

## **CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT – 25 NOVEMBER 2010**

### **PROPOSED VARIATION OF CHARGES FOR RESIDENTS' PERMITS, OXFORD**

**Report by Deputy Director for Environment & Economy  
Highways & Transport**

#### **Introduction**

1. This report considers comments and objections received to a formal advertisement and statutory consultation undertaken to increase the cost of Residents' Parking Permits in Oxford.
2. At present permits for the first and second vehicles at a property cost £40; where applicable, permits for a third vehicle cost £80 and all further permits £120. The proposal is that these rise to £50, £100 and £150 respectively.

#### **Background**

3. In September 2006 the Cabinet of Oxfordshire County Council approved the introduction of charges for parking permits to cover the costs of administering the controlled parking schemes and eliminate the deficit that had accrued as a result of enforcement of these zones.
4. The consultation that took place prior to this decision identified a number of issues that were causing residents concern and it was recognised that in return for charges being implemented residents should rightly expect a higher level of service in return. Therefore in response to consultation comments the Council gave a commitment to:
  - (i) Undertake to provide service improvements in permit administration by:
    - (a) Sending reminders that a permit needs renewing.
    - (b) Providing a 24 hour visitor permit in place of the present calendar day permit.
    - (c) Providing a resident's permit for temporary residents here for work reasons (subject to the limit per household) to be charged pro-rata.
    - (d) Allowing permits for people with permanent use of a works vehicle.
    - (e) Enabling a temporary change of registered vehicle if a resident's vehicle is off the road for a specified time

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- (ii) Improve visitor permits by:
    - (a) Amending the charging proposal to give one batch of 25 permits free and charge for the second batch of 25 permits as a broad equivalent to free city centre parking time.
    - (b) Not charging at all for visitor permits to residents aged 70 and over.
    - (c) Allowing a discretionary award of 25 additional visitor permits if requested following bereavement of a married or civil partner.
  - (iii) Undertake to complete a review of the West Oxford CPZ and South Oxford CPZ within 18 months including consideration of a reduction in permit allocation to one per household. This cannot guarantee to match permit numbers to spaces in a street or overall, and will be subject to Traffic Order procedures and further consultation.
  - (iv) Make arrangements to enforce parking restrictions around the Kassam stadium when car boot sales are held at the stadium.
5. All of these have now been introduced and furthermore the Council has undertaken a programme of smaller reviews of all zones to more quickly address local needs.
6. The existing residents' and visitors' parking permit schemes have two prime purposes directed at securing suitable on street parking facilities and the reduction of traffic congestion . First, they give residents and their visitors priority for parking where there is a limited amount of parking space available. Second, they restrict long-term non-residential parking and encourage greater use of park & ride and public transport. In addition (and where it is applicable) by having a higher charge for the third and fourth vehicles they provide an incentive for residents to limit the number of vehicles which they park on local streets.

### **Financial Background**

7. The current traffic orders allow for an increase in charges every 3 years in line with the Retail Prices Index. This would have the effect of raising permit charges to £43 for the first and second cars.
8. The current financial outturn figures show that administration and enforcement of the Controlled Parking Zones is costing approximately £100,000 more than the Council are receiving in income.
9. The table at Annex 1 shows the costs of, and income from, parking enforcement both generally across the City and specifically within resident bays, from where it can be seen that the loss on resident bays is £22,075. It is estimated that around 75% of yellow line restrictions are within CPZ areas, which means that the cost of enforcing them is proportionately less than those outside of the zones as costs are shared with enforcement of resident bays.

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Consequently, whilst the total loss on the enforcement of restrictions other than for resident parking bays is £169,105, the proportion attributable to CPZs is approximately £85,000.

