
CAR PARKS CUSTOMER SURVEY- RESULTS

1 SUMMARY

- 1.1 In accordance with the Revenue and Housing Management Division Service Plan, a Car Parks customer survey was undertaken in November 1999.
- 1.2 This report provides the results of the biennial survey together with the observations of the Head of Service for Members consideration and debate.

2 INTRODUCTION

- 2.1 Customer Surveys provide a mechanism for interface with customers and an opportunity for them to comment on the services we provide. The summarised results of the survey are shown on Appendix 1 to this report.
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- 2.2 The Survey was carried out by staff on various days of the week and included all the Council's fee-paying Car Parks. Of the 1,000 survey forms handed to motorists 302 were returned. This is a reasonable figure and statistically the survey results are a reliable indication of the views of our customers in general.
- 2.3 However, consideration should be given to the 698 motorists who declined to return the survey form. On the basis that if they had strong opinions they would respond, one could arguably conclude that they either had nothing to comment or were satisfied with the service provided.

3 SURVEY DETAILS

- 3.1 The survey form asked a variety of questions about the services provided by the Car Park Section. The Head of Service makes the following observations together with comparisons relating to the survey undertaken in November 1997.
 - 3.1.1 **Section A3** - the survey indicates that one quarter of respondents feel there are insufficient ticket machines in the Authority's Car Parks. The previous survey showed that one third of the respondents had the same concern. Since the last survey, two additional pay and display machines have been installed in the District and this may have contributed to the improved result.

- 3.1.2 **Section A4** - the results do not correlate with overall ticket sales recorded from the pay and display machines. It is possible that the responses were predominately from users of longer stay bands.
- 3.1.3 **Section A8** - 82.67% of those respondents who had contact with the Patrol Officers indicated that they found them professional and courteous. This is a slight reduction on the previous figure and may indicate that more suitable or refresher customer care training needs to be provided.
- 3.1.4 **Section B4 & B5** - There is a small increase in customer awareness of the Trader Refund Scheme, together with a marginal increase in its use.
- 3.1.5 **Section D2** - Customers who felt they were dealt with promptly and courteously by Officers based in the offices, increased from 86.02% to 92.21%. This is a pleasing result particularly in view of the volatile nature of some enquiries although there is still room for improvement.
- 3.1.6 **Section E4** - Those respondents who had experienced vandalism in relation to their vehicles fell from 11.46% to 9.60%, representing a reduction of 16% between surveys.
- 3.1.7 The survey also gave customers the opportunity to make 'General Comments' and these are listed on Appendix 2 of this report.

4 CONCLUSION

- 4.1 It is difficult to draw positive conclusions from the survey because of the variety of different elements contained therein. However, it would appear that a main concern of customers is actually being able to **locate** a parking space. This suggests that our Car Parks are well used and that paying for parking is an accepted part of the service we provide.
- 4.2 The reduction in reported crime is particularly pleasing and will hopefully show a further decline once the improvements have been carried out at The Approach Car Park.
- 4.3 The Head of Service feels the survey is a useful exercise and a further one, with minor revisions to the questions asked, is planned for Autumn 2001.

5 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 Council have agreed that the Car Parks Strategy Charging Policy and the continuation of the Trader Refund Scheme be reviewed at tonight's meeting of Council.

6 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 The provision of a customer survey forms part of the divisional work plan.

7 RECOMMENDATION

- 7.1 It is proposed that the Council **RESOLVES:-**

That the report and survey be noted and a further survey be carried out during Autumn 2001. (HRHM)

S J Clarkson

Head of Revenues and Housing Management

Background papers

302 completed survey forms.

Survey Detail Report

Both of the above will be placed in the Members Lounge during the week commencing 29th May 2000 for Members perusal.

For further information please contact Paul Skelton on (01702) 546366

Section A - About your visit.

