

Public Document Pack

NORTH HERTFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

CABINET

TUESDAY, 11TH FEBRUARY, 2025

SUPPLEMENTARY AGENDA

Please find attached supplementary papers relating to the above meeting, as follows:

Agenda No Item

8. **PROPOSED PARKING TARIFFS FOR 2025/26 (Pages 3 - 70)**

REPORT OF THE SERVICE DIRECTOR – REGULATORY

Proposals to increase parking tariffs for 2025/26 in the Council's off-street car parks and on-street charging bays in Royston town centre.

Included in this Supplementary Pack is a replacement Appendix C to the report.

This page is intentionally left blank

APPENDIX C : Full Copy of Responses received to Proposed Parking Tariff Changes in NHC Car Parks for 2025/26: December 2024 Consultation

Date	Category	Comments
9.12.24	Non resident visitor	<p>Good morning I just wanted to give my views regarding the parking situation mainly the tariff increases. I often visit Royston town solely going to Royston after 3 o'clock to park because it's free often looking around the shops however if the parking charges were to increase then I feel like I probably wouldn't do this any longer. I appreciate the council wants payment however it's not just about the payment itself but also the convenience if I then have to worry about getting payment and making sure I'm back in time et cetera to the car then I will no longer visit the town and there's such local businesses will suffer because I will simply look to go elsewhere. The three after 3 pm scheme is such a good idea and I am not opposed to a small increase for parking charges before 3 pm however to increase the price away from the scheme is simply not a good idea especially considering the impact it will have a local businesses. I will most likely just shop online rather than face the parking charges for popping in and having a browse .In summary, please do not get rid of the free after three pm in Royston but also all of North Herts. Thanks Matthew</p>
9.12.24	Local business	<p>Hi there, I have just been made aware of the proposed changes to the car parking charges in Royston.I am writing as the owner of a small local family run business with a shop in Royston Town Centre. I plead with you to reconsider this proposal. On Fridays we are open past 3pm and it really makes a difference for trading when those on the school run can pop by and park quickly to get some cakes from us. Retailers in the town have already taken a hit with the scrapping of the high street free parking. With costs escalating all the time, and the efforts to bring footfall into the town centre, this would be catastrophic for local trade. Customers often complain about the lack of local shops and an offering beyond what's here, and this is certainly not going to help encourage businesses to open here (and stay!) I would be keen to understand the reasons for this - beyond cost cutting. Many THanks Kelly</p>
9.12.24	Royston resident	<p>Hi there, I'm writing to share my comments as a resident of Royston and a frequent visitor to other towns in our county such as Letchworth, Hitchin and Baldock. I think the proposed increases to parking charges, especially removing the free parking after 3pm, are a terrible idea. If you spend time in Royston town centre, there's a huge difference in footfall past 3pm. The shops are busy, people are milling around and getting coffees etc. the cafes are busy. Many parents and school children pop into the town after school pick up to make use of free parking. If you charge people for parking in the town after 3pm, they simply won't bother with their visit and will take their business to Tesco, or the shops on the Royston gateway site. The town centre already has too many shops to let, taking away the free parking will just increase business closures and also put many local businesses off opening up here. I'd strongly encourage the council to look at how towns like Ely are managing their parking to encourage visitors. All parking is free, and they have a fabulous market and brilliant shops partly because of this. A town like Hitchin could certainly benefit from this structure. I also live close to Royston town centre and many people use my road for free all day parking when they go to work in the town. If you take the free after 3pm car parking away, they'll also do this when if they come to shop in the afternoons. There are a lot of residents who don't have driveways and rely on the free on road parking and already struggle to park. It would make the tricky parking situation on my road a lot worse The local council have made some good changes recently, but sadly there also seem to be many that are aimed at reducing access to our lovely local towns and driving people away, rather than encouraging them to shop and eat local. For the sake of our local businesses, I hope the plans do not make it through. Best wishes, Shardé</p>

9.12.24	Royston resident	Hello, It seems like you are wanting to kill the town of Royston.Like most people who try to shop in Royston and support local businesses those of us who are not as able bodied to walk into town I will just give my money to business in London on the days I am in the office. Very short sighted of the council. Not sure how to feel that you can use terminology as 'fair and sustainable'. The lights are never on in the evening, so not safe. A wall in the parking space where the Morrisons used to be, their is a collapsed wall and it's been like this for about 2 years. What is your raising cost? Management and Executives getting larger pay rises. would not then utilise the businesses in Royston even though it's more costly than London. Good luck. Judy
9.12.24	Royston resident	Hello, I see that you are proposing to remove free parking after 3pm in Royston. This will severely impact an already ailing highstreet. Many people pop to the local shops after 3pm following the school pick up. There will be no incentive to do this if free parking is abolished, they will just go to Tesco Extra where they can park for free. Smaller, independent shops will suffer. Other small towns such as Buntingford have free parking schemes at peak periods, let alone off peak. It is completely unreasonable that Royston has no or very limited provision for 1 hour - 90min free parking to pop to the shops or appointments. Hundreds of houses are being built outside of the town centre with no infrastructure and too far to walk to the shops with children or elderly passengers. Paying for parking will force them to go elsewhere. The local shops in Royston are really trying their best but they need the local government to support them. The increase in parking fees will stop footfall and shops will close This is a very disappointing proposal. Tessa
9.12.2024	Visitor	Dear Sir/Madam, I notice that you are proposing to remove the "free after 3" parking at Royston and replace with a £1 flat fee after 3pm I would just like to express my strong opposition to this proposal and, unfortunately, it reeks of the worst kind of local government short termism. That you justify it with "it could even out visitors during the day it could help local businesses" is absurd. I do not believe that a single person at NHDC believes this to be true. Royston is not Letchworth or Hitchin. It is a smaller, less wealthy, town with a smaller High Street and much reduced commercial footprint. The current arrangements bring in some trade at a quiet time of day and is essential to the struggling traders. Without it they may as well all close up at 3pm To consider changing this is purely a blatant cash grab and to present it as anything other than this is patronising to the residents of the town. Therefore please reconsider this proposal as it will be a further nail in the coffin for our struggling town centre. Yours, Adrian
9.12.24	Royston resident and Local Business	Dear Sirs I understand that you are planning to scrap the Free After Three parking concession in Royston in the New Year. Presumably this is to fund the proposed introduction of reduced cost parking in Letchworth after 3pm. I would strongly ask you to reconsider removing Free After Three parking in Royston.The High Street in Royston is frail financially and they value the support of families being able to shop in town after school has finished. You need to take into account that Royston is a very different centre to the larger conurbation that is Letchworth/Baldock/Hitchin. Ours is a small market town much closer in ethos and geography to Buntingford. Car parking in Buntingford is currently free after 3pm, free for 1.5hours before 3pm and free all day at weekends. We are already losing out to the much more generous parking charges in Buntingford. Removing our only parking concession - the Free After Three - is only going to cause yet further damage to our High Street. Please support our community in Royston and stop trying to transfer all these resources to Letchworth. It is not fair on us. Kind regards Charlotte
10.12.24	Royston resident	Hello, I see that you are proposing to remove free parking after 3pm in Royston This will severely impact an already ailing highstreet.Many people pop to the local shops after 3pm following the school pick up. There will be no incentive to do this if free parking is abolished, they will just go to Tesco Extra where they can park for free. Smaller, independent shops will suffer.Other small towns such as Buntingford have free parking schemes at peak periods, let alone off peak. It is completely unreasonable that Royston has no or very limited provision for 1 hour - 90min free parking to pop to the shops or appointments. Hundreds of houses are being built outside of the town centre with no infrastructure and too far to walk to the shops with children or elderly passengers. Paying for parking will force them to go elsewhere.The local shops in Royston are really trying their best but they need the local government to support them. The increase in parking fees will stop footfall and shops will close.This is a very disappointing proposal. Joe

10.12.24	Royston resident	<p>Dear Council, Having seen your proposal to increase fees and also charge across the 3pm times in Royston, I can help but think this is not joined up thinking. The 3pm cut off at least offers people of the town the opportunity to park and shop without paying meaning they are incentivised to do so. It's not always the actual cost, but the ability to simply park and quickly get done that one quick task (post office, bank, pint of milk). The town and it's shops need this turnover of visits as well as the prolonged visits to the high street. Other than money, there is no reason for this move. It does not benefit the town, it doesnt benefit the shops. It simply raises money for you at the cost of everyone else. There is already the beginnings of out of town shopping in Royston and this will simply send more people that way. You know that this is not the right decision and is only being made by bean counters at the council. Think long and hard before you make it harder for people to shop and go about their day in the town that they live. Thanks Gareth Royston resident</p>
10.12.24	Non resident visitor	<p>Hi I live in the villages. If I have to pay after 3pm for parking I will use Tescos a lot more and the high street shops a lot less. I think you could kill the high street completely. It's already a confusing nightmare to park and I generally go after 3pm to avoid the confusion as much as the charge. Best wishes Jennie.</p>
10.12.24	Royston resident	<p>Dear Team I have been made aware of the proposed introduction of after 3pm parking tariffs in Royston and am strongly opposed to the proposal. As a local resident this is a shame and will result in me and my family members frequenting the town centre less often and visiting the supermarkets who offer free and convenient parking on a more regular basis. It also has the potential to have a negative impact in local clubs, e.g. the Evening WI, that frequent several local restaurants, pubs and halls within the town centre of an evening several times a month. Additional cost and inconvenience could result in less attendance or a move to alternative venues. The introduction of parking fees will either increase journeys to supermarkets on the outskirts of town and therefore increase CO2 emissions or reduce the number of journeys residents take and community events, venues and clubs visited and thus have a negative impact on the loneliness agenda and mental health as well as the economy of the community. I see no real benefit other than increase the councils finances and increase the cost to households during this cost of living crisis. I thank you for you time Kind regards Emma</p>
10.12.24	Royston resident	<p>I just wanted to send a quick email opposing the proposed car park charges after 3pm in Royston. As a local resident who lives near the town centre, I'm concerned about the impact on local roads near the town centre as cars would likely park there, rather than using the car parks, if charges are introduced, and cause congestion on local roads Many thanks Laura</p>

10.12.24	Royston resident	<p>I believe that removing the free post 3pm parking in Royston will impact the town and its residents in several areas: Older people who rely on the Royston Health Centre as there is ample parking there for them can have their appointments after 3pm without worrying about penalty notices due to late appointments/ urgent medical conditions. It also affects NHS staff working in the health centre who will have to pay more each day when they are already poorly paid. It will affect the local businesses like Mica, new independent shops in the corn exchange like Honest Fig, Tesco etc who rely on people popping into town for one or two items - it literally takes them 5 minutes maximum then they leave. as a result of introducing the post 3pm fee I expect more people will risk parking on the yellow lined roads along Fish Hill to use the only Bank ATM left in the town rather than park in the car park, causing congestion, increased release of carbon dioxide and making it potentially more dangerous to people on foot. It will also mean that the existing minimal street parking that's left in the town will become less available for those that only want to pick up / drop off for a short period of time. It will affect the charity shop donations which we & many others pop down to Market Hill to unload after 3pm and park safely directly outside of the shop. We have already lost the high street parking, our town is becoming a ghost town with little more than barbers, hairdressers, charity shops & coffee shops being present. It is not in keeping with other local towns - in Buntingford you get 90 minutes free once a day then free after 3pm Hitchin has significant free parking in the town centre and a thriving independent shopping centre Once a post 3pm fee is introduced then it will become an easy way of increasing the tariff regularly and further impacting the viability of the shops. It will also increase the amount of paper generated in tickets & receipts which is not vey 'green'. RegardsNigel</p>
10.12.24	Royston resident	<p>Good evening I am writing to you about the concern of there being a debate about the parking in town changing to being a pound after 3pm and not free , as someone who lives in town and works early mornings I see this being a big inconvenience as yes some people may be able to pay everyday but it soon adds up and parking somewhere else further away for free would mean me walking to my car at a goldly hour in the morning .I speak for all people who live in town in the flats as i have spoke to neighbours about this , if there was a way for us to park there such as a permit that could work as normally this works out cheaper for the yearly cost Thank you Leonie</p>
10.12.24	Royston resident	<p>Hi, I'm a resident opposite the Warren car park who uses the public parking facility provided. I normally use it between 5 pm and 8 am and over the weekends. If the proposed plan to charge for out of hours parking goes ahead, that's an additional £365 that goes towards it. Really hope you could make a decision for it to stay the same for residents in the vicinity (we already pay for Saturday parking and on off days)</p>
10.12.24	Royston resident	<p>Hello Please don't charge for parking after 3pm. There are 3 adults in my household who drop into town because we can park for free and visit shops or stop for a drink. We do this because the parking is free and wouldn't do so if it wasn't Kind regards, Victoria</p>
11.12.24	Visitor	<p>Good morning, I am writing in favour of keeping the free after three parking in Royston. Please keep this for the sake of the town! If there's somewhere I need to sign online let me know. All the best Kelly</p>
11.12.25	Visitor	<p>Hi, I strongly object the proposal to start charging for parking in the town centre after 3pm. The high street is suffering as it is with footfall and starting to charge will only make this worse. You will hurt local businesses and the high street as people opt for larger out of town shopping centres vs the high street. Please do not introduce this charge. I would like to be kept up to date on this proposal, how can I / you do that? Thanks, Karan</p>