10. Since 2007 the County Council has reduced operating costs by around £250,000 per year as a result of retendering the service and through a reduction in Council staff involved in the administration processes and further savings will be sought in the coming year.
11. In 2008, Government introduced new legislation that took Penalty Charges for yellow lines from £40 to £70 (or £35 if paid within 14 days) and from £40 to £50 (£25 if paid within 14 days) for permit bays, which the initial financial modelling did not consider. The initial model had assumed that the County Council would raise its PCN charges to the higher level available at that time which was £60 (£30 if paid within 14 days).
12. The increase in enforcement has had a significant deterrent in abuse of resident parking bays reducing from 19,269 PCNs issued in these bays in 2006/7 to 12,874 PCNs in 2009/10 making spaces more freely available for those with permits than before charges were introduced.
13. As a result of increases in PCN levels across the country most authorities have seen the number of PCNs issued on yellow lines decrease significantly. Oxfordshire County Council issued 62,846 PCNs in 2007/8 but only 39,345 in 09/10. This reduction is in keeping with that experienced by many councils across the country following the new legislation.
14. This significant reduction in PCN levels and the lower level PCN charge for resident bays to that modelled has resulted in the Council not being able to meet its targets of ensuring that the schemes are self financing.

### **Formal Consultation**

15. The formal consultation on the proposed new charges took place in September 2010. The public notice was published in the Oxford Times on 2 September 2010 and prominently displayed in the Parking Shop, with background documents placed on deposit at County Hall and relevant libraries. The same information was made available on the Consultation section of the County Council's website. Letters and emails were sent to statutory consultees, to all County Councillors representing City Divisions, to all City Councillors and to Tenants & Residents/Community Associations in areas where the new charges would apply. A copy of the Notice of Proposal which sets out the proposal is attached at Annex 2.

### **Consultation responses**

16. A total of 8 responses were received which are summarised at Annex 3 along with officer comments. Copies of all the correspondence and minutes received are available for inspection in the Members' Resource Centre.

## Conclusions

17. The purpose of this proposal is to try and ensure sufficient revenue is raised to cover the costs of permit parking places and thereby sustain the permit parking schemes in Oxford. It has been a long-standing traffic management policy of the County Council that the full costs of operating residents' parking schemes are to be recovered via the relevant schemes.
18. A direct like-for-like comparison with other authorities is difficult as the method of charging varies but as the list at Annex 4 (which provides a sample of the cost of a permit for the first vehicle across a range of towns and cities) shows the proposed cost for a permit for the first and second vehicle is similar to, and indeed cheaper than, many other similar authorities.

## How the Project Supports LTP2 Objectives

19. The proposals described in this report relate to the LTP2 objective of Improving the Street Environment (better management of parking).

## Financial Implications (including Revenue)

20. Were the proposed increase not to be approved then the authority would have to fund the shortfall from other budgets. Given the existing budget pressures it is likely that this funding would be diverted from other priority areas.

## RECOMMENDATION

21. **The Cabinet Member for Transport is RECOMMENDED to approve the proposed changes to the cost of residents' parking permits in all the permit parking zone orders for the City of Oxford (excluding those for Blackbird Leys West, Brake Hill, Frys Hill and Minchery Farm and Waterside) as advertised in the Oxfordshire County Council (City of Oxford and North Hinksey) (Variation of Charges for Residents' Permits) Order 20\*\***

STEVE HOWELL  
Deputy Director of Environment & Economy  
Highways & Transport

Background papers:           Copies of all the letters and emails received in response are available in the Members' Resource room.

Contact Officer:               David Tole Tel: 01865 815942

November 2010

**EXTRACT FROM ANNUAL REPORT ON CIVIL PARKING  
ENFORCEMENT 2009-2010**

	Oxford City Parking Enforcement (see note # below)	Oxford City Residents' Parking Bays	<b>TOTALS</b>
<b>INCOME</b>			
Penalty Charge Notices	£629,834	£411,569	£1,041,403
Residents' permits		£370,911	£370,911
<b>Total income</b>	<b>£629,834</b>	<b>£782,480</b>	<b>£1,412,314</b>
<b>EXPENDITURE</b>			
Equipment purchase	£181,436	£117,693	£299,129
Contract Costs	£485,175	£375,775	£860,950
Council Staff costs	£61,920	£50,498	£112,418
Parking shop costs	£13,037	£110,812	£123,849
Other	£57,371	£153,777	£211,148
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>£798,939</b>	<b>£808,555</b>	<b>£1,607,494</b>
<b>Balance</b>	<b>-£169,105</b>	<b>-£22,075</b>	<b>-£191,180</b>

