



NORTH HERTFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

26 Jun 2023

Our Ref Hitchin Area Forum/ 4 Jul 2023
Contact. Community & Partnerships
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To: Members of the Committee: Councillor Ian Albert (Chair), Councillor Clare Billing (Vice-Chair), Councillor Raj Bhakar, Councillor Clare Billing, Councillor Val Bryant, Councillor Sam Collins, Councillor Elizabeth Dennis, Councillor James Denselow, Councillor Keith Hoskins MBE, Councillor Chris Lucas, Councillor Nigel Mason, Councillor Richard Thake, Councillor Dave Winstanley and Councillor Daniel Wright-Mason

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN OF A

MEETING OF THE HITCHIN AREA FORUM

to be held in the

**ST. JOHN'S COMMUNITY CENTRE, ST. JOHN'S ROAD,
HITCHIN, SG4 9JP**

On

TUESDAY, 4TH JULY, 2023 AT 7.30 PM

Yours sincerely,

Jeanette Thompson
Service Director – Legal and Community

****MEMBERS PLEASE ENSURE THAT YOU DOWNLOAD ALL AGENDAS AND REPORTS VIA THE MOD.GOV APPLICATION ON YOUR TABLET BEFORE ATTENDING THE MEETING****

Agenda **Part I**

Item		Page
1.	APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE	
2.	CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS Members are reminded that any declarations of interest in respect of any business set out in the agenda, should be declared as either a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest or Declarable Interest and are required to notify the Chair of the nature of any interest declared at the commencement of the relevant item on the agenda. Members declaring a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest must withdraw from the meeting for the duration of the item. Members declaring a Declarable Interest, wishing to exercise a 'Councillor Speaking Right', must declare this at the same time as the interest, move to the public area before speaking to the item and then must leave the room before the debate and vote.	
3.	TOWN TALK Presentation from North Herts Council's Community Safety Team Leader on vandalism in open spaces and allotments. Followed by Q&A.	
4.	PUBLIC PARTICIPATION To consider community grant applications for recommendation to the Executive Member for Community and Partnerships.	
5.	GRANTS & COMMUNITY UPDATE To provide the Area Forum with an update to ensure Members are kept informed of the work of the Community and Partnership Team.	(Pages 3 - 12)
6.	HITCHIN BID TOWN CENTRE - UPDATE To receive a verbal update from the Hitchin BID manager on their work in Hitchin town centre.	
7.	PROPOSED OFF-STREET CAR PARKING TARIFFS FOR 2023/24: CONSULTATION To seek the Area Forum's comments on proposed off-street car parking tariff increases for 2023/24.	(Pages 13 - 22)
8.	WARD MATTERS AND OUTSIDE ORGANISATIONS To receive any verbal reports from Members and members of the public regarding Ward matters and Outside Organisations.	
9.	FUTURE AREA FORUMS To discuss topics for future meetings and agree whether winter meetings should be either hybrid or virtual.	

REPORT (FOR RECOMMENDATION & NOTING BY AREA FORUM)

HITCHIN AREA FORUM
DATE 4 JULY 2023

*PART 1 – PUBLIC DOCUMENT

SERVICE DIRECTORATE: LEGAL & COMMUNITY

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 To advise the Area Forum on the current expenditure and balances of the Community Grant budget.
- 1.2 To bring to the Forum's attention details of recent requests received for Community grant funding, made by community groups and local organisations.
- 1.3 To enable Forum Members to make recommendations to the Executive Member for Community & Partnerships on grant applications.
- 1.4 To advise the Forum of the activities and schemes with which Community & Partnerships officers have been involved in and some important community-based activities that will take place during the next few months.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1. Considers and notes the information within this report.
- 2.2. Makes recommendations to the Executive Member for Community & Partnerships on the grant applications detailed below.
- 2.3. Hitchin BID - £2,000 towards replacing the Hitchin town centre Christmas lights infrastructure.

3. BACKGROUND/ RELEVANT CONSIDERATIONS

- 3.1 The community grant base budget for Hitchin Area Forum 2023/24 is £11,000.
- 3.2 The grant budget carried over from 2022/23 is £3,705.
- 3.3 The budget available for community grants for the Hitchin area stands at **£14,705**.

4. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 Following the decision of Full Council on 18 April 2023, an Area Forum shall consider applications for community grants in its area and make recommendations to the Executive Member for Community & Partnerships on them. The Executive Member has delegated authority to make these Executive decisions under section 14.6.8(b)((ii)A 5 of the constitution, in consultation with the Service Director: Legal & Community. That decision will be subject to a 5 clear working day call-in period, following publication in the Members Information Service (MIS) and on the Council's website.
- 4.2 Other issues raised in this report are for information and noting and therefore no direct legal implications arise.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 As outlined in Appendix 1 and under item 3.3 the Community Grant budget available is **£14,705**.
- 5.2 If the application outlined in Appendix 2 is recommended, there would be **£12,705** available for Community Grants for the remainder of the 23-24 financial year.

6. RISK IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 There are no relevant risk entries that have been recorded on Pentana Risk, the Council's performance and risk system. Individual events should have their own risk assessments in place to mitigate any health and safety issues. Whenever a request for grant funding for equipment is received, the recipient of the funding will be advised to obtain insurance for the item to avoid a repeat request for funding in the event of the equipment being stolen or damaged. There are no pertinent risk implications for the Authority associated with any items within this report

7. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 In line with the Public Sector Equality Duty, public bodies must, in the exercise of their functions, give due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation, to advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between those who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- 7.2 Community Grant funds are awarded to community groups that clearly demonstrate positive impact on the community and wider environment. The projects outlined in this report seek to advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations.

8. SOCIAL VALUE IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 The Social Value Act and "go local" policy do not apply to the matters contained within this report, as there are no recommendations on procurement.

9. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 There are no known Environmental impacts or requirements that apply to this report.

10. HUMAN RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

10. The activities details of the Community & Partnerships team are covered by existing budgets.

11. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 11.1 Terms of Reference for Area Forums, Section 9 of Council Constitution updated May 2023.
- 11.2 Community grants Criteria Policy May 2023.

12. APPENDICES

- 12.1 Appendix 1. Hitchin Community Grant Budget 23-24
- 12.2 Appendix 2. Hitchin BID
- 12.3 Appendix 3. Community Updates

13. CONTACT OFFICERS

13.1 Author

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HITCHIN AREA FORUM BUDGET 2023/24

SUMMARY/ TOTALS	Funding	Allocated	Spent	Outstanding	Unallocated Budget				
<u>Budget brought forward from 2022/23</u>	£5,096	£1,391	£1,391	£0	£3,705				
<u>Budget 2023/24</u>	£11,000	£0	£0	£0	£11,000				
Total	£16,096	£1,391	£1,391	£0	£14,705				

	Funding		Project	Allocated	Date	Spent	Outstanding	Unallocated	
Funds Brought Forward from 2022/23	£5,096		Buzzworks	£932	28-Mar-23	£932	£0		
			Friends of Whitehill School	£459	28-Mar-23	£459	£0		
Total	£5,096			£1,391		£1,391	£0	£3,705	

	Funding		Project	Allocated	Date Allocated	Spent	Outstanding	Unallocated Budget	Comments
2023/24 Base Budget	£11,000						£0		
Total	£11,000			£0		£0	£0	£11,000	

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Appendix 2 – North Herts 50 plus

=Document Control:

Version	Issue Date	Changes
1.0	NA	First Draft (BE)

Reference	5105			
Name of Organisation	Hitchin BID			
Organisation Type	Business Improvement District			
Ward	Hitchin			
Project Type	Christmas lights infrastructure in the town centre.			
Green option considered?				
NHC Councillor involvement that may constitute a conflict of interest	Cllr Hoskins is a BID representative.			
Previous financial support within six years	None			
Documentation reviewed and approved*	Safeguarding	No – awaiting robust safeguarding policy	Accounts	Yes
	Demonstrates clear governance	Yes		
Total applied for	£2,000	Total project cost	£10,690	
Officer Summary				
<p>Hitchin BID would like funding towards the cost of replacement Christmas lights infrastructure in the town centre that failed testing. With industry standard infrastructure in the town centre Christmas lights display in Hitchin town centre will be possible, and ensure the infrastructure is safe for many years to come.</p> <p>The lights are enjoyed by 1000s of visitors each year and play a vital role in encouraging shoppers and sustaining footfall.</p>				