1. Which car park did you visit today?

<i>Back Lane</i>	
No.	44
Percent	14.57%
<i>Castle Road</i>	
No.	41
Percent	13.58%
<i>Hockley</i>	
No.	11
Percent	3.64%
<i>Market Rayleigh</i>	
No.	11
Percent	3.64%
<i>Mill Hall / Bellingham Lane</i>	
No.	21
Percent	6.95%
<i>The Approach</i>	
No.	31
Percent	10.26%
<i>Websters Way</i>	
No.	139
Percent	46.03%
<i>More than one</i>	
No.	4
Percent	1.32%
Grand Total	302

2. What was the main purpose of your visit? - Total

<i>Business</i>	
No.	122
Percent	40.40%
<i>Shopping</i>	

Full Council - 28 June 2000 - E22.34

Car Parks Customer Survey - Summary of Results

Appendix 1

No.	157
Percent	51.99%

Tourist

No.	3
Percent	0.99%

Visit to Doctor/Dentist etc.

No.	18
Percent	5.96%

Unknown

No.	2
Percent	0.66%

Grand Total	302
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3. Is the number of machines within the car park adequate? - Total

Yes

No.	226
Percent	74.83%

No

No.	76
Percent	25.17%

Grand Total	302
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4. How long did you stay? - Total

Less than 30 minutes

No.	26
Percent	8.61%

30 mins - 1 hour

No.	89
Percent	29.47%

1 - 2 hours

No.	71
Percent	23.51%

2 - 3 hours

No.	17
Percent	5.63%

3 - 4 hours

No.	4
Percent	1.32%

4 - 5 hours

No.	8
Percent	2.65%

Over 5 hours

No.	86
Percent	28.48%

Unknown

No.	1
Percent	0.33%

Grand Total	302
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5. Are the notice boards adjacent to the ticket machines easy to understand? - Total**Yes**

No.	285
Percent	94.37%

No

No.	17
Percent	5.63%

Grand Total	302
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6. Do you consider there are sufficient parking spaces in the town you visited? - Total**Yes**

No.	187
Percent	61.92%

No

No.	115
Percent	38.08%

Grand Total	302
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7. How often do you use the Council's car parks? - Total**Daily**

No.	114
Percent	37.75%

Once or twice each week

Car Parks Customer Survey - Summary of Results**Appendix 1**

No.	145
Percent	48.01%
Occasionally	
No.	37
Percent	12.26%
Seldom	
No.	6
Percent	1.99%
Grand Total	302

8. If you have had contact with one of our Patrol Officers, did you find them professional and courteous?

Analysis of Contact

Yes	
No.	150
Percent	49.67%
No	
No.	152
Percent	50.33%
Grand Total	302

Analysis of Conduct

Yes	
No.	124
Percent	82.67%
No	
No.	26
Percent	17.33%
Grand Total	150

Section B - Transcard and Trader Refund schemes.

1. Are you aware of the TransCard method for parking?

Yes	
No.	150
Percent	49.67%
No	

No.	152
Percent	50.33%
Grand Total	302

2. Have you ever purchased a TRANSCARD?

Yes	
No.	25
Percent	18.87%

No	
No.	125
Percent	83.33%
Grand Total	150

3. Are you satisfied with the TransCard product?

Yes	
No.	16
Percent	64.00%

No	
No.	9
Percent	36.00%
Grand Total	25

4. Are you aware of the TRADER REFUND scheme?

Yes	
No.	194
Percent	84.24%

No	
No.	108
Percent	35.76%
Grand Total	302

5. How often do you use this scheme?

Regularly	
No.	22
Percent	11.34%

	Often
No.	6
Percent	3.08%
	Occasionally
No.	22
Percent	11.34%
	Seldom
No.	20
Percent	10.31%
	Never
No.	118
Percent	59.78%
	Unknown
No.	8
Percent	4.12%
Grand Total	194

Section C - Penalty Notices.

1. Have you ever received a Rochford District Council Penalty Notice?

	Yes
No.	93
Percent	30.79%
	No
No.	209
Percent	69.21%
Grand Total	302

2. Was the Notice clear as to what action to take?

	Yes
No.	82
Percent	88.17%
	No
No.	11
Percent	11.83%
Grand Total	93

3. Do you think it's fair to issue a Penalty Notice to a vehicle which is parked outside a marked bay?

	Yes
No.	232
Percent	76.82%
	No
No.	70
Percent	23.18%
Grand Total	302

Section D - Office Contact.