11.12.24	Non resident visitor	<p>I read this week with dismay that the authority is consulting regarding the scrapping of free parking after 3pm in Royston. As I live in Wimpole I have to use my car to visit Royston for local shops and currently I do so precisely because I can shop after 3pm without paying for parking. The affect a change like this will have on retailers such as Merlin Mica the homeward shop is likely to be a real blow as customers will go to the likes of Screwfix with free parking in the out of town retail area.I am sure the loss of rates revenue when independent retails close in favour of last corporate retailers paying much less rates out of town will have a bigger impact on council revenue that the few pounds uplift from parking charges after all of the management costs Royston is almost unique, having a predominantly independent retail offering rather than the usual high street of empty units and those served with national brands the country over! This will only remain if those independent retailers are supported by the community and therefore the local authority. Regards Peter</p>
11.12.24	Local Resident	<p>I am writing in support of maintaining the Free After Three scheme, which is part-funded by Royston First.In essence, this is not free parking for NHC and generates revenue from the funding provided by the business community, via Royston First, and in the past, other organisations too.The scheme has been running for a number of years and positively impacts on footfall in the town centre, with many people dropping in to the town to shop locally and use the facilities in the town, at the end of the day.To lose the scheme would have a detrimental effect on our local economy, both in real and perceived additional cost and “hassle factor”The reality is, with Tesco, Bury Lane and the Gateway sites, offering free parking and a quick and easy option to drop in, the town centre is under extra pressure to attract visitorsI am strongly opposed to any initiative that negatively impacts on our traders in the townBest regards Cath</p>
11.12.24 Page 7	Non resident visitor	<p>Hello, As advertised online, I am emailing in my concerns regarding the proposed removal of the ‘free after three’ parking. I currently live in one of the surrounding villages and visit the town once or twice a week, taking advantage of this parking incentive. If this was to be removed, I would stop visiting the town centre all together, and go either elsewhere or online for me needs. I hope common sense prevails and this proposal is squashed, as I only see significant damage forthcoming to Royston town centre businesses if this was to proceed. Many thanks, Martin</p>

<p>11.12.24</p> <p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">Page 8</p>	<p>Local business</p>	<p>Dear Sirs It has come to my attention that there is to be a further increase in the Parking Charges in the Royston Car Parks, which may be understandable, but also that the Free after 3pm is to be stopped. I find this very disappointing as a business, Merlin Mica Hardware, based on the Market Square for 40 years. I am not advocating that no charge should be made at any time, indeed when Parking was free, the Car Parks were full before 9am of both workers in the town and also those catching buses or trains to London, Cambridge and elsewhere - there was certainly no room for shoppers from 9am! So I believe that charges should remain but that said they must remain reasonable and favourably comparable with other small Market Towns bearing in mind our size and facilities. One of the comments by the Council was that stopping the current Free After 3pm would even out trade in the town more equally over the day, resulting in a better balance for businesses but I do not believe that to be the case. The people who come despite the charges before 3pm will continue to come but those that take advantage of the free Parking later will probably stop coming at all, instead opting to go to the Retail Parks where free parking is available all day! So this would be very detrimental to the town as a whole, leading to more empty shops and a further decline to business within the town. Eventually there will be no businesses in the town to attract people to park in the Car Parks to pay any fee at all. I cannot believe this is the Council's intention! Also it seems to me, if I have read the proposals correctly, that after 3pm the tariff will increase by 10p from 90p to £1 for 1 hour - surely this will further discourage customers from coming later in the day. If there has to be a charge surely it should be no more than the daytime hourly rate and as I say, preferably the Free after 3pm should be retained to encourage Shoppers, not frighten them away! I am aware that Royston First, by means of the Royston Bid Moneys that we contribute to, sponsor the Free Parking after 3pm scheme so I sincerely hope that this continues as part of that as that is one of the items that I consider I voted for, when the Bid scheme was suggested for Royston Town Centre. At the moment the Council receives some revenue from the car parks until 3pm and shoppers who prefer free Parking can wait until later and come after 3pm. This particularly benefits families who can come after school into the town. It provides a bit of a boost to businesses and means that, if only briefly, we are on a level playing field with the out of town Retail Parks! In my view, stopping the Free after 3pm idea is totally unacceptable, particularly in view of the pressure we are under from the businesses on the Bypass with their Free Parking facility. I sincerely hope, for the good of the Town Centre and the businesses within it, that this part of the proposal is turned down Carly</p>
<p>11.12.24</p>	<p>Royston resident</p>	<p>Good Evening I am one of many residents residing on the actual High Street itself. The High Street that had seen the little parking it did have removed or turned into disabled spaces. If the "free after 3" parking is removed, are there any contingencies in place for the residents of the High Street? So many surrounding towns either have the free after 3 pm, schemes for residents to participate in reduced fees for permits or here's a thing....actual free parking!! 😊 Ely has free parking and fees for those parking between a certain time. We have lived in Royston for nearly 10 years. We have put up with the lack of facilities for residents of the High Street. We've paid for a days parking, we've moved cars from street to street, we've parked 15-20 mins away from our home. It's not like we don't "pull our weight" or contribute. Please don't take the little bonus we have and remove the free after 3. Kindest Regards A Cash Strapped Mum Aka Laura</p>
<p>11.12.24</p>	<p>Royston resident</p>	<p>I am writing to put my objections to increasing Car Parking charges in Royston Town. This will reduce people from coming into the town, which will reduce the foot fall into the shops, which will eventually be the demise of the shops in town and so no need to use the car parks, as people will shop elsewhere or shop online. Regards Laraine</p>
<p>11.12.24</p>	<p>Royston resident</p>	<p>I have read to proposals for the increase in parking fees for Royston. In the past this's has been mainly funded by Royston First an organisation of businesses in the town. Some of these small businesses are struggling to survive as it is. The Royston High Street has been described by Boots management as a failing High Street. Can you please explain how scrapping the "free after 3" scheme would help to bring business into the town. Without this the existing few businesses around the town would not survive. The parking charges should be scrapped completely, it is the only way, thus saving the parking wardens salary! School traffic (St Mary's) use the Town Hall car park, without that the A10 will be chaos. Add to this the increased parking during the day, people won't go into town any more. We are not a huge town like Hitchin & Letchworth with lots of national/chain stores, we are a small town with no banks and very few shops. These increases will be the end of Royston town centre. Jackie</p>

12.12.24	Visitor	What about free parking everywhere on Saturdays in Royston for 1h or 2h to help businesses.Thank you Best wishes Claire
12.12.24	Visitor	Sir. I note the proposal to increase parking charges in Royston car parks for the year 2025-26, including the proposal to commence charging after 3pm. Currently, there is no charge after 3 pm, which does encourage shoppers to visit Royston and make purchases in the local shops rather than frequent the out of town establishments where parking is free. I would ask that this be reconsidered to benefit the shops in Royston. Regards, A E Leigh
12.12.24	Royston resident	I have just been advised by friends and seen it on Facebook that you are proposing to increase car park charges once again in Royston and do away with the free after 3 offer.I entirely disagree with these proposals. I live in the town and do use the car parks after 3pm,for which I have been very grateful, but if you are proposing the £1 fee I will not be using the car parks and will choose to do my shopping elsewhere where it is cheaper or no charge at all. You will just be pushing more people to park around the neighbouring streets to avoid your car park charges and keeping people away from the town will be very detrimental to businesses who are trying to survive in a very difficult financial climate. As Royston residents we are also clobbered with the car park charges when we visit the Royston Health Centre or Market Hill Surgery, which is totally unfair. Other towns do not charge car park charges for patients visiting their GP. I really think you should re-consider the proposals so that poor old Royston town can thrive not fail. Why drive people away? Since I have lived in the town (1989), I have seen many businesses close and so many good shops have vacated the High Street. They cannot survive. We cannot even buy a pair of shoes in the town now. Not everyone has a car to travel to other towns. We are lacking so much in Royston now. Does anyone care about us anymore I wonder? No wonder so many people buy goods online.Mrs M Smith
12.12.24	Royston resident	Dear Sir/Madam, I would like to request serious consideration against introducing charges in the Royston car parks after 3pm as per the current proposal.The high street is frequently suffering from a number of closing establishments and adding further charges will only penalise local businesses further. As well as impacting on local residents during already tough economic times. Please do reconsider. Yours sincerely Eleanor
12.12.24	Royston resident	Dear panel members,I would like to register my objection to doing away with the 'free after 3' parking in Royston.Myself and friends often choose to go into Royston later in the day as it is a bit quieter. I do worry that bringing in a charge will damage the local traders and affect the hospitality establishments in Royston in the afternoon and evening. The 'free after 3' was brought in to support traders and encourage new customers into the town to keep the local economy boyant. I have to ask what the panel considers will be the outcome if a parking fee is introduced after 3pm?The traders I am sure will back to square one. Worried about lack of trade, overheads, staff costs and whether it is financially viable to continue to open in the afternoon.I hope you will take on board the points I have raised. Regards,Mrs Teresa Smith
14.12.24	Visitor	I'm disappointed that parking for free after 3 pm may no longer be applicable.I feel it will have a detrimental effect on the high street, many people will pop into town after the school pick up and make use of free parking, I do, if I only want one inexpensive item I will not pay to park, I either won't bother or I'll go to Tesco.I've spoken to friends about this and we are all in favour of it continuing to be free . If charges are brought in, they maybe small to start with but they soon rise Royston especially needs to attract more footfall and I don't think parking charges help, I really hope the idea will be considered.Thank you Lee
08.01.25	Visitor	Governments and local authorities claim to be concerned about declining high streets. All retailers face mounting pressures in attracting footfall, not least from parking charges, as town centres have long not been the public's prime shopping option. Out of town (free parking) and online (despite the environmental downsides of packaging costs and delivery) have savaged them. I realise that councils have their own budgetary challenges, so should be increasing parking in line with inflation. But many 'assist' retailers by offering the public eg a free initial half hour, or in Royston's case a free after 3. Maybe the Royston First subsidy (helped perhaps by the town council who own one of the key sites) needs updating. Because a 'free' option, rather than a 'cheap' one, is disproportionately effective in attracting customers after school times, when the town might otherwise be dead. At a time when Royston is finally 'on the up' again, damaging parking publicity would be a huge discouragement Please juggle the parking strategy to enable free after 3 to continue to exert its beneficial effect.Sent from Paul

10.01.25	Royston resident	Hi - I am writing in favour of keeping the 'free after 3' parking charge in Royston. Like a lot of parents, I often pop into Royston after the school run and I think a lot of shops benefit from this trading period. Royston doesn't have lots of shops like Letchworth and Hitchin, and can't justify high car parking charges. I feel that our high street is just starting to recover after Covid and that removing the free after 3 scheme would have a very negative impact on Royston. I want our high street to thrive, please don't kill it off! Regards Caroline
10.01.25	Royston resident	The shopkeepers are already being hit by new government taxes so will be struggling. This free parking must be maintained. What are you suggesting will be a death knell for our High Street. After 3 is the busiest time at the moment so do not even think about doing this. Ian
10.01.25	Non resident visitor	I would like to object to an increase in parking charges in Royston. I purposely don't arrive to shop in Royston until 3pm so I don't incur charges. I live in South Cambridge so won't bother travelling to Royston as I object to paying for parking in a small market town. Noleen
10.01.25	Local Business	I'm just writing to object to the parking increases in Royston town. I am a business owner and find most of my clients from out of Royston want to come in for an appointment after 3pm when it's free. The planters in the high street that have taken over the 20 minute free slots in my opinion have killed the town. Please don't increase the parking prices and take away the few customers that do support our local town. Joanna Guiver Essential Beauty
10.01.25	Royston resident	To whom this may concern I have heard that you are looking to terminate the after three free parking in Royston, increase general off-street parking costs, and to introduce Sunday charging for car parks. Please be advised that I strongly object to this and would like you to reconsider. Our town is struggling as it is and increasing parking charges is not the answer.Sincerely Mrs Cooper-Smith
10.01.25	Royston resident	Hi,I have seen your proposal to change parking tariffs in Royston. I'm disappointed with this proposal. In my opinion this will decrease footfall in the town and therefore will impact current businesses and make it less attractive to new businesses. I have lived in Royston for over 30 years and during that time it has become clear that NHDC have no interest in improving the town centre while approving planning for new houses without improving the infrastructure. I sincerely hope that this proposal doesn't get approved. Thanks Dr Steve Day
10.01.25	Visitor	Hello,I object charging Fees by flat rate £1 on free after three it always have been free for years i like it to keep it that way it helps more people in the town. if you accept this flat rate £1 we get less people coming to the town of Royston and businesses might get tough keep there business open. Yours Faithfully
10.01.25	Visitor	Dear humans, Royston like a lot of small towns businesses are struggling to keep their heads above water. Making the parking payable after 3 will be the nail in the coffin for a few which is really sad. If you truly believe this is in the best interest of the town you will be showing how detached you are from what is needed. All you will be doing is putting people out of work, hence putting the social bill up. Yours sincerely B Boardman
10.01.25	Royston resident	I can't believe that the council is thinking of changing the parking in Royston. It will kill the town centre or what is left of it. They survive on the free after 3pm parking and free on Sunday means people just won't go in. Short sighted, the town is dying as it is the shops needs help not more obstacles. You are not working for the people of Royston.Karl
10.01.25	Royston resident	Hi, Like many of my neighbours in Royston, we are against the removal of free parking after 3pm. Often I only need one or two things and with free parking after 3pm I try to shop locally in town. If I have to pay for parking (even at £1) it would be better to just drive to Tesco/ shop online to buy my cards (currently get from card factory), some beauty bits (usually go to boots), small gifts (often go to Ladds) etc. Especially if I only want to pop somewhere for 10 mins, £1 is ridiculous to pay. I almost never visit town when I have to pay and will probably never do so if there is never any free parking. Things are going up in price all the time, I cannot afford any extra costs. A pound here and there soon adds up. The new NI increases and min wage increases are going to severely hit small businesses, getting rid of free parking will just make it worse. Surely we don't want our town centre to become just full of vacant buildings due to business closing. I strongly oppose the introduction of parking charges after 3pm in Royston. Nicki
10.01.25	Visitor	Hello, Emailing to object against the above proposal. It will have a detrimental effect on the many local businesses in the town centre and should not be implemented. Brendan

