

## **Response of Mrs Theresa Villiers**

### **MP for Chipping Barnet**

Letter 17.10.2014

Many thanks for contacting me about the Barnet Society's campaign for one hour's free parking from Monday to Saturday in all parking spaces along the High Street, and in the three council car parks in the High Barnet area.

It is good of you to take the time to contact me on this issue and I have noted the contents of your letter to Councillor Dean Cohen.

The council control only 300 of the 800 spaces in High Barnet. As you will be aware, they have recently made changes to parking in and around the High Street after consultation with local groups. Council controlled parking is now cheaper than The Spires. Bays with 15 minutes free parking have been implemented and I gather that this has already helped to increase trade for some food retailers. Additionally, there is an hour's free parking in the Moxon Street car park and two hours' free parking on the A1000 by Hadley Green. High Barnet ward councillors are once again proposing that shoppers be given free weekend parking in the immediate run up to Christmas.

As I said at the recent meeting of the Barnet Residents Association, the key challenge here is to inform people of the free parking which is already available. Significant efforts have been made to do this (including David Longstaff and I going shop to shop to talk to traders about parking and other issues). I will continue to work to try to get the message out as clearly as possible, including with a newsletter which is being delivered over the next couple of weeks.

I feel that it is important that we give the current arrangements a chance to work before further changes are considered.

I also think that the parking regime should promote a regular turn-over of cars parking in the High Street, so that there is more chance of people being able to find a

space if they are popping into the shops. That might be a reason for retaining at least some bays with shorter periods of free parking.

Thank you again for alerting me to your campaign and please feel free to keep me updated with its progress. I would be happy to meet up with you and your colleagues from the Barnet Society to discuss this further if you feel that this would be helpful.

Regards,

Theresa