1. Have you ever contacted the Council Offices regarding any aspect of car parking?

	Yes
No.	77
Percent	25.50%
	No
No.	225
Percent	74.50%
Grand Total	302

2. Were you dealt with promptly and Courteously?

	Yes
No.	71
Percent	92.21%
	No
No.	6
Percent	7.79%
Grand Total	77

3. Please give a brief explanation as to the nature of your query.

	Penalty Notice
No.	40
Percent	51.95%
	Season Ticket

Car Parks Customer Survey - Summary of Results

Appendix 1

No.	28
Percent	36.36%
Transcard	
No.	1
Percent	1.30%
Trader Refund	
No.	1
Percent	1.30%
Other	
No.	7
Percent	9.09%
Grand Total	77

Section E - General Questions.**1. Does paying for parking influence you using town center car parks? - Total**

Yes	
No.	165
Percent	54.64%
No	
No.	137
Percent	45.36%
Grand Total	302

2. When using the car parks, how often have you encountered a faulty ticket machine? - Total

Often	
No.	37
Percent	12.26%
Occasionally	
No.	138
Percent	45.70%
Seldom	
No.	76
Percent	25.17%

	Never
No.	40
Percent	13.25%
	Unknown
No.	11
Percent	3.64%
Grand Total	302

3. When using the car parks how often do you see one of the Council's Patrol Officers? - Total

	Often
No.	59
Percent	19.54%
	Occasionally
No.	110
Percent	36.42%
	Seldom
No.	88
Percent	29.14%
	Never
No.	43
Percent	14.24%
	Unknown
No.	2
Percent	0.66%
Grand Total	302

4. Have you ever experienced vandalism or theft in relation to your vehicle whilst using the car parks? - Total

	Yes
No.	29
Percent	9.60%
	No
No.	273
Percent	90.40%
Grand Total	302

6. What improvements would you like to see made in the car parks?

Appendix 2

Back Lane

Paying on exit or free parking.

They seem adequate for my purposes.

Recycling bins tend to obstruct the view when backing out of some disabled bays. Also the bushes at the end of the lanes obstruct vision of vehicles driving round or trying to exit the car park.

A system to reduce speed especially in Back Lane.

Extra area to park. Pay and bays at Freighthouse favour staff, market traders have free parking. Unfair to public.

More machines. More parking spaces.

Machines that accept pound notes.

Back Lane is the only car park I have used when visiting a relative and I find it quite adequate. Visitor from Kent.

More machines - more noticeable or free parking.

Just keep up good work. Rochford council is superb.

Machine that gives change.

Cameras.

More disabled parking or some way of stopping non disabled parking in bays

Payment on exit - this is fairer and one does not always know how long a visit might last.

There are no motorcycle spaces in Rochford - where am I supposed to park? What about allocating some?

More parking desperately needed in Rochford particularly on market day.

Right of way and stop signs - drivers exiting car park have no regard for drivers along the approach road (adjacent to Renoufs)

Lot more spaces

Wider spaces for people like myself with young children. Parent and toddler spaces.

CTV fitted.

Spaces for season ticket holders only

Could not park not enough spaces. Was told to use Rochford as it was quicker than Southend. Will not try again. It was badlam. More spaces provided for short stay only

Access could be better. Remove flower beds to gain extra spaces.

No payment at weekends.

Free parking for short stay i.e.: first 30 mins

Cheaper for season tickets. We are the business of out town.

Free parking or reduce the charges.

Free parking when you visit your doctors in Back Lane. More spaces for the general public who visit the local town, not for business or office staff. Remove the special spaces for the disabled so they can jump the queue

I'm happy with it as it is thank you.

Cheaper Season Tickets.

More parking needed Tuesdays in Rochford.

None your car parks are excellent.

Additional spaces at Castle Road/Bell Lane car parks if possible.

Castle Road

Change machine. Free parking up to one hour. Payment for one hour and over. Sometimes you only want to be 10-15 mins and you have to pay. This puts you off using car parks.

No I think they are ok as they are

More long stay places. It's often difficult getting back in P.M though I've paid for day. I have to go home lunchtimes from work.

Fees reduced.

Removal of fees.

Concessional rates for workers in the town as I have no choice but to use my car for work as I have to collect my daughter from school in Hadleigh.

Special rates for long stay. More patrol officers to stop parking outside of marked bays. Better trolley leaving bays.

Pay on exit

Pay on exit so that time spent in town is not restricted.