10.01.25	Local business	Hi I am the owner of Pamper Mi Mi beauty salon in royston writing to express me anger over the potential free parking after 3pm no longer being in place. The high street already lacks a range of shops due to rent being so high. I've been working within the high street for 3 years now and the beauty industry has taken a hit since Covid and taking away free parking after 3pm impacts my business further as clients will choose to not come to us as they would usually because they get increasingly annoyed with the charges. I feel like this is going to have a huge impact on so many local business and ludicrous to even be considered.Yours sincerely
10.01.25	Royston resident	I am writing to object to the possibility of cutting the free parking after 3pm and charging for Sundays in Royston car parks.People try so hard to keep Royston on the map and give a great town centre for the people of Royston and surrounding villages.Charging for Sundays and cutting the free charge after 3pm could do so much damage. It's just managed to get back on its feet again after almost dying a few years ago.It would be a terrible shame to do this! Angela and Manager of Kennedy Court in the town.
10.01.25	Local business	Hi, I am the manager of the very popular cafe Morenos in Royston town centre. I was welcomed by the Royston community 5 years ago when my brother took over the business and I have been the Manager since. I am writing this email after hearing about the possible suspension of the free parking after 3 in the town centre which have left us very dissapointed as one thing I have realised about the town was the fact that the footfall was much more after 3pm which clearly was due to the free parking the community benefited from, especially during the hardest financial times for the past decade or so. Since being a part of this town, alot of businesses has been shut down and the independent businesses like ours has had very difficult times because of the lack of footfall and by doing such a thing, I can surely gaurantee that you will actually kill the town even more. The footfall would most likely reach the minumum possible, many of our elderly residents would not take advantage of the free parking which they all appreciated, families with kids would not come in to town after school and literally, alot of more reasons. So why damage the town even more? The council may benefit from an extra income which will definetely turn out to be a loss in the long term as you will have a lot of businesses closing down, including us which will be a big blow for the community and all the hardworking business owners and their employees. I can literally sit here all day and write all the things that will be effected but I am just not sure if the council really does care for its businesses and community because if that was the case, this idea would have never even popped up. From the bottom of my heart, as a hardworking person who has tried hes best since moving into the community and behalf of all the other business owners, community etc. Please but please reconsider this situation and do not change and damage the community and the town centre as it has been damaged for the past few years as it is. I truly believe the council will overturn this decision and help the the town and its people.Kind Regards,Oguzhan Akar
10.01.25	Royston resident	I have just been informed that you plan to bring in extra charges for the car parks in royston town centre. I am just emailing to voice my objection to this, the town is struggling already to survive without further charges to hamper it even more Kind regardsRichard
10.01.25	Vistor	The proposals you are suggesting to make to past 3pm parking are a disgrace.It is bad for local business and Royston residents.There is nothing wrong with the current parking regime and no one has asked for this. You work for the people and you are not acting in their best interest.It will simply make people head further away in their cars to industrial estates to shop or eat etc where parking isn't an issue or charged. You bemoan people driving cars adding to pollution yet try to force people out further for activities in their cars. Madness. Mr D Shaw
10.01.25	Royston resident	Good evening,I was shocked to hear that the free parking after 3pm would be changing in Royston if new proposals were agreed. The town centre is already struggling. I only book appointments and visit the town after 3pm so can use the free parking, I live too far out of town to walk. I shall look to use services and shops elsewhere if the parking charges are implement as they are so expensive! I can go to the retail park in Biggleswade and park for hours for free. You are killing the High Street.Anna
11.01.25	Royston resident	Good Morning I would like to register my opinion/objection regarding the proposed parking increase in Royston.1. The footfall in Royston has declined in recent years and this will add to more decline.2. Free parking is very helpful for those collecting prescriptions and visiting the doctors.3.Royston needs all the help it can get.I am vey lucky that I am fit enough to walk into town but still feel strongly that to remove "Free after 3" is wrong.RegardsJill

11.01.25	Royston resident	Hi,Please note my objection to the proposed changes to parking tariffs - specifically in relation to removal of the free after 3pm tariff in Royston. We live in Barkway, but regularly stop off in town after 3pm because it's free. It draws us in to use the shops. Otherwise we'll go down to Buntingford which offers much better parking rates. Royston will decline further with this change. Also, why should 1hr post-3pm cost more than a peak 1hr slot? If you have to charge for it, it should be less than 90p. Many thanks,Hazel
11.01.25	Royston resident	Dear Sir /Madam,I oppose to the charges after 3pm due to the following:-parents are already rushed off their feet after finishing work, then collecting kids from school and then rushing home to prepare dinner. To add one more item on their already busy schedule would create further tension to a family's wellbeing and environment -mature people want to finish work and collect last minute shopping / prescription from town without worrying about paying for parking; this also brings business to the town and local independent businesses. Would you rather they parked free within giant supermarkets and offer them more business instead of the local shops within the town? -the public will avoid using the local shops in the town to shop within the small window between 3 and 6pm if they have to pay for parking and are more likely to use larger supermarkets -young adults don't have the means to pay for parking on top of popping into town to buy a coffee or food or even their own shopping. They already get charged over the odds on car insurance, so adding costs of parking for them is unnecessary I hope the above concerns will be reviewed and free parking after 3pm remains for the town of Royston. Best regards Rak
11.01.25	Royston resident	Dear Sir/Madam,I am writing to formally object to the proposed increase in car parking charges for the 2025/26 financial year, as outlined in your recent consultation. As a local resident I am very concerned about the potential negative impact this increase will have on our high street. If I am being honest I know that the proposed changes to the free after 3 parking incentive would greatly influence whether I visit Royston after work or not, especially as there are alternative options available which are easier to visit, even before the prices change.I regularly pop into town after work (I finish after 3pm) as I do wish to support local businesses and it is easy to just park and go into town. This is currently the time I most often shop in Royston. It is rare for me to be around at the weekend and the parking issues and cost already mean I choose not to visit at the weekends unless I have enough time to walk in.The shops are never busy when I visit in the late afternoon and evening hours and if people like myself stop coming they will be virtually empty.I have lived in Royston since 2004. In this time I myself have experienced the impact of previous changes to parking tariffs on my shopping habits in the town and where and when I attended baby groups.I meet increasing numbers of new residents who do not know what our town centre has to offer as they never visit. Being able to pop by without paying for parking after 3pm encourages people to give our town centre a go. Now is the time to be trying to engage these new residents into our shops, not to add further barriers.It should not be down to community and buisness groups alone to fight for our town centre. As our local council we expect you to be supporting our local buisnesses and town centre. I hope that you reconsider your proposed changes and focus on what will benefit Royston as a town going forward. Best wishes Paula
11.01.25	Visitor	To whom it may concern, Please please do not scrap Royston's free after 3 parking, nor introduce Sunday parking fees. As a family of four, we purposely choose to go for dinner in Royston town knowing we can park for free. Without this, we wouldn't choose to spend our money in Royston's town centre. This will have a huge negative impact on the high street and I implore you to reconsider. This will cause businesses to close, causing the town to lose out on local amenities, house prices will suffer as the town becomes less attractive and enticing and business rates will receive less income. Please please cost this out appropriately. Thank you for your time, Katherine
12.01.25	Royston resident	Dear North-Herts CabinetI would strongly suggest you do not increase parking fees and remove the "free after 3pm" parking. If anything cost should be removed, or reduced with longer periods of free parking.By charging to visit the town centre is putting people off of coming into the town, and fuels the closure of the shops due to restrictions. Also stopping limited free parking at the high streets need to be removed. There is no where convenient to park to just pop into the town.Please take my email as feedback and consideration when you meet in February 25 to review. If you do not live in the town or use the services, then I don't feel an informed decision can be made on this. This should be put to the residents of Royston on a vote to ensure any decision are made on a 360 degree prospective. Kind Regards Malcolm

12.01.25	Royston resident	<p>Dear sirs,I would like to object to the proposed removal of the free car parking after 3pm in Royston town and proposed new fee structure. I believe this will have a negative impact on our town for the following reasons:Firstly, I think the proposals will negatively impact our high street businesses and in particular the unique independent business that we have been lucky enough to open in our town, such as the cheese mongers, butchers, book shop, clothes shops, pet shops, gym and cafes. Excessive parking fees and the removal of our free 3pm parking may make customers rethink visiting our town over other neighbouring towns where there are large supermarkets with free parking available. Whilst we have a Tesco superstore it is arguably too far from the town centre to benefit parking and the small tesco in town has no allocated parking, this would put our town at a disadvantage to other larger nearby towns in North Herts.In addition, it is useful as a parent to know that I can go into Royston for free after 3pm to take my children to the library or other facilities without worrying about parking. This change could have a negative consequence on all community facilities within the town, including the library, community rooms (market hill rooms, complimentary health centre), scout huts and churches. This would be a real shame and, I'm sure, have unintended consequences.Finally, I would like to object on the grounds that there are many residential properties, especially flats above the high street shops who already struggle with parking their cars and this would become an additional, unfair and disproportionate cost to our residents living in the town centre. I hope you will consider my objections and that my voice and the others who also write to you, will help you see the benefits that we feel having free parking after 3pm brings to our small market town and that the parking fees for the rest of the day should remain reasonable in this challenging consumer environment to help our town to thrive. I would like to propose that you consider adopting a different policy on parking for smaller market towns to encourage towns of this size to flourish and keep the free after 3pm policy. Many thanks,Julia</p>
12.01.25 Page 13	Royston resident	<p>Good morning I'm writing in response to the latest article in the Royston crow relating to the parking chargesThe town has been closing shops ten fold since before covid and either not being replaced or being replaced by vape and charity shops. The parking charges put people off of going into the town when they can buy most things they want in Tesco with free parking and why should these small independent shop owners keep suffering and closing. The small independent shops that bring something different and unique into the town are penalised by high rates and the fact that no one can just 'pop' into the town quickly by the removal of any spaces up the high street even for a quick 10 minute slot has massively effected business The decision to increase charges and remove the 'free from 3' scheme should not be decided by people in a room who don't even live in Royston, the residents of the town should have a say so I urge you to put this out to the community. Towns such as Saffron Waldon and Hitchin have lower parking charges and more free spaces and both towns are booming with footfall and unique shops. Royston Town has been dying for years and something needs to be done to preserve it given the number of new housing developments that are planned!Please take this email as my official feedback as a Royston resident Kind regards Nicola</p>
12.01.25	Visitor	Free after three needs to stay if shops are to survive in Royston Sent from my iPhone

12.01.25	Royston resident	<p>I write following the public notification of increased parking charges in Royston.I would ask the Council to consider the impact this would have on our many independent businesses and the elderly community. Increased charges would destroy the already faltering trade that our independent businesses have with local people. My household tries to support the local businesses wherever possible but these are already disadvantaged because they cannot offer free parking like the big supermarkets. It isn't always possible to walk to town and haul the shopping back home. Also when you have a spring clean and take big bags of goods to the charity shop, it would cost you more to drop that off.I attend St Johns parish church and a number of the congregation can no longer manage to walk there and back. It's awful that the Council would penalise church goers for their commitment to faith. A huge number of these people are the same who volunteer for countless charitable groups, keeping the community going, organising events and support groups. They already support the community. I am also sure that extending parking charges now will set precedence for Sunday parking charges by stealth in the future.Increasing parking costs will harm the community in many ways, cutting off Royston from major towns and encouraging youths to vandalise or congregate, littering because they have nothing else to do Please do not make it harder for people to live in Royston. We do not want Royston to become a ghost town or a suburb of North London.Julie</p>
12.01.25	Royston resident	<p>To whom it may concern,I completely disagree with all of your proposals to increase charges for parking around Royston. The town centre is struggling enough as it is and if you do this you will stop the remaining people that do use the town from going in. Including me. I like to shop locally but it's very frustrating to have to pay for parking for an hour when I'm only there for a short period. You've taken away nearly all of the free short stay spaces. I also dislike having to pay for a parking space when I have to visit the doctors too.Although I don't live in town centre, I have friends that do, and I remember looking at properties and the main reasons I didn't buy is because of the lack of parking for town properties and having to pay to park your car over night. With everything else increases in this world, you'd be breaking more people.It's a silly idea and you'd be ruining our town centre for residents and businesses if you do it.Thanks for reading.</p>
12.01.25	Non resident visitor	<p>I wish to raise an objection to the proposed parking charges in Royston. I am a resident of Litlington, Royston is the nearest town. The only public transport from the village is one bus per day which fails to meet the needs of the majority of village residents, and therefore we are dependent on our cars to visit Royston. The town centre has already been destroyed by Tesco where you can park for free & get the majority of your shopping. Many of us want to support local traders in the centre of town and use services such as the dentist, library, dog groomer & gym. The current charges, whilst I don't like them are acceptable with many of us using the post 3pm free parking. The proposal to introduce a flat rate after 3pm will be detrimental to local businesses. I don't believe consideration has been given to the impact on the local traders. Kind regards Rachel</p>
12.01.25	Non resident visitor	<p>Hi Let me thank you firstly for reading my email. I have lived in towns and cities all my life where nothing has been considered on the impact of independent businesses. Royston is a town that is struggling in so many ways , independent shops and owners I have spoken to recently are looking to end tenancies because they are unable to continue with the high rent demand. Thus going forward for these then heightens the extra payment for parking. I, myself came into Royston before Christmas to do and support local business. Unfortunately I was there to early and my parking ticket would of expired before the shops were open.I was able to come back and support our local businesses. Unfortunately some people do not have that privilege of time or money, to waste. I have a micro business of upcycling furniture annd have a stall on the first Saturday of each month. I would be very offended if my clients would not be able to reach out to me or me to them, because of being made to pay extra through parkingRoyston is steeped with so much history and I personally think that putting extra tariffs every where would have a huge impact , not only for traders but also for the folk that rely on " keeping it local". Should we not embrace our small and potential thriving town rather than add on extra costs that will put people off ,especially in these days of shop and support local. Lets look.at advertising further a field than spending money on parking. Let's put Royston back on the map to invite and engage with people from further afield. I am so.supportive of let's enjoy local and strive to advertise and maintain this.I look forward to your reply Kind regards Joanne</p>

