

# THORNBURY TOWN CENTRE PARTNERSHIP

Dear Mr Birch

CC'd Cllr's Maggie Tyrell, Jayne Stansfield & Chris Davies & local MP Claire Young.

I currently chair the Thornbury Town Centre Partnership group which includes representatives from Thornbury Town Council, Thornbury Chamber of Commerce, Love Thornbury, local Police, Management of St Mary shopping Centre, SGC officers & SGC councillors.

The proposed parking scheme was discussed at our recent meeting and it was unanimously agreed to strongly oppose the proposed scheme. Please note SGC officers & councillors abstained due to obvious conflict of interest.

It was noted that all members of the group were extremely disappointed not to be included in discussions regarding the structure of the incoming charges.

The proposed scheme was discussed and, amongst other concerns, the following issues were raised;

- The originally promised period of free parking has been essentially removed. When proposals were initially announced, periods of 2 hours of free parking were suggested.
- The annual fee for parking is too much to expect any volunteer, paid employee or frequent town visitor to spend given the the average income of town centre workers & the ongoing cost of living crisis.
- The displacement parking caused by the scheme will upset and disrupt a lot of the town. The police voiced concerns that they do not have capacity to attend or police this expected issue.
- Access to GP surgeries has been protected, however, this excludes NHS dentist services as well as NHS maternity services, physio services etc.
- When the high street was originally closed, SGC reassured businesses that the town would survive due to the abundant provision of free parking. Only a year or so later, this provision is being removed.
- The population of Thornbury is 14,496, which is less than 5% of the total for south Glos. At a rough count there are 1627 payable spaces in the scheme. Thornbury has 547 spaces. Thornbury will be providing 33% of the chargeable parking spaces when they are only 5% of the population, this does seem very unbalanced.
- The Thornbury Chamber of Commerce initially surveyed the local population receiving an astounding 3000+ negative responses, these must be listened to.

We invite you to attend our next meeting, which can be arranged around your availability, to address these concerns and hopefully form a plan to ensure your budget needs are met without causing potentially irreversible damage to this town's economy.

Could I suggest that this meeting takes place in November. We normally meet at 1pm on Wednesday's if you can make any of those work.

I look forward to hearing from you,

*James Murray*

**Chair Cllr James Murray (Mayor, Thornbury Town Council)  
On behalf of Thornbury Town Centre Partnership members;**

Cllr John Reynolds (Thornbury Town Council)

Cllr Chris Bloor (Thornbury Town Council)

Cllr Fiona Deas (Thornbury Town Council)

Alan Cole (Peer Group, Chair of Thornbury Chamber of Commerce)

Jonathan Broughton (Deputy chair, Thornbury Chamber of Commerce)

Sandra Davies (Love Thornbury)

Justyna Domalewska (Avon and Somerset Police)