Parking spaces available for season ticket holders only. It is frustrating having a pre paid ticket and not be able to park in a long stay car park.

You are always watching the time Pay on leaving is a lot better.

More car parks with all day parking and pay on exit.

More ticket machines especially near mother and child spaces, disabled, as have to leave children in the car to get ticket or take them across busy car park.

Better lighting. Particularly in far corner of Castle Lane. Have complained before by petition from our company - we received no reply. Season ticket holders find it difficult to find a space after 9am Often have to ride round which makes you late for work. Would be ideally there were spaces for st holders. Is a problem if you have a ticket and still can't park.

Shopping trolleys not left in car parking spaces.

Cont on letter attached.

None.

Please do something about abandoned trolleys.

Making sure that people who have paid for a season ticket can always park their car in restricted parking areas.

Wider parking bays - damage to and from doors is becoming quite a problem not to mention expensive

Regular collection of supermarket trolleys in Castle Rd.

Grifting in icy conditions first thing in the morning

More parking spaces

Reserved parking bays for ST holders.

Supermarket trolleys being taken from the car park promptly as they take up valuable parking places.

Pay on exit.

The lagoon to be returned for short term. Free public parking.

It would be handy to have larger trolley bays to prevent them being scattered all over the car park

Pay on exit. It is cheaper to park and shop in Basildon. Even cheaper to go to Hadleigh.

The lighting is not really adequate.

Pay on exit machines. They pay for themselves.

More spaces available. Cheaper parking for regular users.

Hockley

Perhaps a machine that gives change - that's really the only problem I have

Free parking up to 30 mins.

Free parking

Unless you make car parking free there will be no independent small shops left or else make charges at supermarkets for cars.

None - this car park is always clean and tidy and well kept.

More space for you to open doors like in USA

With the relentless house building being allowed in Hockley parking space will soon be inadequate.

None.

Better security by way of regular patrols.

Market Rayleigh

A penalty for those whose cars cover 2 spaces. I think disabled parking should not be free. Many pensioners receive no benefit but because of geography use their cars and have to pay.

Free parking more often. Easier exits and more of them. More disabled parking. We have a wheelchair person who we regularly bring to Rayleigh shopping.

Quite satisfied.

More space. More patrol officers, less charges.

More room/wider car park bays - careless people opening car doors damaging adjacent vehicles. Shopping trolleys abandoned in car park. Make Market car park full time. Plenty of room in wide street pavements to hold market instead of using car park.

Obtain stocks in each car park and a supply of rotten toms for the Hitler patrol officers.

Larger parking spaces and more room between rows.

Would prefer pay on exit. Sometimes have to cut short time in shops or talking to friends to avoid possibly having to pay a penalty.

Mill Hall / Bellingham Lane

More car parking. Allocated parking for business users.

More parking permits for people who work in the town (Rayleigh).

Not enough machines.

Cheaper longer stay for work

That all the car parks are long stay so that I can find a parking space when I go to work. And lower the long term price of parking in Rayleigh etc

Happy as they are.

Making the car park in W.Way long stay on Tuesdays and Wednesdays when parking is restricted with the market being closed.

Pay for time parked when leaving then you can do away with the scandal of fining people who innocently forget to purchase a ticket. How do you expect a pensioner to afford a £40 fine it is a scandal. The council should be ashamed.

More parking spaces. Cheaper parking.

CCTV.

Possibly better lit during dark winter evenings.

Car parking is at a premium in Rayleigh. Often visit for pleasure but feel put off by paying to park. The car park attendants are less than lenient.

More places. Cheaper if not free parking.

Improve night lighting

Websters Way made into a long stay car park. Sensible bollards i.e.: rubber ones. Machines that give change.

Very few shops use trader refund. Should all be long stay.

Free parking for local area residents (particularly OAPs). Change machines.

None.

Make them free. More people might then use the town without having to claim fee back from a shopkeeper

The Approach

Better lighting and pay as you leave car parking.

More policing of season ticket only bays

The bays are not wide enough at the Approach. Some of the bays access is restricted by the nearness of bollards/fences. Number of bays reserved for ST holders is insufficient.

As there are 2 exits arrow road markings would help motorists.

Move the bollards from the first section near entrance.

Improve lighting in Approach car park - quite dark to walk to and from car at night.