*Funding will only be released on receipt and approval of all supporting documentation

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Districtwide Community Updates
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Co-ordinating various local and district wide Network Groups such as Youth Action, Food Provision, Arts and Culture and Green and Growing Group.• A Wellbeing networking group has been established – first meeting July 19th.• Coordinating a project for the Cooperative Council’s Innovation Network (CCIN) around how Arts & Culture can improve community cohesion and encourage vibrant town centres.• Continuing to facilitate NHC Councillors' Community Surgeries.• Sharing and disseminating information on social media and to mailing lists, keeping in touch with the community, voluntary, statutory and non-statutory agencies.• Coordinating voluntary support response to Asylum Seekers based in North Herts.• Working in partnership with the ground maintenance contractor John O’Conner, we’re aiming for ‘bee friendly’ status for Letchworth, and if successful will roll out to other towns in the district ‘Bee’ part of it! North Herts Council (north-herts.gov.uk)• New Community Partnership Officer covering Baldock starting 10th July.
Area Community Updates
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Facilitating a partnership project between Waste Not, Want Not and Keystage Housing to provide a community garden at the Lord Lister Hotel in Hitchin.• Hitchin Festival – July• Hitchin Creative Day at Market Place – July 1st• The first day of the Hitchin Art Trail – July 1st• Chalking Churchgate at the Churchgate Shopping centre – July 1st• The World of Peter Rabbit™ Storytime Trail at North Herts Museum• Hitchin Eco Day – July 15th• Youth Showcase 2023 - September 30th• Afro-Carib Culture Fest – Oct 7th• 25th Anniversary of North Herts Minority Forum event Westmill Community Centre - Oct

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HITCHIN AREA FORUM

4 July 2023

*PART 1 – PUBLIC DOCUMENT

TITLE OF REPORT: PROPOSED OFF-STREET CAR PARKING TARIFFS FOR 2023/24: CONSULTATION

INFORMATION NOTE OF THE STRATEGIC INFRASTRUCTURE & PROJECTS MANAGER

EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR PLANNING & TRANSPORT: COUNCILLOR RUTH BROWN

1. SUMMARY

- 1.1 That the Area Forum Members provide their comment on the proposed off-street car park tariffs for 2023/24 as set out in Tables 1 to 5 at Appendix A
- 1.2 To enable Forum Members to provide their comments on the proposed off-street car park tariffs to the Executive Member and Deputy for Planning and Transport.

2. STEPS TO DATE

- 2.1 As per the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy, the Executive Member and Deputy for Planning and Transport have been involved in discussions and selection of the proposed tariff increases for 2023/24.
- 2.2 The Executive Member and Deputy have requested that the Area Forums and key organisations (i.e. the Royston Town Council, Knebworth Parish Council, and the Hitchin, Letchworth and Royston BIDs), are informed and invited to offer their comments on the proposed tariff increases as set out in Appendix A in advance of a report being taken to Cabinet.
- 2.3 Consultation on the proposed off-street parking tariff increases will take place with the Area Forums and key organisations over June and July. Comments received will inform the Officers report to Cabinet in September for their consideration and agreement.

3. INFORMATION TO NOTE

- 3.1 The Council's approved Medium-Term Financial Strategy for 2021-26, sets an annual budget assumption that the Council should increase parking fees and charges annually by 2%. It makes it clear that parking charge levels are mainly set to manage demand and are reflective of the cost of alternative parking locations. The budget estimates for 2023/24 include the expectation that income from parking will increase by 2%. Any variance from this would be reported through the budget monitoring process.
- 3.2 Paragraph 5.6.30 of the Council's Constitution, states '*it is for cabinet to determine charges for car parking*'. Comments received from the Area Forums and key organisations will be

collated and reported to the Executive Member and Deputy and will inform the Officers report to Cabinet in September.