**NOTES**

This table excludes information relating to On-Street Pay & Display in Oxford  
# All restrictions other than Residents Parking Bays



# OXFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

## ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984

### OXFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL (CITY OF OXFORD) (VARIATION OF CHARGES FOR RESIDENTS' PERMITS) ORDER 20\*\*

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that Oxfordshire County Council propose to make the above mentioned Order under Sections 45 and 46 of and Part IV of Schedule 9 to the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 and all other enabling powers.

The effect of the Order will be to vary the orders listed in the schedule to this Notice being all the permit parking zone orders for the City of Oxford (excluding those for Blackbird Leys West, Brake Hill, Frys Hill and Minchery Farm and Waterside) to the following effect:-

1. All Residents' Permits currently costing £40 per annum index linked will be increased to £50 per annum index linked
2. All Residents' Permits currently costing £80 per annum index linked will be increased to £100 per annum index linked
3. All Residents' Permits currently costing £120 per annum index linked will be increased to £150 per annum index linked

These increases will incorporate inflationary increase due to take effect from April 2010 which would have taken permit charges up to £43 per annum, £85 per annum and £128 per annum respectively. Under the terms of the existing Orders the next inflationary increase will take effect from April 2013.

For information the following changes to permit charges will be made from 1 January 2011 to take account of provisions in the existing orders for inflation linking.

1. All Residents' Permits currently costing £10 per annum will rise to £11 per annum index linked
2. All Visitors' Permits currently costing £15 per annum for a block of 25 (second allocation) will be £16 per annum index linked

Documents giving more detailed particulars of the Order are available at <http://myconsultations.oxfordshire.gov.uk/inovem/consult.ti/system/calendar> and for public inspection at **County Hall**, New Road, Oxford OX1 1ND from 9 am to 4 pm Monday to Friday; at **Oxford Central Library\***, Westgate, Oxford OX1 1DJ from 9 am to 7 pm Monday to Thursday and from 9 am to 5.30pm on Friday & Saturday; **Cowley Library\***, Temple Road, Oxford OX4 2EZ from

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9.15 am to 5.30 pm Monday & Friday, 9.15 am to 7 pm Tuesday & Wednesday and 9 am to 4.30 pm Saturday; **Headington Library\***, Bury Knowle Park, North Place, Headington OX3 9HY from 9.15am to 1 pm Monday & Wednesday; 9.15am to 7 pm Tuesday & Thursday; 9.15am to 6 pm Friday; and 9.15am to 4.40pm Saturday; **Old Marston Library\***, Mortimer Hall, Oxford Road, Old Marston, Oxford OX3 0PH from 2pm to 5pm Tuesday, 5.30pm to 7pm Thursday, 10am to 12pm & 2pm to 5pm Friday, and 9.30am to 12.30pm Saturday; and **Summertown Library\***, South Parade, Summertown, Oxford, OX2 7JN from 9.30am to 5.30pm Monday & Friday, Tuesday & Thursday 9.30am to 7pm, Saturday 9am – 4.30pm (\*these locations have existing orders on CD).

Objections to the proposal, specifying the grounds on which they are made, and any other representations, should be sent in writing to the Director for Environment and Economy (ref. TRO/PH) at the address given below no later than 30th September 2010. The County Council will consider objections and representations received in response to this Notice. They may be disseminated widely for these purposes and made available to the public.