More lights particularly at the end of the Approach. Cameras also as a deterrent.

Remove season ticket only spaces in the Approach.

Removal of bollards at the Approach car park. These make parking and leaving very difficult

Not so many season ticket holder spaces, 1st come 1st served. Not so expensive, more lighting and security cameras especially at the back end of car park. If you buy a daily ticket @ £1.75 it should be for the whole day not 12 hours.

Free parking.

Appendix 2

More machines. Cameras - security patrolling

A level surface - resurface Bollards removed. Lighting, possibly CCTV Letter also attached.

More council parking at the station and being able to pay by credit card.

I only use the Approach car park which on the whole is faultless.

Improved bay parking i.e. diagonal and the bays marked season ticket holders only - cars with daily tickets use their spaces and are never checked or penalised.

Increased security including CCTV, better surfacing esp. near new houses.

Reinstate the convenient places in the station approach that has been taken out for an unused/unuseful taxi rank.

Tickets available for more than 3 hours.

More lighting. Cheaper parking fees Make the Approach one way to stop congestion.

More room at the Approach Too tight in the ST bays due to concrete bollards along the front and the pavement

Remove bollards or extend length of spaces at North end of ST spaces in the Approach

The Approach - wider bays, removal of concrete bollards to facilitate easier parking (this is the cause of a lot of minor scrapes). Enforcement of season ticket bays/non season ticket parking at station.

More spaces for ST holders only or only allow annual ST holders to park in marked bays.

With regards to the Approach remove the concrete bollards to make parking easier.

Removal of stone bollards at narrowest path of car park almost impossible to reverse into space without hitting bollards when park is full. These spaces are usually all that is left because everybody has the same problem.

More spaces, more lights at station.

Websters Way

Less trees in what used to be a space.

Make them free of charge.

Car parking should be free to revive the town. If we pay it must be pay on exit

Change machines.

Wider bays and more free afternoons (like Sat Websters Way)

People driving slower through the car parks but that is not your fault.

None.

Free parking for short stays and pay on exit.

I should like to see toll booths because a) you only pay for the time you use, b) you can't get a ticket whilst in town getting change for the machine, c) an excellent way to create jobs. Continued on a letter

Wider space for backing out of bay.

Free

Lower tariffs.

More lighting. Pay on exit or better free parking

Cheaper parking fees and say 4 hours max time.

None I'm quite happy with them as they are.

I was given a parking notice when picking up an elderly person - remove the 'jobsworth' attendant.

Bring back free parking outside Boots in Ray. More parking spaces. Bigger parking bays. Less expensive for longer stays. In addition please bring back the one way system to Rayleigh. Trying to get in and out of Ray is a nightmare - try not to shop there because of it

A one way system would make it easier to get out of W.Way as no one wants to give way. Pay as you leave would encourage a longer stay and more time spent shopping - as in Basildon. You talk about cost but you've wasted more on the present ridiculous traffic scheme I have problems even getting into town.

None and RDC car parks are much cheaper than others I have encountered up and down the country.

Parent and child spaces that are monitored to make sure selfish drivers without kids do not park there!!

Pay on exit.

Speed limit commensurate with safety and imposed and displayed. Ban on driving across parking spaces by way of short cuts.

At present they are adequate.

More parking and more ticket machines.

More parking spaces and pay on exit.

When leaving car parks drivers be more considerate and not block off the aisles.

Pay on exit would be a better system for everybody that uses these car parks.

Pay on exit.

I think that RDC car parks are reasonable and fairly well run. Having visited the Lake District and paid up to 70p per hour for parking I feel we are well catered for.

Entrance to W.Way now unnecessarily cluttered. Hockley recycling bins always creating a mess.

More payment machines. Change given

Reduced charges Alternative exits in W.Way Southern exit another cause of traffic hold ups in W.Way.

A ticket machine which gives change.

None.

Patrol officers when checking tickets should check times on machines not their watches as cash machines are not the same as GMT.

An area for people with children, wide spaces for doors to open easily, to put children in their car seats adequately

More free parking during the week as on Sat afternoons The 30p charge to cover period up to 1 1/2 hours. The taxi rank to go back as it was, giving an extra 5 mins short stay dash into banks parking.

Free parking like Hornchurch.

