

## REVIEW OF HYTHE FERRY PARKING SCHEME

### 1. BACKGROUND

#### 1.1 Reasons for Introduction:-

On 1 January 2008 the Parking Clock scheme for Hythe Ferry was amended in order to clearly link the concessionary parking scheme with use of the ferry.

#### 1.2 Summary of how scheme operates:-

All ferry users who wish to park in a Council car park can take advantage of the Hythe ferry parking concession and need to:-

1.2.1 Purchase a short stay clock (£10 per annum)

1.2.2 Display either a Hythe ferry parking card issued with a 10 journey ticket or

1.2.3 Display a Hythe ferry parking permit for the period of which their ferry ticket is valid (monthly, 3 monthly or annual)

1.3 The ferry concessionary parking cards are distributed by the ferry ticket office and enable the holder to park long stay in a Hythe car park without the need to purchase an £80 long stay parking clock or pay the daily tariff. Naturally, if the ferry user does not wish to take advantage of the ferry parking concession they can purchase a ticket in the car park in the normal way.

### 2. REVIEW

#### 2.1 Use of Ferry Clock.

The primary objective of the scheme was to more closely link the use of the ferry concessionary parking facilities with use of the ferry.

#### 2.2 Sales of Clocks from Hythe Information Office.

Year	Short Stay	12 Monthly Long Stay	6 Monthly Long Stay	Total
2007	5278	50	42	5370
2008 to Date	5064	224	48* 2 <sup>nd</sup> half year sales not included	5336

2.3 It is not unreasonable to assume that the dramatic four fold increase in long stay clock sales and the 4.05% decrease on short stay clocks has occurred because people, who formerly purchased ferry concessionary clocks but did not use the ferry, are now purchasing the appropriate clock type.

## 2.4 Use of Concessionary Vouchers/Passes.

### Number of Ferry Passes Vouchers Observed Using Ferry Concessionary Parking

Date	New Road Average of 3 Surveys	St Johns Street Average of 3 Surveys	Jones Lane Average of 3 Surveys
20/6/08	4	5	44
23/6/08	2	3	46

## 2.5 Displacement.

Concerns about existing on street parking problems and the fear that the Hythe parking clock scheme would exacerbate this were raised by the Parish Council and local members. The Traffic Management Section is in the process of putting in place a number of traffic orders to alleviate these concerns. Two complaints have been received concerning on street parking since the new ferry clock was introduced, one relating to parking in Jones lane, which will be resolved by the new Traffic Regulation Order, and one relating to the use of a Disabled Badge on double yellow lines. The general impression gained by patrol staff is that there has not been a marked change in parking patterns since the introduction of the new Hythe Ferry concessionary scheme.

## 2.6 Ferry Patronage.

2.6.1 The Ferry Company have provided the below mentioned information concerning ticket sales.

Type of Ferry Ticket Sold	July 06 to June 07	July 07 to June 08
10 journey tickets	7260	7564
Monthly seasons	306	327
3 monthly seasons	15	28
Annual Seasons	10	14
Adult peak returns	3137	3362
Adult off peak returns	30225	28869

In terms of tickets sold there has been slight improvement for 2008 for most ticket types but reduction in the number of Adult off peak fares paid. The ferry company think this is due to a combination of:

“some will be due to the bus, some to the loss of their jobs, some due to the enforced change in our timetable when we were moved to the Red Funnel berth, some due to timekeeping and reliability problems and some due to the car parking.”

2.6.2 The ferry company's overall comments are “there are no significant issues regarding the issuing of the car parking tickets”. We must remember however that there is the inevitable deterrent effect on people parking who use the ferry due to the natural complexity of the arrangement.

2.6.3 Members of the Parish Council expressed concern that those who purchased 10 journey tickets and only use the ferry for the outward journey require more than the 5 days parking allocated on the voucher issued. It appears that to date only two or three passengers have been in this category, their parking requirement has been met by issuing them with 2, 5 day parking vouchers. The Ferry ticket office believes this arrangement is working well.