3.3 Parking Tariffs were last increased by Cabinet in September 2022 for 2022/23, which were implemented on 1st November 2022.

3.4 The proposals for 2022/23 included:

- Achieving most of the target through applying a 10p increase to the one hour tariff bands across all off-street car parks in Hitchin, Letchworth, Royston and Knebworth. (with the exception of Baldock, as Baldock only has a 3hr and all day tariff band)
- Retaining all other tariff bands as per the 2021/22 prices across all car parks.
- Not increasing the cost of Season Tickets or Business Permits due to a reduction in the take up of these permits with the change in employer habits with more people continuing to work from home and commuting into their office on certain days.
- Retaining the off-peak incentives after 3pm in Hitchin and Royston. In Hitchin this included a flat rate irrespective of whether visitors park for one or more hours after 3pm in the short stay and long stay car parks. In Royston the 'free after 3pm' incentive is currently subsidised by an annual contribution from Royston First BID, Royston Area Committee and County Councillor Hertfordshire Locality Budgets to the value of £11k on the total income estimate.

3.5 In order to enable local businesses to further recover from the pandemic it was previously agreed that the Council would delay the inflationary tariff increases for 2022/23 until later in the year. The same rationale has been applied to this financial year given the increases in energy prices and overall cost of living. Officers are therefore planning for implementation during the latter part of 2023/2024, with the proposed tariffs operational into 2024/25 (i.e. from November 2023 to Sept 2024).

3.6 The proposed 2% inflationary uplift for 2023/24 is estimated to increase annual income by £39,500. The actual impact on income from the changes to tariffs will depend on the level of demand for parking. Transaction data over the 12 month period April 2022 to the end of March 2023 has been analysed to estimate the impact of adjusting individual tariffs.

3.7 The following rationale has been applied when considering the proposed tariff increases for 2023/24:

- To continue to support the economic vitality of the town centres by encouraging people to stay longer by increasing the one hour tariff band by a nominal 10p, thereby further reducing the gap between the one hour and two hour tariffs, and by retaining the after 3pm off-peak incentive in all Hitchin and Royston car parks.
- To review and rationalize the 5p tariffs across all car parks in response to complaints received from the public about machines not always accepting 5p coins. The replacement of the machines, which is due to commence later this financial year, will rectify this issue (see para 3.8).
- To adopt a consistent approach across all car parks and harmonize tariffs where possible within each town whilst respecting their separate identities.

3.8 The longer term aim is to set car parking tariffs that support the achievement of modal shift away from private car use in seeking to reduce carbon emissions and supporting more sustainable initiatives as set out in the Council's Climate Change Strategy (2021-2026) . It

is also the Council's intention to introduce alternative methods of payment that will enable visitors to stay longer including moving towards more cashless payment options to help support the vitality of town centres. This work has commenced and will be implemented over the next 18 months.

- 3.9 Rounding the 5p tariffs up across all car parks in addition to the proposed 10p one hour tariff increase would increase the overall parking revenue by 2.4%. This is slightly more (equivalent to additional income of around £6,800) than the budget expectation of 2%, based on the current composition of demand for each tariff. This compares to an estimated 2.1% increase from applying the 10p one hour tariff increase across all car parks (around £1,200 additional income).
- 3.10 The proposed 2023/24 off-street tariff increases for the four towns and Knebworth are set out in Tables 1-5 at appendix A. In summary these proposals include:
- (i) Applying a further 10p increase to the one hour tariff bands across all Council operated off-street car parks in Hitchin, Letchworth and Royston including the after 3pm one hour tariff band in all Hitchin car parks.
 - (ii) Increasing the 0-2 hour tariff in the Lairage MSCP by 5p – i.e. from £1.25 to £1.30 to align with the one hour tariff band in the other long stay Hitchin car parks of Bancroft and Woodside.
 - (iii) Increasing the half hour tariff by 10p in Knebworth from 30p to 40p but retaining the one hour tariff.
 - (iv) Rationalizing all the 5p tariffs across all car parks to facilitate usage of the machines, has resulted in the majority of the tariffs increasing by 5p, with some reductions to the all day tariff in the Letchworth long stay car parks, the two and four hour tariff in the Letchworth Town Hall short stay car park, and to the three hour tariff in the Royston Princes Mews car park.
 - (v) In Knebworth, given the smaller size of the high street and in seeking to encourage visitors to stay longer to support the local businesses, the 5p tariff has been removed, thereby reducing the two, three and four hour tariffs by 5p.
 - (vi) Retaining the off-peak incentive after 3pm in Royston, where the subsidised full 'free after 3pm' policy in all Royston car parks will be retained until such time as this policy is reviewed, such as in light of the Hertfordshire County Council Sustainable Travel Town Initiative¹.
 - (vii) Retaining all other tariff bands as per the 2021/22 prices (unaltered in 2022/23) across all car parks.

