

Residents concessionary car parking permits - a further suggestion.

Proposition 1:- one permit to be given to all households in the South Hams via the Council Tax distribution system, to replace the present system.

If this doesn't find favour, then

Proposition 2:- a revised permit that allows free parking between 4 and 6 pm, and 8 till 10 am (**but not overnight**) be issued free to all households in the South Hams, by means of the Council Tax distribution system. This to be **in addition to** the present paid for permit for those that want to use car parks overnight.

Background.

At Prosperity PDG on 18 November several financial data were given showing the costs of running the present system and the assessed losses from sale of car park tickets. A summary is:-

Cost of admin and stationery	£12,500
Estimated loss of income from overnight tickets	£17,900 (full year)
Estimated loss of half hour, 1 hour and 2 hour tickets	£16,300 (full year)
Total estimated costs	£46,700

Income from sale of permits (ex VAT) £29,900

"Loss" from system to SHDC £16,800

NB this doesn't calculate the "benefit" to residents being able to park more easily, nor to the local shops if people have transferred their shopping locally instead of using the supermarkets.

If a permit were to be issued to all households the estimated admin costs are £3,000 for stationery and £8,000 for postage.

Analysis

It is accepted that the major users of the permit seem to be those living near our car parks. The biggest financial "loss" from the permits is the overnight ticket income and this has probably also affected the loss from sales of tickets in the 4 to 6pm and 8 to 10am slots as well. £17,900 worth of income represents about 50 people paying £1 per night every day of the year.

Figures obtained from Chris Lucas for overnight income in 08/09 show that for the six months October to March 7,110 tickets were bought (about 40 a day) and for the six months April to September 34,611 tickets were bought (about 190 a day).

It would therefore appear that those who regularly used the car parks overnight throughout the year (40 or so) have been using the permits instead (the 50 on average who make up the loss).

Therefore "giving" a permit to every household will not make further inroads on our overnight ticket sales - and the tourists will still have to pay as they do now.

There could be an increased "loss" of ticket sales in the late afternoon and early morning slots but this would be outweighed by the benefits to the town centres. Many of the people using this permit might otherwise not have used the car parks, so it wouldn't be a "loss" anyway.

Proposals

1) Send a permit to all households with the council tax mailshot. Cost of stationery £3,000, Loss of overnight ticket sales £17,900, loss from early morning and late afternoon sales £16,300 plus ?, total £37,200 plus. This is a small sum in comparison to the £3 million income received from our car parks.

Or, if this is too much:-

2) Create a "new" resident's concessionary permit that allows free parking between 4pm and 6 pm and then 8 am to 10am (but not overnight). Send this to all households with the Council Tax mailshot, cost £3,000. Loss from ticket sales will be less than the £16,300 as some of that is linked to the overnight parking. Benefit to town centres is enormous as the users of this permit will be coming to do business / shop etc. Continue with the paid for permit that allows overnight parking, at whatever fee is deemed reasonable.

Mark Lawrence, December 2009