

## West Devon BC Consultation on Car Parking Tariff 2021

### Response from Transition Tavistock, 11<sup>th</sup> Feb 2021



We support the increase in car parking charges, given that they have been unchanged since 2018. There is no justification for holding down the cost of car parking at the expense of other public services including investment in making our towns easier to walk or cycle in. This is unfair to residents who either do not have access to a car (nearly 3000 households in West Devon)<sup>1</sup> or choose not to use it for short journeys.

We are, however concerned at the Council's stated reasons for the particular change: "... to encourage turnover of vehicles. It is anticipated this will, in turn, improve the vibrancy of towns and provide visitors and shoppers better access to parking."

Encouraging turnover of vehicles implies encouraging more journeys by car. This ignores the Council's recently published Climate Change and Biodiversity Strategy, which shows that road transport accounts for 30% of the district's greenhouse gas emissions. If these journeys replace longer ones to shops outside the town centres there could be net benefit – but the proposal offers no evidence for this. Nor does it consider the likely negative impact if more traffic deters active travel.

We fully support the aim of improving the vibrancy of towns and encouraging shoppers to visit and we promote these aims as a volunteer run community group. However, we object to the assumption, implicit in this proposal, that encouraging local shopping means encouraging cars.

We suggest the Council's car parking team is given a wider remit to include provision for sustainable travel into and around our town and village centres, using advocacy where it does not have a direct role. The proposal references a survey which asked residents about car parking. So far as we are aware the Council has not asked residents about other ways to enable them reach shops or get shopping home, eg location of bus stops, cycle routes, delivery services. Nor has it researched whether traffic levels in shopping streets, particularly those with narrow pavements, are a reason for people preferring supermarkets.

No analysis is given of how many drivers paying the long stay tariff do stay for more than 4 hours, and why. Without this, it is hard to see what the effect of the proposal on that group, or the pattern of car park use, will be. Encouraging those working in town centres to commute by other means could be beneficial – but there is no indication that the Council knows what other measures are needed (eg secure cycle parking) to enable them to do so.

Submitted by Transition Tavistock, [www.transitiontavistock.org.uk](http://www.transitiontavistock.org.uk)

Our Travel Action Group can be contacted on [travel@transitiontavistock.org.uk](mailto:travel@transitiontavistock.org.uk)

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<sup>1</sup> Data [here](#). Many of these are outside town centres, eg 21 in Walkhampton, 27 in Lamerton, 18 in Meavy. Moreover, where a household has only 1 car (the largest group) it may be out of area in the day time.