2.7 Consultations with Parish Council and Chamber of Trade.

# 2.7.1 Appendix 1 sets out the comments received from the above together with the Council's reply.

2.7.2 In addition to the points made in the reply to the consultees it is perhaps pertinent to note that:

- Civil Enforcement Officers only patrol areas of Highway where waiting restrictions apply
- The consultation concerned concessionary parking arrangements for Hythe ferry passengers and not a general review of the scheme.
- The introduction of a 3 monthly clock to assist those who find purchasing a yearly or half yearly clock difficult will be considered by Cabinet.

### **3. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS**

3.1 The use of Hythe Ferry reduces the congestion on the A326 and commuter routes to Southampton.

### **4. CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS**

4.1 None arising directly from the report.

### **5. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS**

5.1 None arising directly from the report.

### **6. FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS**

6.1 The revised scheme has resulted in the sale of an additional 174 long stay clocks generating an income of £13,920.

### **7. PORTFOLIO HOLDERS COMMENTS**

7.1 In view of the evidence from clock sales and ferry passenger numbers the parking arrangements introduced in January 2008 for Ferry users who hold a multi journey ticket/ pass have been successful and should be continued.

## **8. CONCLUSION**

- 8.1 The factors which influence the use of the Ferry are complex and a combination of many different elements. Parking is a major issue but it does not appear that the revised clock scheme itself has been detrimental to the numbers using the ferry.
- 8.2 The revised scheme has achieved its main objective, linking the use of the concessionary parking to use of the ferry. The total number of clocks sold in the Hythe Information Office has not varied greatly. However, the proportion of long-stay clocks to short stay clocks sold has changed:
- 8.3 In 2007 - for every 1 long stay clock sold 57 short stay clocks were sold. In 2008 under the new scheme, for every long stay clock sold 18.6 short stay clocks were sold. This change demonstrates that the new Hythe ferry scheme has been effective in achieving its main objective.

## **9. RECOMMENDATION**

- 9.1 That the Hythe Ferry Clock scheme as introduced on 1 January 2008 be continued.

**For Further Information Please Contact:**

**Background Papers:**

John Bull  
Parking Manager

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25<sup>th</sup> July 2008

Dear Sirs

As Deputy Chair of The Waterside Business Partnership I feel it is important to respond to the Review of Hythe Ferry Parking Scheme.

I accept that the original ferry scheme (Ferry long stay parking clock purchased for £8 when bought with a 10 journey ticket) was used by a significant number of Hythe people in order to avoid the need to pay the £80 charge for a standard long-stay clock.

I am pleased that the council has made more money out of the car park clocks this year but it is a shame that they have made much of this extra revenue at the expense of some of the most vulnerable people in the community.

As the owner of a business within the town centre I have viewed, with increasing concern, the escalation in parking costs since charges were first introduced. Even a quick look around Hythe shows that general trade has dropped since parking charges were introduced. Car parks that were previously full are now often half empty. My practice was hit with a 10% drop in turnover compared to the previous year when charges were first introduced, mainly due to reduction of sales of pet food and sundries. I am fortunate that as a veterinary surgeon I am better insulated from this compared to many other local businesses. Until recently the town was blighted with numerous empty shops but at least for the time being this situation has improved. With internet shopping becoming more the norm it is essential that the council do not place greater burdens on struggling businesses for short term financial gain!

It is well established that many jobs within Hythe are relatively low paid and often involve part time working. A significant proportion of these workers have been put in a very difficult position as this parking charge has caused considerable hardship. Buying a clock in January causes particular problems as it is a time when many household budgets are at their most strained. I personally have experience of people working part time having to reconsider the viability of keeping a job in the village. As an employer I have a number of part-time employees and this has affected them greatly.

Some workers have decided to pay for clocks, others are parking on the streets, leading to double parking particularly on Atheling Rd, chaos along Jones Lane and major arguments within private parking areas especially at the back of the Pylewell Precinct and The Marsh. I am astonished and somewhat suspicious that patrol staff have not noticed the change in parking patterns. I wonder if too much time is spent in the car parks checking for opportunities to issue parking tickets and not enough patrolling the roads.