12.01.25	Royston resident	Dear Sir/madam,I would simply like to voice my objection to your proposed increase in parking charges, especially the after 3pm flat rate. Life is increasingly becoming more expensive and a pay pay pay society. I have recently moved to the Royston area and was refreshed by the free after 3pm parking. Can you please enlighten me as to where the extra funds you propose to collect will end up?Kind regardsSteven
13.01.25	Non resident visitor	<p>To whom it may concern. With regard to the increase in parking charges I would like it noted that I feel these increases are completely wrong in the case of Royston. I don't understand how you feel that taking away our free after 3 is going to increase daily foot fall. If any thing you are sending people to use out of town shopping areas which provide free parking for 3 hours.You are also penalising those of us that need a doctors, dentist or optitions appointment. I live in a village and really have no option but to drive to my appointments. Using the bus service which runs once an hour is impractical. Using a bike to get to Royston is a case of taking your life in your hands, as we have fast traffic and a major roundabout to contend with to get there. Oh and no where to leave your bike either! If you are ill, who in their right mind would want to cycle or wait around for a bus?By keeping on increasing the carparking fees you are closing Royston. Do you not realise that is why Royston is loosing it's footfall? It's also another reason we don't have new shops opening up in our high street. Surely increasing the footfall would bring you a better revenue by shops opening, people using the car parks and bringing you rent for the premises instead of empty spaces, which bring you nothing.You are also penalising parents from the villages that in the Summer would like their children to use the splash park. With money tight it's hard to find the money to pay for parking for such treats. So far I can see, there is no benifit for Royston by increasing the carpark fees, just more empty shops. We have no infrastructure from the outlying villages, to make them attractive to use as an alternative to driving into Royston. Therefore we feel the need to use our cars.Since retiring my husband and I have been visiting many towns in Norfolk and Suffolk and have been amazed at the low cost of parking in these places, many of which have free parking for anything between 1 and 3 hours. These places have vibrant high streets filled with lively, independent shops, busy cafes and plenty of footfall.Perhaps you need to visit Royston and see what the town is really like. I feel that you are unaware of what we are paying to use the carparks for. Come and speak to our shop keepers and the users of the High Street, then make a decision. I am more than happy to meet you and explain about our situation. I look forward to hearing from you and taking me up on my offer of a guided tour.Yours Christine</p>
13.01.25	Non resident visitor	Dear Sir/Madam,I am writing to express my concerns regarding the proposed increase in parking fees for the car parks in Royston town centre, specifically the consideration to begin charging from 3 PM. As a resident of a nearby village, I rely on driving to Royston due to the lack of safe cycling routes. I actively support local independent businesses and usually plan my visits to coincide with the free parking period starting at 3 PM. The proposed changes will significantly affect my shopping habits, and I fear that, like many others, I may be compelled to alter my purchasing decisions as a consequence. Royston's high street currently lacks the appeal and foot traffic seen in Letchworth and Hitchin, which results in fewer shopping options. Should I be required to pay for parking, I would likely choose to use the park and ride service in Cambridge or shop in another town that offers greater value for parking fees. If I were a business owner, I would question the viability of operating in Royston under these new charges. I strongly urge you to reconsider the proposed parking fee increases. Thank you for your attention to this matter.Sincerely, Danielle
13.01.25	Visitor	Hi, My wife and I are both pensioners and regularly take advantage of the free parking after 3pm in Royston. Making us pay after 3pm will not only have a financial burden on us but also have a affect on our mental health as it will restrict our movements. Yours faithfully Paul

13.01.25	Royston resident	<p>To whom it may concern: I am emailing in response to the proposed car park tariff increases in Royston I am dismayed at not only proposed increases to the current charges but also the addition of charges after 3 pm.Are the council trying to kill off our town centre completely? The town centre is already pretty grim, especially when compared to the likes of Letchworth and Hitchin, with vacant premises and hardly anything but nail bars and barbers. The few decent, mainly independent businesses will be negatively impacted by these changes.Potential customers will simply choose to go elsewhere, to places where they do not have to pay for parking, such as larger supermarkets, avoiding the town centre completely The idea that adding a fee after 3pm will “even out” visitors to the town centre is absolutely preposterous! Who on earth came up with that ludicrous idea?! It will do nothing of the sort and will simply drive visitors away.Please reconsider these ridiculous proposals.I look forward to acknowledgment of my email.Kind regardsLisa</p>
13.01.25	Royston resident	<p>Dear Sir/Madam It has come to my attention recently that the Council is proposing to bring in charging for parking in Royston after 3pm. My objections are as follows:The Road Traffic Act 2004 imposes an explicit duty on local councils to manage their network so as to reduce congestion and disruption. Imposing after 3pm car parking charges in the town centre will encourage people to go to the out of town stores on the edge of the town thus increasing congestion.The Road Traffic Act 2004 says that local authorities need to develop parking strategies that are linked to local objectives and circumstances. A local objective is to increase footfall within the town centre, bringing in after 3pm parking charges will work directly against this objective.The Road Traffic Act 2004 says that local authority strategies need to take account of the needs of all Road users in the area. Pushing more traffic onto the roads to the furthest edge of town, will cause congestion for those using the roads to pass through to the major roads connected to the town.The Road Traffic Act 2004 says that parking strategies cannot be simply for restricting parking, they need to meet the best interests of road users, communities and businesses. Charging for parking after 3pm would definitely have an adverse effect on the businesses within the town centre. It would also have an adverse effect on the community as a whole, pushing residents out of town and away from local coffee shops, classes and meeting places. In a time where people are having to economise, this policy will drive people out of town, harm local shops and make it harder for people to park responsibly and go about their everyday lives.The Road Traffic Act 2004 adds a network management duty which requires local traffic authorities to do all that is reasonably practicable to manage the network effectively to keep traffic moving, increasing parking charges after 3pm will cause people to look elsewhere to park in side roads or shop out of town. Both of which will work against keeping traffic moving smoothly.The residents of Royston appreciate that they are able to park for free within the town centre after 3pm and use this time to do many small errands and spend time in the town. The Council is already paid for much of this parking by Royston First. I believe the Council has responsibilities for traffic movement within the town, and should spend a little of the high level of council tax it receives from residents, on showing them that it is working for the town, not against it.RegardsGill</p>
13.01.25	Royston resident	<p>A further comment on the below- the traffic on garden walk will increase exponentially if there is no free parking in the town hall car park. This will cause chaos for residents and parents at the school. ThanksTessa Sent from my iPhone> On 9 Dec 2024, > Hello,> > I see that you are proposing to remove free parking after 3pm in Royston. This will severely impact an already ailing highstreet. > > Many people pop to the local shops after 3pm following the school pick up. There will be no incentive to do this if free parking is abolished, they will just go to Tesco Extra where they can park for free. Smaller, independent shops will suffer.> > Other small towns such as Buntingford have free parking schemes at peak periods, let alone off peak. It is completely unreasonable that Royston has no or very limited provision for 1 hour - 90min free parking to pop to the shops or appointments.> > Hundreds of houses are being built outside of the town centre with no infrastructure and too far to walk to the shops with children or elderly passengers. Paying for parking will force them to go elsewhere.> > The local shops in Royston are really trying their best but they need the local government to support them. The increase in parking fees will stop footfall and shops will close. > > This is a very disappointing proposal. > > Tessa</p>

13.01.25	Royston resident	<p>If the parking charge after 3pm is brought back, those of us who just want to go into town for a couple of items (to pick up a prescription or buy a loaf of bread for instance and might buy a few other items whilst there) will be penalised for shopping locally. You cannot apply the same rules for Hitchin and Letchworth with Royston as they have a bigger population and therefore a bigger footfall. If you think it wouldn't be fair for Royston parking to be cheaper than Hitchin and Letchworth, they could bring their custom here to Royston. Also, we would be paying the same fee for less shopping options available. For pensioners already on limited funds, free parking after 3pm makes a big difference. Kath</p>
13.01.25	Non resident visitor	<p>Good afternoon I write to object to the proposed car parking changes in Royston. I live in one of the nearby villages (Bassingbourn) and Royston is my nearest town. The town centre has already been negatively affected by free parking available at the Gateway development on the edge of town as well as Tesco. The proposal to not only increase parking charges and get rid of the free after 3pm parking will spell the end for many of the small businesses in the town centre. I use the free after 3pm parking regularly and it is a major consideration when choosing where to shop. There are some lovely small businesses such as The Honest Fig, No 3 and Revolution Records. Letchworth town centre has free parking for an hour, as well as considerably cheaper parking than Royston. I know that budgets are tight, but NHDC should be supporting Royston town centre to develop and improve, rather than driving shoppers away with increased parking charges. With kind regards Kirsty</p>
13.01.25	Local business	<p>Dear North Herts Council, I attended the Community Forum held in Royston on 4 December 2024 where the Parking Tariff Consultation was presented and gave feedback to the councillors in attendance that evening. I found it interesting that it was asked what the views of Royston First were and if they would continue to support the Free After Three scheme and the response from the councillors was that there had been no response / contact from Royston First and in fact they 'only funded £11 000' towards this scheme and that it cost a lot more than this to run. I have copied in Paul Brown from Royston First on this front. I would have thought that NHC would have met with Royston First regarding these proposals prior to the consultation being published. Additionally, there was a comment made that NHC were wanting to make Letchworth, Hitchin and Royston to be the same across the board. My comment to the councillors was that Royston is in no way the same as Letchworth and Hitchin and this was not a reason to increase the parking charges or remove the Free after Three scheme. I may be wrong in the next piece of information, but my recall is that NHC don't have many council run/owned car parks in Letchworth (I believe someone said it was 1) and Hitchin which makes me wonder whether Royston is being targeted as an additional revenue stream for the council in parking charges. Apologies if I am wrong on this - I would like to know how many Council run/owned car parks NHC generate income from in each of those locations. My customers come from many locations and come by foot, train, bus and car. However, many have children, and for practical and safety purposes, use their cars or are from villages where there is not much choice but to come by car. I mentioned at the Community Forum that Herts Lynx buses are hard to come by and for many in the villages who use Royston to shop or run errands, they come by car. Feedback from my customers on the proposed changes: 1. They usually use the Free After Three scheme because it is free. They can pick up their children and pop in to town to do their shopping, see the doctor, use the library without having to worry about sorting out parking or the additional cost of coming in to Royston 2. They asked the questions ' why is North Herts Council hell bent on stopping people from coming in to Royston? I might as well go to big Tesco where parking is free and I can get most things from there'. 3. 'I can park for free in Buntingford - I might just head there instead of Royston'. My feedback as a business owner on the proposed changes: 1. Running costs for small businesses are being increased from April 2025 as a result of the latest budget changes. A further increase in parking charges to be able to park in Royston adds to the cost of running a business in an already challenging time. Raising the parking charges is not supportive of encouraging people to choose to come to Royston and support local businesses. 2. The Princes Mews car park (closest to my business) is already very expensive for more than 2 hours and NHC have yet to make it safe when its dark as you haven't turned the lights on. 3. Councillors are ignoring the need for surrounding villages to use cars. By increasing the charges and taking away the Free After Three scheme, this discourages them from choosing Royston. Once they are in their cars, they can go to Buntingford, Saffron Walden or Cambridge. All outside of the NHC geographic area. 4. Royston businesses and Royston First work really hard to showcase and highlight Royston. This feels like NHC are attempting to undermine this work. 5. Based on the Community forum meeting I attended in December 2024 and my understanding of how many car parks NHC actually generates income from, it would appear that Royston is where you are looking to generate additional income. If this is a misunderstanding from the meeting, I apologise. I really hope that the feedback received from local business and residents in Royston is taken seriously and that this isn't just a tick box exercise. Sincerely, Kelly</p>

13.01.25	Royston resident	Hello,I am writing to express my dismay at the potential removal of the free after 3 parking scheme in Royston. This scheme is invaluable to parents who need to collect children from KJAR. Garden Walk is unbelievably busy during school pick up time, with cars and buses, and this makes it dangerous for all the children walking along there. Without the free after three parking, this problem will be exacerbated and risk to pedestrians will inflate further. I hope the council will be able to come to an acceptable agreement with a third party such as Royston First to try and keep this essential incentive in place for parents Best wishes, Chloë
13.01.25	Non resident visitor	Good Afternoon I'm emailing to express my views and concerns with the proposed changes to the parking prices in the Royston car parks.I schedule any visit to the town to make use of the free after three scheme. This coincides with having the children with me after school where we will visit the library, a coffee shop along with any other shops and errands I may need to run. I also park in the town hall to wait for my child to walk down from St Mary's school, as do many of the parents at this school and KJAR. If charges are going to be introduced, then the pressure of the traffic on the streets down garden walk and along the A10 will increase.If charges are introduced then I can see my use of the town decreasing. So many other towns have free parking for 1 hour - why can't Royston do the same. There are so many empty units in the town, and these will not be attractive to anyone wanting to rent these units if the high street is deserted. I feel this is a short sighted money making scheme, which will kill off the town for good. Please re-consider these parking charges, and please take all the residents views into consideration.Yours faithfullyClaire
13.01.25	Royston resident	Dear NHDC ,We wish to register our disagreement with the proposal for levying charges for post 15.00 parking. As Royston residents , we consider that this will have a disproportionately bad effect on local traders and hence on the town's economy. We urge the reconsideration of this proposal With kind regards,Matthew
13.01.25	Royston resident	Dear Herts council, Royston has been struggling to hold on to a decent high street for a long time- choices by planners and councils have really not assisted the town which was once a thriving place to shop. It seems to be sinking further each year and businesses are closing down all the time. Rather than just applying a standard increase in fees the county council should be looking really hard at how to help Royston to get back on its feet. It's particularly disappointing to see the admission that removing the free after 3pm will affect footfall with little further comment.Regards,Emma
13.01.25	Royston resident	Hello I live in Royston and I find the “free after 3pm” car park scheme is very useful. We many times do shopping or eat in local restaurants after 3 pm. Weekdays we often go to the library & town park after school. I think the scheme is overall good for both residents and local businesses . It won't benefit either if this changes Thank youAlexandra Tsami
13.01.25	Royston resident	Dear Sir/Madam After reading the proposed changes to the parking in Royston town centre I would have objection to these as a resident of the town. I use the free 1hr spaces frequently for short visits with my small child to visit the library. These are most useful but often taken. I use the free after 3 spaces regularly to allow us more time t use local businesses also instead of going to 'big Tesco'. I want to support local businesses not only independents (which will of course be the first to suffer) but also chains which offer good value and also employ local people. These such as Savers, whs smith and boots all will only look at their bottom line thinning and become obsolete to these national companies and close. Going to town is what I would like my child to remember not just walking around a shopping centre or superstore. We also like to make use of the local charity shops and donate items to these when we can. Not possible on the high street this would be less ideal with having to pay for parking to drop items off. Understandably money has to be made but if there are no shops to go to in 2 years time no one will be coming.Regards Hannah
13.01.25	Royston resident	To whom this may concern I have heard that you are looking to terminate the after three free parking in Royston, increase general off-street parking costs, and to introduce Sunday charging for car parks.Please be advised that I strongly object to this and would like you to reconsider. Our town is struggling as it is and increasing parking charges is not the answer.Sincerely Mr Cooper-Smith