### SCHEDULE

1. The Oxfordshire County Council (Oxford Central Area) (Controlled Parking Zone) (Consolidation) Order 2003 as amended – *consultation on an updated order is being undertaken*.
2. The Oxfordshire County Council (Oxford – Divinity Road Area) (Controlled Parking Zone and Waiting Restrictions) Order 20\*\* - *Order has not been made*.
3. The Oxfordshire County Council (East Oxford) (Controlled Parking Zone Waiting Restriction and Traffic Management) Order 2010.
4. The Oxfordshire County Council (Headington Central) (Controlled Parking Zone and Various Restrictions) Order 2005 as amended.
5. The Oxfordshire County Council (Girdlestone Road) (Controlled Parking Zone and Waiting Restrictions) Order 2006 as amended.
6. The Oxfordshire County Council (Headington North East) (Controlled Parking Zone and Waiting Restrictions) Order 2006 as amended.
7. The Oxfordshire County Council (Headington Quarry) (Controlled Parking Zone and Waiting Restrictions) Order 2006 as amended.
8. The City of Oxford (Headington West) (Controlled Parking Zone) Order 2000 as amended – *consultation on updated Order is being undertaken*.
9. The City of Oxford (Jericho) (Parking Places and Controlled Parking Zone) Order 2000 as amended.
10. The Oxfordshire County Council (The Lakes Headington) (Controlled Parking Zone and Waiting Restrictions Order) 2007 as amended.

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11. The Oxfordshire County Council (Marston South) (Controlled Parking Zone and Waiting Restrictions) Order 2007 as amended.
12. The City of Oxford (Norham Manor) (Controlled Parking Zone) Order 1999 as amended.
13. The Oxfordshire County Council (North Oxford) (Controlled Parking Zone and Waiting Restrictions) Order 2004 as amended.
14. The Oxfordshire County Council (Northway Headington) (Controlled Parking Zone and Waiting Restrictions) Order 2007 as amended.
15. The Oxfordshire County Council (North Summertown) (Parking Zone and Waiting Restrictions) Order 2007 as amended.
16. The Oxfordshire County Council (South Oxford) (Controlled Parking Zone and Waiting Restrictions) Order 2009
17. The Oxfordshire County Council (Summertown) Controlled Parking Zone and Waiting Restrictions) Order 2004 as amended.
18. The Oxfordshire County Council (Walton Manor Oxford) (Parking Places and Traffic Management) (Consolidation) Order 2003 as amended.
19. The Oxfordshire County Council (West Oxford and Osney Mead) (Controlled Parking Zone and Waiting Restrictions) Consolidation Order 2009 as amended.

Dated:

2<sup>nd</sup> September 2010

H. Jones  
Director for Environment and Economy  
Oxfordshire County Council  
Speedwell House  
Speedwell Street  
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**PROPOSED VARIATION OF CHARGES FOR RESIDENTS' PERMITS, OXFORD**  
**Summary of Comments**

No.	Commentor	Summary of Objection or Comment	Observations of the Director for Environment & Economy
1.	Councillor Susanna Pressel	I'd like to protest on behalf of the people I represent: in many parts of my division it is not possible to find a space within sight of where you live, especially in the evenings, so people are forced to pay something for nothing! It's an insult!! The scheme was set up to prevent commuters from parking in residents' spaces, not in order to generate income for the County. I oppose this proposal	In accordance with the undertaking given when charges were introduced in 2007 the West Oxford CPZ has been thoroughly reviewed which created some small but significant amounts of additional parking for residents. In addition enhanced enforcement available as a result of existing charges has reduced abuse of bays by 33% making more spaces available for legitimate permit holders.
2.	Resident, Howard Street	(1) Objection because current revenue raised exceeds costs of scheme  The Oxfordshire County Council document, 'Annual report on civil parking enforcement 2008-2009,' contains on page 9 a statement of accounts for Oxford City Residents Parking zones (subject to final audit at the end of this month). Further, the document, 'OXFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL ON-STREET CAR PARKING 2007/08 - ACTUAL INCOME / EXP,' contains audited accounts for the parking zones for 2007/08, the year prior to the introduction of resident parking permit charges.	(1) The annual report finances are broken down into three parts. Income and costs for Pay& Display, income and costs for parking enforcement (i.e. yellow line), income and costs for residents parking zones (i.e. administering residents bays).  A controlled parking zone is made up of a mix of yellow lines and resident bays with approximately 75% of yellow lines in the city falling in controlled parking zones. Consideration of the latter two columns should therefore be taken to understand the impact of funding the controlled parking zones in the City.

