

Written statement about proposed parking restrictions in Abingdon (Ock Street area) – submission to County Council meeting on 4 September 2025

As I am unable to attend on 4 September due to work commitments, I am submitting a written statement to the meeting at which the proposal for a residents' parking scheme in the Ock Street area of Abingdon will be considered.

The points I raised in my objection to the consultation are validated by the responses to the Consultation received from other residents in the area.

In particular:

- 1) The case is not made by the Council that this scheme is needed. The data I received in response to a Freedom of Information request submitted to both Abingdon Town Council and Oxfordshire County Council evidenced only a handful of complaints to either body or to the Town and County Councillors in the past 5 years. It cannot be said that there is groundswell of opinion that the scheme is needed.
- 2) If there is a problem with 'school parking' this should be addressed by better enforcement of the restrictions already in place on Conduit Road, or by the private parking management company responsible for Park Road.
- 3) As many respondents to the consultation observed, there is plenty of parking available during working hours. There is pressure on parking in the early evening once everyone is home for the night – and this is not addressed by the proposal.
- 4) Of 44 houses in Edward Street (3 of which are currently empty), 20 households have objected, evidencing the strength of opposition to this proposal.
- 5) At a time of a cost of living crisis, it is irresponsible of the Council to propose the introduction of a parking permit costing £132 per year. The County Council has already increased council tax by the maximum amount of 4.9% in this financial year. The proposed scheme represents a *further 7.9% annual increase* for any single person with one car who pays band C council tax, and a whopping *11.8% increase* for a household of two adults with two cars. Apart from Park Road and Park Crescent, this is not a wealthy area of Abingdon and this will add to hardship already felt by many.
- 6) For many residents, a maximum of 50 visitor permits a year is simply not an adequate allowance. It provides for less than one visitor each week, including any visits from a plumber or similar tradesperson. While the first 25 tickets may be free, a further charge of £31.50 for 25 more tickets, which almost everyone will need, represents an *additional 1.5% increase* on the single person's council tax figures I quoted earlier.
- 7) As many others have noted, the (charged) contractors' allowance of one week you propose is simply laughable. I recently had to have essential but unexpected done to my house, which took 7 weeks with a team of 3 to 4 workers here each day. At £31.50 a week, for 2 (sometimes 3) vehicles, that would have cost almost £500 on top of the already expensive repairs. And if permits are only available for one working week, we fear that contractors will start to refuse to work in this area – another hurdle for small local businesses which we are trying to support.
- 8) The proposal does not even mention the potential future provision of shared electric vehicle charging points, which seems a gross omission when this is one of the areas in Abingdon with the highest concentration of houses and flat with no driveway or off-street parking.