13.01.25	Royston resident	I hear that there are plans to remove free parking from Royston town centre!If this is true, why are you intent on destroying local trade and driving business towards out of town shops?This is utter madness when you should be looking for more ways to help high street businesses not make it hardware for them!Free parking Sundays and after 3pm weekdays should be improved not removed! Please tell me these plans are not true?!Regards John
14.01.25	Local school	Please find attached feedback about the proposed car park changes in Royston from St Mary's School. Julia Pearce Executive Headteacher. Copy of Letter attached below
14.01.25	Royston resident	Dear Sir or Madam Please reconsider your proposal to increase charges and to introduce paying to park after 3pm and on Sundays.The town centre used to be a thriving community of regular shoppers and vibrant shops. You are proposing to price customers out of visiting shops, restaurants and coffee shops. This will ultimately lead to people shopping elsewhere and for businesses to close, through lack of customers.These businesses are already struggling, and this will just be the nail in the coffin for many. Personally, I rarely use the town centre now, as I cannot walk far and really miss the 20 minute parking bays up the High Street. The only time I do visit, is when I get free parking after 3 pm, this will also have an impact on which GP surgery I will use. I currently use royston health centre and have to pay to see a doctor, or collect prescriptions. I arranged my day, if possible, to visit after 3 pm, to avoid paying parking fees and to not have the stress of worrying about getting a parking ticket, if my Appointments over ran. Royston is increasing in size, year by year, with all the new houses that are being built, there are fewer and fewer facilities and shops to accommodate them and now you are proposing to make the town centre even more inaccessible to people. Absolutely appalling and badly thought out! Please reconsider!! Yours faithfully Yvonne
14.01.25	Royston resident	I am writing to formally object to the proposed increase in car parking charges for the 2025/26 financial year. These increases are likely to have a negative impact on the small local businesses in Royston who are already having to deal with the effects of the recent budget. Local independent shops are the heart of our high street, and the council should be doing everything they can to promote business enterprise, not destroy or limit it. Thank you for considering my concerns and I hope you take the views of local businesses and people into account when making a final decision. Yours faithfullyPat (Royston resident)
14.01.25	Local business - Chamber of commerce	Dear Sir/Madam I represent Royston Chamber of Commerce, I'm also a local Royston business man employing a number of Royston residents. Any increase in the current parking tariffs will without doubt have a direct impact on the small independent business in the town. In my role as a local accountant, clients have expressed concern at the proposed increases stating that currently a small but noticeable increase in daily takings occurs after the current 3pm free to park period.Businesses are currently faced with ever growing costs and this is very evident with the reduced footfall over the last six months. This proposed increase will be seen as just another attack on business already faced with a national insurance increase and looming recession.We as the Chamber respectfully request you do not increase the parking tariffs and show support of the local traders and residents of this great community.It would also seem that any decision the council comes to will take into account its Climate Change Strategy which, of course, you're willing to ignore if the Bid is willing to fund the shortfall. So like all things in life, your decision is really a financial one, which is understandable. As the Council can have such liquidity in their decision making please add into the mix concerns the business have. Whilst we understand the Council needs to balance its books, the wellbeing of its community, residents, and business need to be brought into the equation. Thank you. Yours faithfully John Froggett - FAIA \royston Chamber of Commerce

14.01.25	Royston resident	<p>Dear Council I have been reflecting on the recent posts on social media triggered by your release of information about possible introduction of parking charges evenings and Sundays as well as a general increase on daily charges. I am lucky to live in easy walking distance of the town centre so rarely need to use the car parks during the day. I have been a resident of Royston since 1990 and have seen significant changes to the town and surrounding villages. I have also visited towns such as Hitchin and Letchworth during that period and feel that Royston is very different not having the layout to allow for any traffic free shopping areas unlike the two aforementioned towns. The growth of population in the town and surrounding villages has not been met with corresponding provision of health, community and retail services. The arrival of the Tesco Extra store with free parking on the edge of town saw alternative choices such as Morrisons leaving the town. I walked through town this morning and was sad to see more shops unoccupied. The lack of choice and range in the town means that people are less likely to spend significant time browsing what is on offer. More likely it is definitive purchases maybe a shirt from Dysons, cheese from the Honest Fig, a novel from Bows Books. So these purchases can be transacted in less than an hour so introducing further discouragement to shops is quickly going to trigger the demise of some more of the already struggling businesses. Instead of killing the town the council should be looking to promote growth and opportunity. Best regards, Ron</p>
14.01.25	Royston resident	<p>To whom this may concern I have heard that you are looking to terminate the after three free parking in Royston, increase general off-street parking costs, and to introduce Sunday charging for car parks. Please be advised that I strongly object to this and would like you to reconsider. Our town is struggling as it is and increasing parking charges is not the answer. Sincerely Miss Cooper-Smith</p>
14.01.25	Royston resident	<p>Dear Sir / Madam I would like to express my concerns and objections with regards to the proposed car parking charges planned for Royston. Proposed Parking Tariff Increases for 2025/26. I wholeheartedly worry about the impact this will have on the businesses in the high street. I visit many independent shops in town such as Merlin Mica, The Honest Fig, The small cafes, Ladds and the charity shops who depend on footfall. I myself am on low income and depend on ways to save money when I can. I use the car parks after 3pm for this reason. One of the main reasons I park after 3pm is to visit Royston Pharmacy to collect medical prescriptions. If charges are enforced after 3pm I will be forced to change my prescriptions to be sent to the Tesco Extra which is already overcrowded and always very busy. Sadly, this will deter me greatly from visiting other business in the high street at the same time. My wife has mobility issues and cannot walk fast. Being able to park for free after 3pm allows us to visit various businesses in the town without having to worry about rushing back to the car. Not having free parking would mean we would have to pay for multiple hours of parking, which we can not afford, so that we have ample time to walk around without fear of parking time running out. People struggling on low incomes will have choice taken away from them and be forced to visit the supermarkets out of town. If parking charges are introduced, I will simply not use the high-street. I hope the council see sense and realise that certain people rely on schemes such as free parking for being able to mix with the local community and to have choice when shopping and using local businesses. The money they will lose from business tax after the high-street disappears will outweigh the extra income from the parking. Mr Darren Colson</p>
14.01.25	Royston resident	<p>Dear Sir/Madam, I don't normally express my opinion about town council matters but having read the proposed changes to parking in Royston, I am baffled. For years, especially since COVID, there has been frequent comment about the decline of our town centre and the businesses that have located there. By charging for parking 7 days a week and after 3pm I'm sure that this will put people going into town completely. It feels like a complete money grab from the council's perspective, which is not acceptable. I would like this email to be added to those being considered and hope that more creative ideas about keeping the town centre alive will make their way to the council's discussion table in the near future. Thankyou for your time, Jane</p>

14.01.25	Royston resident	dear sir or madam.already our town centre has been affected by town halls thiinking car parking is a easy way to raise money hear in royston we have seen the steady demise of our centre over several years and to do away with the three oclock free parking will i believe kill the town completely.We now are down to charity shops tatto hairdressers coffee and food shops.I understand money we pay for parking is used in other north herts towns to make them more inviting why cannot this money if implementad should be used in royston.Having a out of town shoping area we need to think how we can improve our town centre as it is has alot of history. if car parking was free all over the town it would be good for the town and footfall so theirfore making it more likely business to in vest.I hope you will reconsider. Martin
14.01.25	Royston resident	Please do not stop the free after 3 parking in Royston, it encourages people to come into town. By increasing the fees you will just encourage people to park on surrounding streets. The park draws people in during the summer months and is one of the best things you do in Royston. Elizabeth Resident of Royston
14.01.25	Local business	<p>Dear Sir / Madam, Having recently seen the North Herts District Council proposals to increase costs and extend charging hours for parking within Royston town centre, we write to express our extreme concern on the hugely detrimental impact that this will have on retail footfall into the town centre.We have traded in Royston High Street for over 50 years and throughout this time have seen a number of changes introduced by NHDC which have already impacted on the number of people coming into Royston to shop, and this is yet another nail in the coffin for trade in Royston High Street. In our consideration, the introduction of higher and extended parking charges and periods will deter people from coming into Royston at all, when we are already trying to compete with edge of town supermarkets and garden centres, who all have free parking. Instead of showing some support for the High Street businesses by retaining the current levels of charges and free parking hours (or god forbid reduce costs / extend free parking hours !!) NHDC are trying their best to kill the High Street completely. It is clearly obvious to us, and many others besides, that footfall in the High Street is currently at an all time low, and continues and will further continue to fall if your proposals are implemented. Measures such as the planters along teh High Street drove many quick-call shoppers away, and these sort of customers have not returned. As for stating that " introducing a tariff in Royston could result in a reduction in visitor patronage to the town centre after 3.00 pm, but could even out visitors to the town during the day " is simply delusional !! At least the Council acknowledges that the introduction of charges will reduce visitors after three, but whoever dreamt that one up to think people will simply come earlier instead deserves a medal, and has clearly lived outside the real world for too long. !! Local independent shops are the heart of Royston High Street, and for once in our 50 years, it would be pleasing to see NHDC actually trying to actively show some level of support and encouragement to traders to continue to trade in Royston....or perhaps the (not so) long term directive is just the opposite.Trusting your better judgment prevails, and these charges will not be introduced Yours faithfully Yolande Gautrey and Margaret HaysProprietors and Directors</p>
14.01.25	Royston resident	Hello, I am a Royston resident and car driver. I try to keep informed of issues affecting Local Councils and am well aware of the financial constraints that they now find themselves under. The vital services you provide have to be paid for somehow.With that in mind, I wish to broadly support the proposed increases although I will miss the free after 3 scheme but with the lack of increase in the subsidy for this I understand why it cannot continue.Many local business owners also live in the town and I know of one response to your consultation that was posted on social media from an owner who lives less than a 10 minute walk from their shop but chooses to drive in and use the long stay car park all day (they complained that increases to this would add to their overheads). They could always walk into town to open their shop.As I said, the vital services you provide to some of the most vulnerable residents have increased in cost massively over the last few years, this seems like a fair way for us all to contribute. Kind regards, Geoff

Dear Louise Further to the information relating to the Proposed Parking Tariff increases for 2025/26, I would like to raise the following points and lodge my **Objection**.The proposed increases in the tariffs in each car park in Royston will have a detrimental impact on retailers and businesses in the town centre plus owners, workers and residents that have no choice but to travel by car, including those that live in the surrounding villages. Any increase also adds a further burden to residents currently struggling. The Council should be encouraging footfall in the town centre, rather than pushing people online or to go outside the town. For many years I have worked with colleagues to have varied tariffs, not only in separate towns across the district, but also in different car parks within the towns. For example, in Royston Civic Centre car park, the charges were originally lower for the first hour to allow for the fact that Royston Health Centre adjoins the car park and it is unfair for residents to pay high charges when accessing healthcare facilities.The Free After Three scheme has been a huge success over many years for both car users and businesses within the town centre. To introduce a flat fee of £1 will have a massive impact on the viability of the town. It is mentioned that the proposed increase “would not preclude the Council considering applications from the Royston BID or any other organisation from continuing to subsidise after 3 p.m. parking in any of the Royston car parks”. Has consideration been given as to the cost of such a subsidy as, presumably, such a contribution would need to be agreed imminently bearing in mind the short time period between the close of the consultation and the report being submitted for discussion at the Cabinet meeting in February?Most towns within the District have a number of non-owned Council car parks offering lower rates. Some have more free on street parking. The majority of car parks in Royston are Council owned, so do not receive this benefit.Mention is made of “the Council’s intention to introduce alternative methods of payment that will enable visitors to stay longer to help support the vitality of town centres. The replacement of the machines will commence in early 2025”. This has been promoted for some time and many of the machines are constantly faulty, so it will be positive if this can be progressed and consideration given to all users as, currently, paying by certain methods incurs an additional charge.The proposed figure of a “4% inflation increase in parking charges” is not totally accurate. Many of the increases are a far higher percentage, particularly with the uplift rounding up to the nearest 10p.Although not mentioned in the summary of changes, it has been reported in the press that the principle of charging for all car parks on Sundays and during evenings was agreed. This can only have the result of impacting negatively on the evening/night economy. Introducing Sunday charging will affect residents attending Church/Remembrance Services and events that take place on Sundays/Bank Holidays. I strongly object to these increases in parking which I do not feel are appropriate at this very difficult time and particularly in the current climate of hardship for many residents, retailers and businesses. I should be grateful if you would include this email and my objection to the proposed increases in parking, specifically in Royston, as part of the consultation process and submit my views for consideration by the Executive Member, Cabinet and Council. Please ensure my views are presented and recorded at all appropriate meetings, including Cabinet.Many thanks.Yours sincerely Fiona Hill