At W.Way there are now, during peak times more delays to getting out of the car park at the top entrance. Since the one way system was introduced Perhaps some thought could be given to that

Car parks are a fright. Do something about hold ups in Rayleigh. Crown Hill/ London Hill by church is unbelievable.

Free parking in small towns like Rayleigh

Re Rayleigh town (W.Way). The sideways parking slot sometimes means you have to go out of the car park to come in again to find a space - really annoying

I feel that local council tax payers should have some free parking tickets for a fixed period at least.

Wider bays, I sometimes struggle to get my children strapped in the back of the car without my door catching the side of another car.

Less queuing to get in Wider entrances. Slightly large spaces - big 4x4 and people carriers sometimes have trouble.

Exits at W.Way.

Payment on exit

Free parking a g.; Lakeside or Bluewater.

None

Pay on exit

Pay as you exit would be easier and you wouldn't have to rush to get back to your car, that way it would benefit traders allowing people more time to look around the shops.

More free parking times. Cheaper parking.

I think a ticket machine and pay on exit barrier would be ideal - I love our new Rayleigh town center

Entrance channel is too narrow and at a difficult angle from Eastwood Rd.

I only ever use W.Way car park which has only recently been improved. Please keep the charge low.

Be able to get out of them easier. Major problems caused by new road layout.

More free parking periods to encourage people to use local shops.

More trees.

Nothing at the moment as W.Way has been modernised recently

Pay as you leave machine

No more improvements to Rayleigh please.

Ticket taken on entry. Then pay at machine at end of parking Insert ticket in barrier to leave car park.

The same system as in the "Royals" in Southend.

Pay as you leave the car park to allow for going over time on ticket

More lighting. Right exit turns from W.Way.

Change the angle to the entrance i.e. put it straight from the roundabout Change the exit so easier to get out.

I would prefer to pay on exit It's annoying if you don't have change for the ticket machine and you are constantly checking your watch to make sure you don't exceed the time on your ticket

Pay on exit. I have to use the car park for visiting the doctors: Is difficult to know how much time you will need as doctors don't run to time. So pay on exit would be most useful.

I would like to see more disabled spaces and maybe an underground car park or multistory.

Better lighting, more parking spaces Regular emptying of recycling units. Don't seem to be checked often enough Meters emptied regularly and checked, often out of order or run out of tickets. Provide toilets in car parks to

They are adequate.

Maps showing location of car parks should also indicate which are long or short stay.

More spaces, extra machines, constant car park patrols

Better Lighting
Pay on exit e.g. Meadows in Chelmsford

Pay on exit

None The only problem in Rayleigh town is the toilets they are filthy and disgusting!

Pay on exit to prevent the stress of over staying the allotted time.

Free parking is key to success of Rayleigh town center.

Either longer time for our money or tickets cheaper. One hour is not very long for shopping.

None.

Improved exit facilities as this is always blocked by traffic in W.Way and too near a pedestrian crossing.

Section E question 1 If the costs were to go up my answer would be yes.

More disabled parking.

Cheaper parking.

More spaces and pay on exit.

Baby spaces - there is no room to get a child's car seat out of a car as the spaces are too close

Payment on exit

Simplification of entry into W Way car park.

Things are quite satisfactory.

Maybe to make it one way round as it becomes very congested at times with cars going everywhere.

As a season ticket holder (annual) special parking bays at xmas - not always easy to park especially if going into work after 9am

W Way which we use the most seems quite adequate for our needs.

Extend free parking to Saturday morning. Reduce half hour cost

More spaces.

Pay on exit.

Toilets, visitors frequently ask. When visiting other towns we always use pay on exit. We live within walking distance of Rayleigh.

A monthly ticket. At the moment there are weekly and 3 monthly

More lighting especially for the bays towards the park, away from the road way out at W.Way.

Make them pay as you leave

Pay on exit. One or two more machines for better reliability on acceptance of transcards

I am happy with the car park. Would like cheaper parking if poss

More than one

Appendix 2

Paying on exit - more parking spaces in town.

Free parking as in the Sussex towns of Sleaford, Uckfield & Heathfield. Local shops would get used more.

Pay on exit.

Free parking after 2 p.m. every day. Saturday all day free. Will give more custom to the shops instead of shutting down.