairly in relation to other towns in the Kennet District.
16	Tony Castles	Objects on the grounds that it is yet another erosion of the rights of High Street residents and their visitors, for which there is no relief or good reason.
17	Mrs P Cavill	<p>1. Measure will discriminate against church worshippers who have no church car parks in Marlborough.</p> <p>2. Marlborough residents use Sunday parking to do their large weekly shopping.</p> <p>3. High Street residents can take the opportunity to move heavy items in and out of their houses on Sundays, or to have visitors.</p> <p>4. Detriment to trade.</p> <p>5. Marlborough is being singled out.</p> <p>6. Residents in roads off the High Street will be unable to park on the one day of the week which they have the opportunity.</p> <p>NB: This letter contained a petition, which had 229 names on it.</p>
18	Rev. Steve Sankey	There are other ways of dealing with traffic management issues other than imposing parking charges.
19	Michael Reynolds	Inconvenience and expense for those who wish to attend church in Marlborough on a Sunday morning, and it will in particular, affect the elderly, who are not so well off (although this is not to be considered an objection, he wishes it to be a response submission or comment).
20	Marlborough Area Development Trust c/o Chairman – Mr M Lillywhite	Concern that the situation is being used as a pretext for levying charges in all the town's car parks, most of which are under no significantly greater pressure on Sundays, and those in any other part of Kennet where Sunday charges will not apply. They believe that a charge should be for only the High Street on Sundays, as the off-street car parks would then become more attractive and alleviate the High Street problem without deterring visitors.

Objection No.	Name	Summary of Objection
21	Details kept private at objectors request	The objector will be forced to use the shopping facilities of Swindon or Newbury, as the introduction of the charges and the possibility of getting a ticket will make parking in the town centre more of a risk.
22	Simon & Sheila Mills	Worshippers at Christchurch – they would be severely inconvenienced, with additional parking restrictions and charges, and frankly they find it offensive to be paying for car parking in order to worship.
23	Details kept private at objectors request	Concern about the levy that would be placed on those attending Sunday services in the town, in particular those who meet together before and after a service, would be away from their cars for longer than the 2 hour maximum period.