15.01.25	Visitor	<p>Dear Sir/Madam,I am writing to formally object to the proposed increase in car parking charges for the 2025/26 financial year, as outlined in your recent consultation.As a frequent user of the car parking in Royston, I am deeply concerned about the potential negative impact this increase could have on local high street. The introduction of higher parking tariffs will make myself and others less likely to utilise the local high street and seek alternative options available, such as large supermarkets with free parking. The added cost of parking could lead many individuals to choose these alternatives instead of supporting local businesses, which would directly harm our town’s economy.Additionally, the free parking after 3pm has been a huge draw to the town centre and removing such an incentive will be greatly detrimental to this town. Local independent shops are the heart of our high street, and the council should be actively supporting these businesses and encouraging footfall into the town centre. Local businesses face enough difficulties as it is and the proposed parking fee increases will create financial barriers for customers.This decision also raises broader concerns about the attractiveness of the town for potential new businesses. We already have several long-term vacant units in the town, and this increase in parking costs makes the town centre even less appealing for those looking to invest and open new businesses. High parking charges can be a deterrent, not just for customers, but for prospective entrepreneurs who are looking for a cost-effective and welcoming environment to establish their businesses. The impact of these increased charges could very well discourage new businesses from coming to the town, further contributing to the issue of vacant units and reducing the vitality of the high street.Thank you for taking the time to read this. I look forward to hearing your thoughts on this matter and hope that you will take the views of local high street customers and local businesses into account when making a final decision.</p> <p>Best wishes Katie</p>
----------	---------	---

15.01.25	Local business	<p>As a small independent business that has only recently opened in the town, I am deeply concerned about the potential negative impact this increase could have on both my business and the wider local high street. The introduction of higher parking tariffs would likely deter customers from visiting, especially when there are alternative options available, such as large supermarkets with free parking. The added cost of parking could lead many potential customers to choose these alternatives instead of supporting local businesses, which would directly harm our town’s economy. I would like to draw attention to a specific statement in the proposal: <i>“While introducing a tariff in Royston could result in a reduction in visitor patronage to the town centre after 3pm, this could even out visitors to the town centre during the day thereby supporting local businesses.”</i> How can the Council justify introducing a measure that it acknowledges will reduce visitor patronage after 3pm? This statement seems to overlook the fact that the introduction of these tariffs will ultimately result in fewer visitors, particularly during the important late afternoon and evening hours. For small independent businesses, the ability to attract customers throughout the entire day, including after 3pm, is critical. This change, rather than "evening out" the flow of visitors, could instead push customers away, as they may choose to visit locations with free parking or avoid the town altogether due to the added costs. Additionally, the proposal mentions that the council might consider applications from the Royston BID or other organizations to subsidize parking after 3pm, but this is not a guaranteed solution. Small businesses should not have to rely on external funding to ensure their customers have accessible parking. It seems more appropriate for the Council to focus on measures that actively encourage footfall and directly support local businesses, rather than implementing policies that could drive customers away. The proposed removal of the "free after 3" parking incentive in Royston is particularly worrying, as this scheme has proven to be a valuable draw for shoppers and workers in the area. Its removal could further reduce footfall in the town centre, and the introduction of higher parking charges will only make it less appealing for people to visit, especially when free parking alternatives are available elsewhere. Local independent shops are the heart of our high street, and the council should be actively supporting these businesses and encouraging footfall into the town centre. However, the proposed parking fee increases will do the opposite by creating a financial barrier for customers. As a new business, we are still in the process of building our customer base, and an increase in parking charges could discourage people from visiting, especially during off-peak hours. I urge the council to reconsider these proposed increases and explore other ways to support both the financial needs of the council and the sustainability of local businesses. A more balanced approach would benefit not only business owners but also the residents and visitors who rely on accessible parking options when they come to the town centre. Additionally, I would like to raise concerns about the impact of the proposed parking fee increases on me as a business owner. As I operate in the town centre, I am required to park in one of the long-term car parks, which will see a price increase under the new tariffs. This adds another cost that I, along with many other local business owners, would be forced to absorb. As a small business, every penny counts, and this additional expense further strains my finances, especially as we are still in the early stages of establishing ourselves. The cost of parking for business owners like me is already a significant burden, and the proposed increase only exacerbates this issue. This decision also raises broader concerns about the attractiveness of the town for potential new businesses. We already have several long-term vacant units in the town, and this increase in parking costs makes the town centre even less appealing for those looking to invest and open new businesses. High parking charges can be a deterrent, not just for customers, but for prospective entrepreneurs who are looking for a cost-effective and welcoming environment to establish their businesses. The impact of these increased charges could very well discourage new businesses from coming to the town, further contributing to the issue of vacant units and reducing the vitality of the high street. Thank you for considering my concerns. I look forward to hearing your thoughts on this matter and hope that you will take the views of local businesses into account when making a final decision. Yours sincerely, Linda O’Sullivan The Honest Fig</p>
15.01.25	Royston resident	<p>I am emailing to object to the proposed increase in parking charges in the town centre and the removal of the free after 3 parking. This will only be to the detriment of the business trading in Royston in what is already a hard climate, as they are competing against online companies. We need to encourage people to shop local and by increasing the parking tariffs, this will discourage them! Regards Katie</p>

15.01.25	Royston resident	<p>Dear Sir/Madam,I write with regards to the proposed increased parking charges in Royston from 2025/6. I am a resident in Royston. I make the following points:Tariffs are increasing in Royston and reducing in Letchworth, a town almost double the size; why is our town, which independent shopkeepers already find difficult to trade in (don't take my word for it - read the separate responses you have received), cross-subsidising the rest of the District?The document acknowledges a likely reduction in visitors post-3pm but spuriously hopes for an 'evening out' throughout the day. Are the authors aware that the whole reason for a spike in visitor numbers post-3pm is due to the schools finishing after this time? There is a growing number of businesses at Royston Gateway with free parking who will continue to benefit from this policy - how does this tally with the climate emergency policy or however it has been badged?The consultation document also does not clarify whether or not parking is proposed to remain free on Sundays or not, and this should be clarified as a point of urgency.One final point - I would request that the names & political parties of the district councillors who are in favour vs those voting against this policy be made public at the time of the vote, so that residents can make an informed decision come the time of the next local elections.Kind regardsGeorge</p>
15.01.25	Royston resident	<p>To whom it may concern, I am writing with regard to the proposed changes to parking in Royston. While I do not drive myself, we have friends who come to visit, and we plan to begin driving later this year. As parents of 2 small children, parking charges make a big difference to whether or not we can visit the town regularly, and an increase will also impact friends visiting, who may prefer to meet at home rather than in town. We recently moved to the area and want to be able to support local businesses and spend time in the town as much as possible. Retaining free after 3, as well as cheaper paid parking, would make things like picking up food or essentials quickly in town much more viable; if these changes were made, people are much more likely to shop elsewhere or online, which would damage our town centre massively.Regards Laura</p>
15.01.25 Page 25	Royston resident	<p>Hi ,I am not sure if I have emailed the correct place I got this from a Facebook thread regarding the fees the council are looking to put in place. Towns are already suffering and I think this is only going to make things a whole lot worse. It will only put people off coming into town and the shops will suffer. Its cheaper to buy online or walk which is obviously good for some people but others have not got that choice. Surely by keeping things the way they are is like having half a biscuit than none.Kind RegardsCheryl</p>
15.01.25	Royston resident	<p>Good MorningI am a long term resident of Royston, having lived in the town for over 25 years. I frequent the town centre as often as I can, regularly running through during the evenings and at weekends, as well as frequenting the market and local shops when I can. I wanted to voice my objections regarding the proposed car parking charges for April 2025. Mainly getting rid of the Free after Three scheme which has been in place for a number of years. We are only a small town which relies on footfall to our local shops and businesses. Having good and reasonably priced car parking is essential for these and the introduction of flat rate parking charges after 3pm is just disappointing. I know the free parking after 3pm definitely helps local businesses in the town and I am sure will deter customers from shopping in the town. I know that local businesses are committed to making the town centre experience a positive one and try to encourage footfall and not send residents out of town or online. I am aware that Royston Bid contributed to the funding of the Free after Three scheme, it's just a shame that this cannot be considered going forward. You mention that by not keeping this scheme it could result in a reduction in parking in the town centre after 3pm but it could even out visitors to the town centre during the day, however I think it would just make visitors stay away.I really do hope you do re-consider this change as it will affect so many people in our lovely market town Many thanks Angela</p>
15.01.25	Royston resident	<p>To whom this concerns,I would like to say how disappointed I am at your proposal to start charging for Sunday parking in Royston town.I know there is a large amount of people who go to the different church services within the town who would not be able to still go if they were having to pay to park and would be unable walk/bike instead.The areas which are free to park not in the bays would be full of the residents from flats in town.Plus you are possibly making people to think twice about leaving the car overnight after drinking on a Saturday night if they would come back to a parking fine.Not everyone can walk any distance but like to drive down to have a coffee and a stroll around on a Sunday, you will just push people to other destinations.Please rethink this stupid idea.Tracy</p>

15.01.25	Unknown	Hello,I'd like to voice my objection to the changes in parking charges in Royston.The negative impact it will have on small local businesses will far outweigh the positive impact to the council.Local towns have free parking after 3pm and on Sundays, such as Letchworth and Baldock, so if people need to pop somewhere in a car they will go somewhere more convenient where they don't need to search for change for a machine or download another app and answer multiple questions, which often takes longer than the task itself and is frustrating.This will drive people away from Royston, without the visitors and people buying things from the shops, it will force local businesses to close and the council will lose our on rent and rates from that business In the current climate the council should be doing all it can to boost our town and it's wonderful small businesses, not the opposite Regards,Carly
15.01.25	Royston resident	Hello, I am emailing to strongly object to the proposed changes to parking in Royston I think the change is short sighted and will only result in fewer businesses in a town already containing many vacant units. I understand there are almost certainly primarily financial motives behind this decision but in the long run promoting a thriving town centre will be much more beneficial culturally and financially than a small revenue increase gained by being able to charge more for parking (which is already subsidised by Royston first). The theory that the charge will 'even out' visitors is at best misguided and more likely utterly naive. Owing to the fact people need to have jobs to be able to spend money in Royston a large portion of business is done in these evening hours after peoples working days. I for one can probably count on one hand the number of times I was able to visit Royston during the day. The imposition of a charge to park would only drive me away in the time that I can go when I need to pop in and grab an item rather than encourage me to come earlier. The council would do well to listen to the feedback of the public on this matter who are concerned not only about their pockets but the culture of the town.This idea is another example of the council choosing to disincentivise certain behaviours as an easy short term solution rather than intelligent incentive based solutions, developed in conjunction with local businesses and residents.Thank you for reading this objection. James
15.01.25	Royston resident	Sirs I object to the proposed increase for Civic Centre car parking after 3.00pm from zero to £1. Also, I understand these increases will apply to Sunday parking which is currently free. Robert
15.01.25	Royston resident	I wish to respond to the proposed amendment to car park charges as they relate to Royston I am a car driver but as I live only just over ½ mile out of town I invariably walk. The proposed new charge will therefor not immediately affect me.However the town centre is undoubtedly busier after 3 and it seems that most shops see this effect.Your consultation document says: <i>While introducing a tariff in Royston could result in a reduction in visitor patronage to the town centre after 3pm this could even out visitors to the town centre during the day thereby supporting local businesses.</i> It seems that the affect on visitor numbers is clearly recognised. The suggestion that the charge might even out visitor numbers suggests that the shops are overcrowded after that time and/or that the car parks are full after that time. Neither is true.The withdrawal of 'free after three' would undoubtedly put extra strain on the high street shops.Please advise the likely increase in income to the council of this change and the likely cost in terms of emptying machines at a later hour and checking cars for payment tickets for an extra three hours a day. Please also include the cost of the withdrawal of the BID contribution.Incidentally your document suggests that someone arriving at 2.30pm and intending to stay until 5.30pm would have to pay at the main daytime rate as the reduced rate is said to only apply to arrivals after 3.00. I assume that this is not intended.Mention is made of the <i>Council's intention to introduce alternative methods of payment that will enable visitors to stay longer to help support the vitality of town centres.</i> Would it not be sensible to delay this fundamental change in charging till after the new system is in place, ar introduce it at the same time? What proposals do the Council make to support businesses in the town centre.Please reconsider your proposals.Neil
15.01.25	Non resident visitor	Dear Sir/Madam,I am writing to formally object to the proposed increase in car parking charges for the 2025/26 financial year, as outlined in your recent consultation.As a regular user of the town centre after 3pm, I am deeply concerned about the potential negative impact this increase could have on our local high street and we are risking losing the retailers that we currently have, which is not many as it is.The introduction of higher parking tariffs would most definitely deter me from visiting the town centre, as I am sure it will many others. It also makes the town less attractive for potential new businesses to open, which our town so desperately needs.Thank you for considering my concerns. Yours sincerely Sophie

15.01.25	Royston resident	Dear NHDC, Please do not change or increase the parking charge arrangements for Royston .Our church members, many of whom are elderly and less mobile, use the Town Hall car park on Sundays. This is within manageable walking distance to the church, where we have no car park. It would be a severe blow to these folk if parking charges were to be applied. We hope to rely on your good sense and judgment to help the people of Royston With many thanks, Yours faithfully, Duncan Rodgers Member of Parochial Church Council Judith Rodgers Church Warden, Royston Parish Church
15.01.25	Royston resident	Dear Sir/Madam I strongly object to the plans by North Herts Council to significantly increase parking charges and to effectively remove the Free After Three scheme which is contributed to by Royston First.It is essential that parking tariffs are kept affordable in Royston to protect our businesses and local economy. These changes could have a negative impact on local businesses and visitors and would deter shoppers. Parking fees for business owners are already too expensive and deter new businesses.I personally welcome the Free After Three scheme and usually use this if I need to drive into town to shop, or have limited time. Removing this would severely affect evening trade.Local independent shops should be supported by the council and new business should not be discouraged. Footfall and the feel good factor are essential for the survival of our high street, but there's not much to feel good about at the moment in this country.Having previously been a town councillor I know that these proposals will further reduce the footfall and reduce the patronage in our already struggling high street. Marguerite
15.01.25	Local business	Hi I am emailing on behalf of two shops. Harmony day spa and 1st class tanning and hairdressing.Our customers are important to us and if the cost of parking was reasonable and kept low our customers will keep coming but they have told us if parking charges go up or free after 3pm is cancelled they may have to think about going elsewhere.This would have a damaging effect on all businesses in town not just ours. We need to encourage more people to our town. To keep the local businesses goingRegards Harmony day spa and 1st class tanning and hairdressing
15.01.25	Royston resident	Having read the possibility of an increase to parking charges in Royston, I am not happy with parts of the new proposal. Where as I think an increase to a flat rate of £1 is understandable and probably necessary, I am definitely not in favour of the Free after 3 being cancelled and the charge being the same as the rest of the day. There are many people attending the Granta Surgery who would purposely choose an appointment that fits in with free parking time. This is because many elderly and people with young families, just can't afford to pay the charge. Apart from this, as has been mentioned already in your announcement, this is going to affect the retailers of the Town. Why pay when you can go to Tesco or Marks & Spencer & park free? I also understand that there is a proposal to charge for parking on Sundays. As far as I'm concerned this is really going too far. For many, Sunday's are still a day for prayer as the regular congregations at Royston Parish Church will show. There are 2 services on a Sunday as well as Children's church once a month during the afternoon.Many of the congregation need their cars to get there, either because they are elderly, or because they live out of town.In my mind this proposal is a total disregard of the meaning of Sundays, please don't assume that all the people parking are shoppers. Sundays to many are still holy days.I pray you take this into consideration when coming to your final decision .Regards.Kay

