

Statement from G Hooper

I have read on google that you are going to review the new car park charges in Dorset in September and so I am writing in the hope that my - and I am sure the views of many other people - may be take into consideration.

I am a pensioner living in Sherborne. I, and anything up to four other friends used to enjoy coming down to West Bay three or four times a month as it is not so crowded as Weymouth and somewhere you can actually sit near to and hear the sea which cannot be done at Weymouth our nearest seaside town. I came down with a couple of friends in May and was quite shocked at the car parks charges. Because I have neuropathy in my feet and can sometimes not walk far I had to pay to park in two different car parks, one near our usual eatery on the front and then move to the park nearer the harbour and piers for shops and tea. I paid £9 in total. I have not been back to West Bay since but decided to go to the coast less and travel an extra half hour over the border to East Devon when I do so as the car park charges are cheaper - £8 pays for 24 hours so we can go down for the day without having to look at our watches.

We decided to leave West Bay until the Autumn but I now see that the parking charges will be in place until the end of October so will not bother to visit. I understand that the Council are trying to catch the holiday makers but do you not think it would be a nice gesture to the people of Dorset to bring the parking charges down after they have returned in September? As residents of the county we are already paying the fifth highest council tax in the country. I did read some time ago that Dorset wanted to attract the 'right people' at the top with six figure salaries. Is this what we are paying for while services are cut and charges go up?

Think of the lost income to local businesses when the holiday makers have left. As one car load we would have paid for five meals three or four times a month at the Windy Corner Cafe and always ended up going into the small shops near the harbour and having tea there before we returned.

Much as I like West Bay I am quite happy to either carry on driving to East Devon or free parking in the National Trust car park and seeing the sea at Burton Bradstock but I think you need some forward thinking for the survival of the small businesses in West Bay.