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	<p>From these documents we can see that prior to the introduction of charges for parking permits the residents' parking scheme made a £144k loss and after the introduction of charging the scheme made a £238k profit which included capital costs associated with the introduction of the scheme. The income from parking permits was £423k. I quote from the statement of reasons: 'The purpose of this Order is to try and ensure sufficient revenue is raised to cover the costs of permit parking places and thereby sustain the permit parking schemes in the City. It has been a long-standing traffic management policy of the County Council that the full costs of operating residents parking schemes are to be recovered via the relevant schemes.' As the audited accounts of the County Council demonstrate, sufficient revenue is raised to cover the full costs of resident parking schemes. Therefore I most strongly object to the, 'VARIATION OF CHARGES FOR RESIDENTS' PERMITS,' because according to the statement of reasons there is no factual basis to justify an increase. There is sufficient revenue raised presently and sufficient revenue will be raised long into the future.</p> <p>(2) Objection because County Council has no mandate</p>	<p>(2) The County Council is defined as both the highway authority and the enforcement authority for</p>
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		<p>There are no county councillors of the controlling Conservative party who represent divisions in which the Oxford residents' parking zones reside. Therefore the controlling Conservative party has no mandate for these changes and no democratic accountability.</p>	<p>Oxford and as such has the authority to implement these proposals.</p>
<p>3.</p>	<p>South East Area Committee</p>	<p>The Committee was disappointed to note that no officer or Cabinet Member from Oxfordshire County Council was in attendance. This seemed to be the case for every Area Committee.</p> <p>County Councillor John Sanders - the variation applied across the whole of Oxford; however the proposed charges for the southern area of the City were somewhat lower than other areas. He had made strong representations at County level on this topic, but without much success. Councillor Richard Stevens added that the increase for the City had been agreed by people who represented non-City areas, and that this was not acceptable.</p>	<p>Requests were received for attendance at all area committees. In considering these requests it was felt that whilst this issue is one of significant interest to the committees, attendance at each is likely to result in different questions being asked and therefore the information available to each committee could vary significantly. It was also felt that it would be difficult to provide an officer at each who would be in a position to answer all potential questions and as such run the risk of the committee not receiving an answer in time to respond to the consultation.</p> <p>The only increases in the Zones around the Kassam Stadium are those resulting from the link to the RPI Index linked approved when charging was introduced in 2007</p>

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		<p>Councillor Croft asked if the traffic order could be challenged legally – this was something that Councillor John Sanders was investigating.</p> <p>Councillor Val Smith reminded the Committee that, several years previously, when the Kassam Stadium was built, there had been a promise that parking in the area would always be free, in recognition of the potential parking problems that the stadium might bring.</p> <p>Councillor Gill Sanders asked that permit charges for match days should be reviewed.</p> <p>Councillor Scott Seamons suggested that a representative from Oxfordshire County Council should be asked to a future meeting as there were a number of traffic related issues that needed to be discussed.</p>	
4.	Cowley Area Committee	The Committee expressed concern over the proposed increase in charges although they noted that no such schemes were operational in the Cowley Area.	Noted
5.	North Area Committee	The North Area Committee made the following comments which would be forwarded to the Oxfordshire County Council as the formal response from the North Area Committee:	(1) The annual report finances are broken down into three parts. Income and costs for Pay & Display, Income and costs for parking enforcement (i.e. yellow lines), income and costs for residents parking zones (i.e. administering resident bays).