15.01.25	Royston resident	<p>Good afternoon,I am writing with regards to the new proposed parking charges you wish to implement in Royston. Whilst it can appreciated that charges need increase I think the implementation of charging after 3pm would have a massive detrimental effect on the shops in the high street.With the increase in housing in the town, there is more competition for free parking spots which are currently along fish hill. Sometimes I just need to pop into town to pick up a prescription and whilst I am there might pop into a cafe or the sweet shop providing spending in town and keeping the businesses going. I will often do this after 3pm so I can park for free. If I have to pay to parking this won't happen and if I do need to pay after 3 then those additional pennies I spend in the shops will be going in parking.Also to think about putting charges in place for Sunday's for a local town seems absurd. Sunday's are a day for people to go to church, they may be elderly and not local to the church and can't walk there, so to start charging will stop people going. The elderly are already facing struggles with income being cut and prices going up and then you will be making it harder for them to go out to their place of worship. With regards to the schools in town and congestion especially for King James Academy, at the moment parents can park in the town hall car park for free and walk down to meet their kids or have the kids walk to them. This relieves some congestion down Garden Walk, if charges are implemented then parents will just go down Garden Walk to pick up their kids for free causing more congestion!! really think that the main focus on this proposal has been to make the council as much money from parking as possible without thinking of the residents in the towns who are not getting pay rises in-line with inflation are are struggling.Right now the shops in our towns need the residents support as much as possible and this is a sure fire way to kill them off.Kind regardsJenny</p>
15.01.25	Royston resident	<p>Can I ask you to reconsider your proposal to charge for parking in the Town Hall car park Royston on Sundays.It will make life difficult for elderly churchgoers and prove a disincentive to shoppers in the high street. (They can park for free at Tescos)Sheila</p>
15.01.25	Royston resident	<p>Dear Sir/Madam,I formally object to the proposed increase in car parking charges in Royston. It will devastate the small high street that we have. This is not the way forward.Yours faithfully Paula E Davies</p>
15.01.25	Royston resident	<p>I am writing to express my concern regarding proposed changes to the parking charges in Royston. As a member at Royston Parish Church we use the Civic Centre Car Park very regularly on a Sunday and during the week. This is particularly concerning with the proposal to charge for off-peak parking which I assume will include Sundays. We are often at the church on more than one occasion during the day. This is going to mean that all those that have to use the local parking will have to pay parking charges to attend church each week. I trust that you will take into consideration the views of those who depend on parking regularly when attending church. Thank you for considering our views.Yours faithfully Robert and Kim</p>

15.01.25	Local business	<p>To whom it may concern I am writing to strongly object to the increase in parking tariffs together with the decision to cease the free off-peak parking in Royston. As both a resident and business owner in Royston I believe this will have a fundamental impact on local, small businesses in the town centre and will only benefit the larger supermarkets that offer free parking. Royston as a town offers so much potential with lots of character and history and there is a real opportunity to encourage new businesses into the area and provide a much needed boost to the town. By increasing charges on what is already inadequate parking and eliminating the off-peak free parking after 3.00pm, there is less incentive for people to visit the town and therefore decreased footfall which will discourage new businesses from opening. I absolutely disagree with the assessment that customers are more likely to visit the town during the day instead of after 3.00pm. That is ill informed and guesswork at very best. The reason that people visit the town after 3.00pm is because of the free parking. Take that away and people are likely to stay away all together. That is based on feedback from our customers. The viability of ours and many other businesses depends on both local people and people from surrounding areas. If there is better and more affordable parking in surrounding areas, people are likely to go to those places instead. Then there is the fact that we, as business owners, need to park close by for loading, unloading and deliveries during the day. We already pay over £4.00 per day for parking which, for us, equates to more £850 per year. By increasing the charges and by removing the off-peak free parking after 3.00pm that will rise considerably. We are a small business and parking is already an expensive overhead for us. We cannot afford to pay any more on parking. The added expense together with the genius of Rachel Reeves will also mean that we are unlikely to be able to employ anyone which, and I'm sure many businesses feel the same, will also harm the local economy. The budget has been a disaster and I do understand that local government will need to generate additional funds for local services however, please do not let it be at the expense of small businesses and people who cannot afford the additional parking charges. The government said the budget would not impact ordinary working people. We are ordinary working people and it has affected us. Regards Chris</p>
15.01.25	Non resident visitor	<p>To whom it may concern, I write to object to the removal of free parking after 3pm in Royston and other local towns, as this will be disastrous for the town centre businesses. There are so many out of town places to shop locally where parking is free, that this will just drive people away from the town centre. Charges for the car parks in general should be targeted to enable maintenance of the car parks, but certainly no more than absolutely necessary. Those of us living in villages without rail connections have no choice but to drive. Sincerely, Rebecca</p>
15.01.25	Visitor	<p>Dear Sirs I understand that there are proposals to introduce parking charges in Royston on Sundays and after 3pm on weekdays/Saturdays. Sunday would make a huge difference to us as we drive my elderly mother to church. It is difficult for her to walk from her house to church so we tend to drive her to the town hall car park. Parking charges every a Sunday will inevitably stop us from going and being able to take her. I imagine she will not need the only elderly person who will be affected. Charging after 3pm will also stop me taking the children into town after school. We will end up giving business to Tesco rather than the smaller independent retailers such as the book shop, Ladds and the coffee shops. This seems such a pity but it will affect our decision where to shop. I strongly believe that introducing these proposed parking charges is a mistake as it will negatively impact the town's retailers. Yours sincerely Mrs Warenius</p>
15.01.25	Royston resident	<p>I understand there is a proposal under consideration regarding the introduction of car parking charges into Royston. I would like to register our opposition to such a move. Given the clear, recognised fact that there is no unfulfilled demand for car park spaces in the Town on Sundays and that such a move disadvantages church congregations, many of whom are elderly, in their attempts to quietly continue their devotions - the practicality of which frequently requires use of a car in their advancing years. There is not a 'one size fits all' solution for every North Herts Town and I would hope our representatives take this into full and thoughtful consideration, before plunging forward with such drastic, unkind and inappropriate action. I would like to suggest that council members take the opportunity of visiting and seeing for themselves the numbers and natures of individuals attending their own churches, in Royston. Sincerely John & Rosemary Dowling, (Members of the Royston Parish Church Congregation).</p>

15.01.25	Royston resident	Good afternoon,I wish to make it known that I object strongly to have to pay more for parking charges in Royston. It won't be attracting footfall into the town if you start charging again for parking after 3pm. Lots of other places nearby don't pay for parking, like Melbourn. We have few enough small businesses as it is. It would be nicer to have more and they have to park their vans in the car park during the day, so do not want to have to incur more expense.Best wishes,Jennifer
15.01.25	Non resident visitor	Hi there, I often visit Royston for local errands, but will always do this after 3pm to make use of free parking since money is tight.If this gets lifted, I will most likely go elsewhere, or park further out.The proposed changes will no doubt have a negative impact on an already struggling town center, so please re-consider,Astrid
15.01.25	Visitor	It is an absolute disgrace to do away with the after 3pm free parking, you will ruin the small businesses in Royston for your greed, plus other areas you have mentioned. I am very much against this. You are letting Royston become more a dump than it is!!! Where do you think people are going to get the extra money when some are on the bread line! Small businesses in Royston need to thrive.
15.01.25	Royston resident	Dear SirThis is in response to your consultation on proposed changes to parkingtariffs in Royston.I have to say that this strikes me as a poor idea and rather ill thought through. It is evident that the businesses in the town struggle withfootfall and the loss to the Council in terms of business rates if morebusinesses close is likely to be considerable. The Royston BID which hasbeen paying for the free parking "concession" after 3pm did so presumablybecause they had evaluated that the benefit to them of trade after 3.00pm isgreater than the cost of subsidising it. I personally use the car parkfrequently as I am unable now to walk into the town centre, and often chooseto come in after 3.pm. It really does make a difference to when we decide touse the town.I read that part of the rationale is to hit the various climate changetargets by reducing the number of cars coming in, so you really do need tobe clear whether you are trying to reduce the number of cars that come in,in which you are hazarding business viability, or you want to raise revenue,and in which case I would ask why you do not then increase the prices ofseason tickets? This is really a loop since if you do not intend thepenalise season ticket holders you cannot then be serious about meetingclimate change targets. I fail to see you can argue both ways.One thing that is unclear from this, is whether you intend to then chargefor the car park usage on a Sunday, as this is off peak, and as a member ofRoyston Parish Church I do see a good many of our parishioners from all overthe locality use the car parks on a Sunday, and I guess that will put someoff who are just about managing, and all the subsequent impact that has onloneliness and mental wellbeing. Not to mention the incremental costs on aSunday of having parking enforcement.I urge you to think again about the post 3.00pm tariff introduction.I am broadly supportive of the other increases, as long as the machines workeffectively with contactless payments, as the apps are beyond many olderfolk, and the cash does not already permit change, so you are no doubtreceiving the higher tariffs proposed in many cases.Best Reg Bailey
15.01.25	Visitor	Good afternoon,I am against the parking charge, the shops are under enough pressure and if you start charging less people are going to come town. Why change something that works so well and gets people in after the schools are out. It encourages the children in as well. Please reconsider Kinds regards Heather
15.01.25	Royston resident	Good evening,I am writing in response to the recent article in the Royston Crow relating to parking charge increases..Having been a resident of Royston for over 50 years, My wife and I want to register our disgust at the proposal to increase the parking charges, this was a vibrant town with a big variety of shops, this has been decimated over the years, mainly by the introduction of parking charges which has meant a significant reduction in footfall, if these charges are increased and the withdrawal of the free parking after 3pm, this will be another nail in the coffin of Royston High St.All that will be left, will be Vape shops, Tattoo Parlours and Charity shops, therefore an even bigger reduction in footfall, whilst the council needs to get money in, this certainly appears to be a retrograde step to achieve this, all this will do is to force people to shop out of town and online, resulting in a once bustling town, becoming decimated by this increase. The town is increasing in size with services being reduced, shopping, doctors, dentists, to name but a few.Hopefully common sense will prevail and this proposed plan will be dismissed as complete madness.Please register this as an official complaint by myself and my wife.Linda & John

15.01.25	Visitor	To whom it may concern If you remove the free parking after 3pm you are going to make Royston a ghost town. Such a shame for all the traders and businesses. Itvus bad enough now that slot of shops have gone. Karen
15.01.25	Visitor	Dear Sirs I wish to raise a complaint regarding the new proposed tariff charges for the car parks in Royston, in particular the charges applied after 3pm, which are free at the present time.I regularly use the free parking to browse around, and make purchases from the town centre shops. If the proposed charges go ahead, I will no longer be prepared to pay to park in the town centre, and will make my purchases elsewhere or online.I fear that many of the independent shops in Royston will end up having to close down because of this unnecessary action, and I feel certain that many of the local people feel the same way as I do on this subject.Should the proposed car parking charges also come into effect on Sundays and Bank Holidays, you will be driving more people away from our area, especially the elderly and families that attend the local churches on Sunday. I cannot see in any way that the proposals will improve anything in Royston. We want more people to visit here, not be put off by having to pay to park their car after certain times of the day and on Sundays and Bank Holidays.I urge you to seriously reconsider, and put forward a plan that everyone can afford to do, otherwise the town centre will become a ghost town, which nobody wants. Please think of the bigger picture, and the future of Royston.Thank you.Rgds A. Mingay
15.01.25	Royston resident	I would like to add a comment about the above proposal.It was lovely to see so many people attending our 10.30am Sunday service on 12th January at the Parish Church in Royston. I am aware that a number of congregation parked in the car parks close to the church. How would this affect the number of attendees at our church services in the future if you insist on charging for parking in the car parks on a Sunday. Do you not care about this? It is important that we continue to see so many families attending our church, but this may not continue if they are expected to pay for parking on a Sunday.Please reconsider your proposal. Kind regards.Marion
15.01.25 Page 3 of 4	Royston resident	I object to the increase in parking fees. The online market has had a severe effect in the high street and while easy to access, free to park retails parks are popping up this is all making the high street less attractive. The high street not only provides shops but a central hub for the community. Increasing the charge to park and introducing a fee in the afternoon will only reduce the amount of people going into the town, reduce the business and eventually close them. Kind RegardsSamantha
16.01.25	Royston resident	Dear council, Please don't charge on Sundays we rely on parking without charge to attend church. Best wishes,Grace
16.01.25	Royston resident	The fees should remain unchanged. The high street doesn't have much to offer as it stands. Nothing should be done to deter people from coming to the town to shop in the few remaining shops worth visiting. The town hall car park should have some free parking spaces for those people attending the health centre. Julia
16.01.25	Non resident visitor	Hello I'm 43, busy and high up in my career - my work takes me all over the country. My wife and I earn well. We live nearby but have no need to be in the centre of Royston on a daily basis. We lived on Mill Road in Royston for 11 years and bought a house last year in Litlington. We have a large driveway for four cars and no parking issues - and we paid a small fortune for that privilege. At our time in life we have options - In many ways your new tarrifs for parking in the town centre pale into insignificance for hard-working, well-paid people. While I could never plan my day around cheaper parking after 3pm, that removal will be a challenge for those who choose when to arrive in the town. I think your £1 flat rate plan however is completely fair and I can remember parking being free for at least 10-12 years since we moved to this nice town. There are many in our local community who have lower incomes and no viable parking options at all. These are people who I'd like you to identify and make the very best provision you can for. Please make the very best town planning and parking judgements that you can with the budgets you must work with. I think about leveraging access for those to work in the centre of Royston, including the best provisions for older, vulnerable adults. Some people cannot walk 50 metres up the road due to illness or mobility problems... please offer some provision to reach pharmacists or groceries without being over-charged. I'm pretty sure the A10 has to be bypassed and town has reached critical mass in terms of transient traffic. The bypass could offer inner ring road parking provision in the longer-term? This is far longer-term thought which I'm sure many town planners have already considered. Thank you - I'm sure better and more articulate responses have come forward regarding the parking plans - I just wanted to wish you all the best with the work that goes into decision-making. Keep a focus and humility for those who really, really need it! Thank you David