I would strongly recommend that if this loophole is to remain closed as is suggested by the draft document that some form of discounted scheme be considered for people working within the town as it seems unfair to subsidise workers in Southampton whilst penalising workers in Hythe.

Hythe has struggled in the last couple of years (as have many other shopping areas within the New Forest) at least in part as a result of the introduction of parking charges. I feel it is time that

the council spare a little more thought for members of the community that elected them and a little less time patting themselves on the back for removing a 'loophole' that was exploited mostly by workers struggling to make ends meet.

Many of the views in this letter are personal but many other members of the Waterside Business Partnership have similar views.

Bob Russell BVM&S MRCVS

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31 July 2008

C1/ss

Dear John

### **Hythe Ferry Parking Clock Scheme**

Thank you for allowing us to comment on the interim results of the above.

In order to respond, the Parish Council has consulted with the Waterside Business Partnership, a copy of their response is enclosed. The Parish Council echoes the views of the Business Partnership and would like to offer additional comments as follows.

It is noted that the District Council have made significantly more money with the new scheme however the negative impact that this has had on people working in the village, who by the very nature of their jobs are part time or low paid employees is alarming.

As a way of reducing their outgoings motorists have tended to park on the road and this has left some roads near the Village Centre double parked and extremely hazardous for pedestrians trying to cross the roads. The forthcoming parking restrictions may help in this matter however it could be that the problems are simply moved to another location further out from the centre.

There is concern that the ferry company have not had any real benefit from the changes to the parking scheme and this would suggest that the current arrangements are not a benefit to anything other than the District Council's finances.

This Council and the Business Partnership request that the District Council reconsider their decision to implement the current ferry parking scheme in view of the current hardships being felt by businesses and employees alike.

Yours sincerely

Sean Spencer  
Deputy Clerk to the Council



My Ref: JGB/R  
Your Ref:

21 August 2008

Dear Mr Russell

### **HYTHE FERRY CONCESSIONARY PARKING SCHEME**

Thank you for your letter dated 25 July concerning the above. Long stay clocks provide long stay parking at a cost of £1.54 a week and short stay clocks provide short stay parking for a year at a cost of 20p a week. The meter tariffs are set at a level considerably lower than those in neighbouring authorities. The Council believe that the level of meter charges and clock charges allow reasonable management of the car parks without causing a disincentive to visiting the towns and villages in the district.

The cost of parking using a clock represents a very small proportion of the cost of running a vehicle. The Council believe that it is those who use the parking facilities provided should pay for their upkeep rather than the cost falling on all council tax payers whether or not they use the facilities or own a vehicle.

The Council appreciates the concerns raised relating to the problems that may be experienced by some in paying for the yearly and half yearly long stay clock in advance. Consideration will be given to the introduction of a 3 monthly £20 clock which should assist this group of people. Additional waiting regulations are being introduced into Hythe Centre to reduce possible safety hazards caused by parked vehicles. Officers naturally only patrol sections of the highway that are covered by traffic regulation Orders.

The Council is acutely aware of the importance that parking provision plays in the economic viability of the towns and villages within the district. The clock scheme provides for a method of managing car parks in a way which provides inexpensive parking.

Yours sincerely

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Parking Manager

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My Ref: JGB/R  
Your Ref:

21 August 2008

Dear Sean

#### **HYTHE FERRY PARKING CLOCK SCHEME**

Thank you for your letter dated 31 July concerning the above. I attach a copy of my reply to the Waterside Business Partnership.

The ferry company have been fully consulted about the scheme and support its continuation. The forthcoming parking restrictions should reduce potential problems caused by on-street parking. As set out in the letter to the Business Partnership, the Council is considering the introduction of three monthly clocks which should assist those who may find purchasing a yearly/half yearly clock difficult to purchase.

Thank you for responding to the consultation concerning the continuance of the Hythe Ferry Parking Clock scheme.

Yours sincerely

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