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		<p>(1) There was concern that the parking account appeared to have an income that was larger than needed to cover the cost of the scheme. It was understood that such schemes should cover administration costs, but should not make a profit. The Committee would welcome information about the costs of the scheme so that it could be clear how this was justified;</p> <p>(2) There had been complaints about lack of enforcement of resident parking schemes and concern about abuse of parking on yellow lines in Wolvercote. Any parking scheme needed to be enforced fairly in all areas</p>	<p>A controlled parking zone is made up of a mix of yellow lines and resident bays with approximately 75% of yellow lines in the city falling in controlled parking zones. Consideration of the latter two columns should therefore be taken to understand the impact of funding the controlled parking zones in the City.</p> <p>Whilst Pay &amp; Display income provides a surplus in the overall parking account these are not part of the operation of Controlled Parking Zones.</p> <p>(2) The Council has significantly enhanced enforcement across all zones as a result of permit charges being introduced. Nevertheless, officers will always respond to any complaints about parking problems if made aware.</p>
6.	Central, South and West Area Committee	<p><u>Resolved</u> to make the following comments and observations:</p> <p>(1) A 25% increase seemed to be excessive when placed into the context of the overall cost of permits;</p> <p>(2) Questions were raised over the legal position regarding such an increase. Local authorities were not able to profit from such schemes so more information was needed on the running costs for last year and well as the projected running cost for coming years. The Committee requested that such a report be</p>	<p>Rises are reflective of the shortfall in administering the schemes and are outlined in the main body of the report.</p>

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		<p>brought to a future meeting;</p> <p>(3) There must be compelling reasons to justify such a large increase. The consultation document was felt to be lacking detail in this respect.</p>	
7.	North East Area Committee	<p>The Committee expressed disappointment and frustration that no County Council Officer was in attendance to present the proposals and answer questions.</p> <p>Councillor Sinclair - the documentation said that the costs of the scheme had to be covered. However, it did not state what the cost of the scheme was and the percentage rises in the cost seemed high for a scheme that was originally no cost.</p> <p>Councillor Coulter - the documentation said that the costs were index linked. However, there were a number of index linked measures that could be used and it should be stated which measurement was being used.</p> <p>County Councillor Roz Smith - the increase was more than 20% and hoped that the Committee would support a review of scheme boundaries as they did not reflect the current situation on the ground. She added that she had raised this</p>	<p>See response to South East Area Committee above</p> <p>It is false to say that the scheme originally had no cost. Prior to charges being introduced costs were met from general highway budgets.</p> <p>The TRO specifically states that “index linking will be undertaken by adjusting the relevant charge according to the fluctuation of the Retail Prices Index: monthly numbers of retail prices produced by the Office for National Statistics”</p> <p>The commitments to reviewing and amending CPZs to reflect current circumstances will continue, within the present financial constraints</p>

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		<p>particular issue with the county council on a number of occasions.</p> <p>Councillor Darke - with regard to exclusions the Blackbird Leys West was a partial exclusion which occurred on match days at the Kassam Stadium and so costs would rise marginally.</p> <p>The Committee agreed that its comments on the proposals be forwarded to the Oxfordshire County Council along with its disappointment that no county officer had attended the meeting.</p>	<p>The increase in the costs of permits in the Kassam Stadium zones results from Index Linking</p> <p>See response to South East Area Committee above</p>
8.	East Area Parliament	<p>The Area Parliament agreed to send the following comments to Oxfordshire County Council:-</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(1) Should this proposed increase, which is significant in scale, be enforced there should not be another inflationary increase for at least 5 years;</li> <li>(2) The only justification for increasing charges was that the scheme did not cover its costs. Without accounts to prove this, it was difficult to support the proposals;</li> <li>(3) Oxfordshire County Council is asked to take notice of the comments made by the East Oxford Residents' Parking Association.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(1) The Order as advertised provides that Index Linking will take place no more than once every 3 years</li> <li>(2) This has been addressed in the main body of the report</li> <li>(3) At the time of preparing this report no comments had been received from this body</li> </ol>

### SAMPLE OF PERMIT CHARGES IN OTHER AUTHORITIES

The table below sets out the annual cost of a residents permit for the first car in a household

TOWN/CITY	PERMIT CHARGE
Swindon	40
Cambridge	41-50
Bath	85
Aylesbury	52
York	93
Brighton	106
Cheltenham	62
Canterbury	125
Gloucester	62
Bournemouth	50
Chester	60
Guildford	40
Camden	82
Croydon	44
Hackney	45-225
Hammersmith/Fulham	99
Islington	35-200
Merton	65
Kensington and Chelsea	66