16.01.25	Royston resident	Hi there, I haven't been able to sign the petition regarding the proposed parking for Royston town centre so I've copied my post on reply to a chat on Facebook. Yeah I'd sign too 🙏 it's crazy that they are thinking this as the businesses in Royston rely on locals to keep the doors open we should be able to park free for longer opening up the town centre not shorter times, that would help keep the centre busier and increase footfall for all businesses, the council have their rates income anyway, we should be encouraging more free parking 🙏 I don't imagine my views will change the outcome much but I have lived in Royston for over 40 years and love the town, it's changed a lot in that time obvs but we need to look after the businesses that are in the town to ensure a healthy high street, I do use local shops as much as I can, let's keep them open! Steve
17.01.25	Non resident visitor	<p>We note your planned increases and add the following observations. Royston is not the best or most attractive town in Hertfordshire. It does not offer a sufficiently large assortment of retail outlets and as such offers extremely limited opportunities for people wishing to visit. Because of this we might now only go there once in every 3 months, if the weather is right. It does however have a large quantity of Charity Shops (which should tell you something) and some acceptable eateries. It did once have a good cinema, but the pandemic killed that. As an aside, we feel the attempt to re-open the cinema was too early and doomed to failure. One element in the frequency of our visits, was to park in the free parking after 3.00pm, do some shopping, have a meal, go to the cinema. Now the town has lost all of that revenue. The authority has ripped the heart out of these small towns with limited parking and/or excessive rates (Buntingford is another good example). Any new venture will always struggle at start up because of these policies. The evening parking clearly helps encourage the hospitality trade, something the authority now plans to hobble. How will parking after 3pm be policed? I doubt there will be traffic wardens at work after 17.00? Perhaps you will sub contract the work with all the issues that brings. Frankly, it saddens me to see that local authorities continually fail to learn the lesson of how to encourage rather than kill footfall, which might go some way to explain why for us, Royston is a destination of last resort. If you are thinking we are retailers you are wrong, we are shoppers and want to go places which are interesting with varied opportunities. Saffron Walden is a good example of a good centre, but recent parking increases, have also dampened our enthusiasm to go there as well! The sheds/retail parks do not charge for parking! As our colonial friends say, 'Go figure!'</p> <p>With sadness Chris</p>
17.01.25	Royston resident	I would like to register my complete opposition to the proposals which will see the loss of Free after Three, Sundays and Bank Holidays. The proposals can only serve to negatively impact on the overall commercial and social viability in the town at a time when the population continues to increase without the appropriate infrastructure. Alan
23.01.25	Royston Town Council	Dear Sirs. I have been advised you are looking at introducing after 6 parking fees, and on Sundays and Bank Holidays. May I point out with the greatest of respect, this would be a disaster for Royston. Unlike other North Hertfordshire towns, we have no bus services after 6pm Monday to Saturday, apart from the 16 town bus, which stops at 6.30 PM. In addition we have no services on a Sunday or Bank Holidays. If you introduced parking charges when we have no services, it will damage both the evening. and weekend economy of our town. May I ask for your assurance in the circumstances that no such parking charges will be introduced in our town for the reasons I have outlined in this Email. We as a council have brought this matter to the attention of the county council in our discussions to become a sustainable travel town. I will look forward to your reply. Cllr Mike Harrison Chairman of General Purposes and Highways, Royston Town Council.

24.01.25	Non resident visitor	<p>With reference to the proposed increase in off street parking charges. Insofar as parking around Royston town centre. Any further increase will further reduce the number of people visiting the town centre. Increase in charges has a knock on effect for retailers, the street market, restaurants, other businesses and services. Why would anybody incur the cost of visiting the town centre when they can park free of charge outside the various retailers and services that are available at Royston Gateway. Further exacerbating the parlous state of the town centre. There must be a time when the ever increasing costs imposed on most of the population that work in the productive sector of our economy has the affect, through no fault of their own, of suffering, ever increasing financial hardship. Unlike the non-productive part over economy who receive blanket percentage increases and pensions. They cannot just earn more money to mitigate price increases. The productive sector of our economy is not money tree to be endlessly picked. There must come a time when increases are not passed on. I cannot see any accounts that explain costs, income and profit. Therefore, NHDC officers and members cannot possibly reach a measured decision to justify any increase. Should accounts information be available and show that parking throughout the District actually achieves a net profit, then surely we should be looking at reducing the charges to only cover costs not increasing charges. I do not agree with increasing parking charges. Regards, Yours Sincerely, Gerald</p>
25.01.25	Parish Council	<p>Dear Sir, I wish to state that I consider the proposed charges for parking for Royston Town parking a backward step for a community that has and is suffering from lack of choice within the shopping experience. High Streets generally through out the U.K have been in decline, and Governments have tried to stop the trend. It is important that local representatives now take up the challenge to help re-create their High Street shopping experience. My wife and I came to this area in 2017 and at that time all the High Street banks were present, there was still a shoe shop and a well stocked stationers. If you want the use of gentlemens or ladies hairdressers, charity shops, or opticians you have plenty of choice. There has to be a greater choice of trades. For a shopping district to thrive and survive it has to have a better choice of shops that will attract shoppers, plus a common sense approach to vehicle parking. Sadly there is a complete lack of understanding of how a retail town shopping policy should be approached by both Royston Town Council and North Herts Council. The current proposal is just another way of creating extra revenue for the Councils, no real thought of how this will affect the future of Royston Town as a shopping destination. It is important that first an appropriate shopping policy should be in place to try to increase the footfall of the town and where there are empty shops try to attract national companies that would give the area a better shopping experience. Once that has been achieved, then this proposal could be considered. Bill Dennis - Chairman Barkway Parish Council (50 years working in the retail trade).</p>

06.12.24	Councillor	<p>Good morning, I would like to make the following comments in relation to the proposed parking charge increases, particularly those in Royston. I understand the need to increase parking charges to meet the increase in operating costs, and a 4% inflation linked increase seems reasonable. I think it is important to encourage sustainable travel, particularly to create a better use of space for pedestrians/cyclists in the town centre. I accept that to achieve this must be at the expense of cars, and charges are one way to incentivise that. I understand the historic anomaly around the costs of free after 3. I also understand the argument about wanting to harmonise across the district. It is important to recognise however that Royston is much smaller as a shopping location than Letchworth or Hitchin, and is in closer proximity to Cambridge which as a major city naturally draws people in. I also note that Norton Car Park is retaining its free 2 hour stay limit, which undermines this harmonisation argument somewhat. Royston does not have large supermarket car parks or other private car parks within easy access of the town centre, as other towns do – so there is limited choice for consumers. Much of its footfall comes from surrounding villages, including in South Cambs. Many of these people have no other option but to drive, and may be more likely to go elsewhere instead as a result of a new charge being introduced. I am concerned that the blanket withdrawal of free after 3 across all car parks will have a negative impact on the town centre economy. As the webpage suggests, this will no doubt be mitigated by some dispersal across the day, and some people will choose to walk/cycle instead which should be welcomed. However a proportion will choose to go elsewhere if they cannot park for free, and Royston businesses will lose out. I would like the impact assessment that was done on this to be published before these changes are brought in. A more balanced compromise would be to introduce the new charge in the short stay car parks only, whilst retaining free after 3 in the civic centre and warren car parks. These are on the edges of the town centre – where people who must drive should be encouraged to park. The impact of this variable pricing could then be assessed before considering a wider implementation. Kind regards, Matt Cllr. <i>Matt Barnes (Liberal Democrats) Royston Meridian ward – North Herts Council</i></p>
----------	------------	--

14.01.25	General	<p>Dear Sir / Madam RE: Objection to Proposed Car Parking Charges Increase I am writing to formally object to the proposed increase in car parking charges for the 2025/2026 financial year, as outlines in your recent consultation. Please see my objections in bold italics below To apply a 4% inflationary increase to all tariffs across all council operated car parks in Baldock, Hitchin, Letchworth, Royston and Knebworth rounded up to the nearest 10p with the exception of the free 0-2 hour tariff at the Norton Common car parks in Letchworth to facilitate users of the common and being out of centre car parks. This 4% increase is reflective of general inflation over the 2 year period and is still lower than the inflationary increases on public transport. <i>The charges are already quite restrictive to people's budget, increasing the charges further will only make it more financially stressful for attending Dr appointments or using one of our many great local shops. Other towns have free parking in areas which I find a great incentive and visit on a semi-regular basis because of this (Buntingford, Melbourn to name 2 very local albeit different Councils)</i> To increase the on-street tariffs in Market Hill Royston to bring the one hour tariff in line with the Royston off street car parks and to apply the 4% inflationary increase to the 2 hour tariff. <i>The charges are already quite restrictive to people's budget, increasing the charges further will only make it more financially stressful for attending Dr appointments or using one of our many great local shops. Other towns have free parking in areas which I find a great incentive and visit on a semi-regular basis because of this.</i> To retain an off-peak incentive in Royston with the introduction of a flat rate tariff after 3pm across all car parks including the on- street tariffs in Market Hill. Whilst free parking has been provided via a subsidy from other sources since 2012, this subsidy has not had an inflationary increase and is much lower than the lost income/ fair proportion of the car park costs. So, it has been reviewed to accord with the Council's agreed policy to implement subsidy and incentive parking schemes on a break-even approach. <i>An increase in parking charges is likely to discourage people from visiting Royston, especially during off-peak hours. I thought the free after 3 was a great invention for our town, alleviating school parents blocking up the roads near schools and causing a hazard to all pedestrians. Less stressful all round. It also has been the time that I will make appointments for if I can or pop to the shops after picking my grandchildren up from school. I'm unlikely to do this if I have to pay to park for a short stop. None of this is good for our town.</i> While introducing a tariff in Royston could result in a reduction in visitor patronage to the town centre after 3pm this could even out visitors to the town centre during the day thereby supporting local businesses. This would not preclude the Council considering applications from the Royston BID or any other organisation from continuing to subsidise after 3pm parking in any of the Royston car parks. <i>I don't understand how this is a good thing to do to our town ! We need to further encourage visitors and locals to come to town and buy from our shops and local services.</i> The same model has been applied for the off-street incentive across all three towns – where the flat rate after 3pm following the 4% inflationary increase is 10p more than the 1-hour tariff. The proposals are as follows:For Royston – introducing a £1.00 flat rate across all car parks <i>An increase in parking charges is likely to discourage people from visiting Royston, especially during off-peak hours. I thought the free after 3 was a great invention for our town, alleviating school parents blocking up the roads near schools and causing a hazard to all pedestrians. Less stressful all round. It also has been the time that I will make appointments for if I can or pop to the shops after picking my grandchildren up from school. I'm unlikely to do this if I have to pay to park for a short stop. None of this is good for our town.</i> I'm looking forward to hearing from you on the above. I really would hate for our local businesses to have to close down due to something like this. I feel we should be reducing parking fees & times, not increasing them to keep our town going. Use it or lose it as they say. Lisa</p>
15.01.25	General	<p>I can't see a reference to it in your report, but I understand that the charges are to include Sundays as well. If this is so, then I see this as a backward step and discriminatory. As an elderly person with mobility problems, Sunday is the only day when I am able to come down to the town centre for its various facilities without having to cope with how to work the parking machines. Please reconsider.BS</p>

15.01.25	Hitchin resident	<p>Please don't charge for parking on Sundays I don't object to paying when attending church on Wednesday but not Sundays and surely this would also impact worshippers for St Mary's in Hitchin.Please reconsider this.Heather Allen.</p>
----------	------------------	--



13 January 2025

Re: Impact of Proposed Off-street Parking Tariffs for 2025/2026

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing to express concerns regarding the proposed changes to off-street parking tariffs, as outlined on the North Herts Council website: <https://www.north-herts.gov.uk/street-parking-tariffs>.

While we acknowledge the arguments presented by local businesses, we believe it is equally important to highlight the potential impact of these changes on local schools, including ours.

Currently, our school has limited parking facilities for parents. To mitigate congestion, we advise parents to use the Town Hall car park, which benefits from the "free after 3:00 pm" policy. Removing this provision will likely result in:

1. **Increased congestion in our school car park**, as parents circle to find spaces. This poses a safety risk to children due to the heightened volume of traffic.
2. **Traffic build-up on the A10**, as vehicles queue to access the school during peak times.

Additionally, our car park is already misused by individuals seeking to avoid parking tariffs. The removal of the "free after three" policy would exacerbate this issue, further straining our limited parking capacity.



DoWAT



A member of The Diocese of Westminster Academy Trust, Vaughan House, 46 Francis Street, London, SW1P 1QN
Registered in England and Wales (company number 7944160)

In light of these concerns, we kindly urge you to retain the "free after three" policy, which plays a crucial role in supporting safe and efficient access for parents and reducing traffic-related risks to children.

Thank you for considering this matter. We would be happy to discuss our concerns further if needed.

Julia Pearce
Executive Headteacher

Benjamin Timms

Ben Timms
Chair of Governors



DoWAT



A member of The Diocese of Westminster Academy Trust, Vaughan House, 46 Francis Street, London, SW1P 1QN
Registered in England and Wales (company number 7944160)