4. NEXT STEPS

- 4.1 The Area Forum notes the content of the report.
- 4.2 The Area Forum provide their comments on the proposed off-street car park tariffs for 2023/24 as set out in Tables 1 to 5 at Appendix A

¹ The HCC Sustainable Travel Town Initiative is a concept being promoted by HCC through their LTP4 which seeks to promote more active and sustainable modes of travel and includes implementing measures to reduce car travel.

- 4.3 Officers will collate and report all comments to the Executive Member and Deputy for Planning and Transport to be taken into consideration when preparing the report for Cabinet in September and making recommendations on the proposed off street parking tariffs for 2023/24.

5. **APPENDICES**

- 5.1 Appendix A: Proposed 2023/2024 Tariffs for NHC Off-Street Managed Car Parks

6. **CONTACT OFFICERS**

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7. **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

- 7.1 North Hertfordshire District Council Parking Strategy 2019 - 2031(adopted January 2019)
<https://www.north-herts.gov.uk/home/parking/parking-strategy>

- 7.2 Appendix A – North Herts Council Climate Change Strategy: Proposed Actions 2021-2026 (adopted March 2021) [NHDC-294 NHDC Climate change Strategy 21-26 Appendix A.pdf \(north-herts.gov.uk\)](#)

Proposed 2023/2024 Parking Tariffs for North Herts Council Off-Street Managed Car Parks

[Note: Purple font shows proposed tariff changes as set out in para 3.10 of the Attached Report: Hitchin Area Forum 4 July 2023: Proposed Off-Street Car Parking Tariffs for 2023/24 - consultation]

Table 1 – Hitchin

Car Park		Duration / hours	2022/2023 Tariffs	2023/24 Proposed Tariff changes
Bancroft	Standard tariffs	1	£1.20	£1.30
		2	£2.40	£2.40
		3	£3.10	£3.10
		Over 3hrs	£5.15	£5.20
	Post 3pm Tariffs	Flat Rate	£1.30	£1.40
Biggin Lane	Standard tariffs	1	£1.40	£1.50
		2	£2.60	£2.60
		3	£4.15	£4.20
		4	£5.70	£5.70
	Post 3pm Tariffs	Flat Rate	£1.50	£1.60
Christchurch	Standard tariffs	1	£1.40	£1.50
		2	£2.60	£2.60
		3	£4.15	£4.20
		4	£5.70	£5.70
	Post 3pm Tariffs	Flat rate	£1.50	£1.60
Lairage MSCP		0-2	£1.25	£1.30
		3	£2.30	£2.30
		Over 3 Hrs	£4.55	£4.60
	Post 3pm Tariffs	Flat Rate	£1.30	£1.40

Car Park		Duration / hours	2022/2023 Tariffs	2023/24 Proposed Tariff changes
Portmill East	Standard tariffs	1	£1.40	£1.50
		2	£2.60	£2.60
		3	£4.15	£4.20
		4	£5.70	£5.70
	Post 3pm Tariffs	Flat Rate	£1.50	£1.60
Portmill West	Standard tariffs	1	£1.40	£1.50
		2	£2.60	£2.60
		3	£4.15	£4.20
		4	£5.70	£5.70
	Post 3pm Tariffs	Flat rate	£1.50	£1.60
St Mary's Square	Standard tariffs	1	£1.40	£1.50
		2	£2.60	£2.60
		3	£4.15	£4.20
		4	£5.70	£5.70
	Post 3pm Tariffs	Flat rate	£1.50	£1.60
Woodside	Standard tariffs	1	£1.20	£1.30
		2	£2.40	£2.40
		3	£3.10	£3.10
		Over 3hrs	£5.15	£5.20
	Post 3pm Tariffs	Flat Rate	£1.30	£1.40

Table 2 - Letchworth

Car Park		Duration / hours	2022/2023 Tariffs	2023/24 Proposed Tariff changes
Hillshott	Standard tariffs	1	£0.80	£0.90
		2	£1.55	£1.60
		3	£2.50	£2.50
		Over 3hrs	£5.05	£5.00

Car Park		Duration / hours	2022/2023 Tariffs	2023/24 Proposed Tariff changes
Garden Square MSCP Short Stay	Standard tariffs	1	£0.80	£0.90
		2	£1.55	£1.60
		3	£2.50	£2.50
		4	£4.55	£4.60
Garden Square MSCP Long Stay	Standard tariffs	1	£0.80	£0.90
		2	£1.55	£1.60
		3	£2.50	£2.50
		Over 3hs	£5.05	£5.00
Norton Common Bowling Club	Standard tariffs	2	£0.00	£0.00
		4	£1.75	£1.80
		5	£4.85	£4.90
Norton Common Swimming Pool	Standard tariffs	2	£0.00	£0.00
		4	£1.75	£1.80
		5	£4.85	£4.90
Letchworth Town Hall	Standard tariffs	1	£1.20	£1.30
		2	£2.05	£2.00
		3	£3.30	£3.30
		4	£5.05	£5.00

Table 3 Royston

Car Park		Duration / hours	2022/2023 Tariffs	2023/24 Proposed Tariff changes
Angel Pavement	Standard tariffs	1	£0.70	£0.80
		2	£1.55	£1.60
		3	£3.85	£3.90
	Post 3pm Tariffs	1	£0.00	£0.00
		2	£0.00	£0.00
		3	£0.00	£0.00

Car Park		Duration / hours	2022/2023 Tariffs	2023/24 Proposed Tariff changes
Civic Centre	Standard tariffs	1	£0.70	£0.80
		2	£0.85	£0.90
		3	£1.15	£1.20
		Over 3hrs	£3.50	£3.50
	Post 3pm Tariffs	1	£0.00	£0.00
		2	£0.00	£0.00
		3	£0.00	£0.00
Market Place	Standard tariffs	1	£0.70	£0.80
		2	£1.55	£1.60
		3	£3.85	£3.90
	Post 3pm Tariffs	1	£0.00	£0.00
		2	£0.00	£0.00
		3	£0.00	£0.00
Princes Mews	Standard tariffs	1	£0.70	£0.80
		2	£1.55	£1.60
		3	£5.05	£5.00
		Over 3hrs	£7.65	£7.70
	Post 3pm Tariffs	1	£0.00	£0.00
		2	£0.00	£0.00
		3	£0.00	£0.00
Priory Gardens	Standard tariffs	1	£0.70	£0.80
		2	£1.55	£1.60
		3	£3.85	£3.90
	Post 3pm Tariffs	1	£0.00	£0.00
		2	£0.00	£0.00
		3	£0.00	£0.00
The Warren	Standard tariffs	1	£0.70	£0.80
		2	£1.35	£1.40
		3	£1.85	£1.90
		3+	£3.95	£4.00
	Post 3pm Tariffs	1	£0.00	£0.00
		2	£0.00	£0.00
		3	£0.00	£0.00

Table 4 Baldock

Car Park		Duration / hours	2022/2023 Tariffs	2023/24 Proposed Tariff changes
The Twitchell	Standard tariffs	3	£1.25	£1.30
		3+	£1.65	£1.70

Table 5 Knebworth

Car Park		Duration / hours	2022/2023 Tariffs	2023/24 Proposed Tariff changes
St Martin's Road	Standard tariffs	30 mins	£0.35	£0.40
		1	£0.70	£0.70
		2	£1.55	£1.50
		3	£2.15	£2.10
		4	£4.35	£4.30

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