



# **MANAGEMENT OF DISABLED PARKING BAYS TASK GROUP**

**Tuesday, 7th May, 2013**

**6.00 pm**

Publication date: 26 April 2013

# AGENDA

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

2. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING (Pages 1 - 4)

The minutes of the meeting held on 29 January 2013 to be agreed.

3. RESIDENTS RESPONSES TO THE QUESTIONNAIRE (Pages 5 - 12)

The Task Group to review the responses from the questionnaire issued to residents who had a disabled bay marked on the road.

The report contains a summary and evaluation of the responses, officers' responses to the comments raised by residents and suggested recommendations.

4. RECOMMENDATIONS

# Agenda Item 2

## MANAGEMENT OF DISABLED PARKING BAYS TASK GROUP

29 January 2013

Present: Councillor Martins (Chair)  
Councillors Brandon, Collett and Greenslade

Also Present: Councillor Lynch  
Councillor Mills (for minute numbers 8 - 10)

Officer: Head of Planning  
Committee and Scrutiny Support Officer

### 6. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Councillor Bell.

### 7. MINUTES OF THE MEETING ON 9<sup>TH</sup> JANUARY 2013

The minutes were agreed and signed.

### 8. REPORTS AND BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Members of the Task Group had received considerable background information from officers. It was agreed that, consequently, the Task Group had a more thorough understanding of procedures and regulations for Controlled Parking Zones (CPZs) and Advisory Parking bays.

The Chair said the key decision for the meeting was how best to establish the extent of the problem for residents with disabled parking bays. He suggested that evidence should be gathered through a survey of those residents who were affected.

Councillors Brandon and Collett advised that they had both had little casework concerning advisory bays.

Councillor Greenslade, however, stated that she was personally affected and that she considered that the criteria by which residents were entitled to a bay were very stringent.

The Chair reiterated that there was a need to test the situation as, at that point, Members had only hearsay evidence and little casework to go on. He considered that it would be wise to ask all those who had a bay whether they had encountered problems.

Councillor Lynch detailed the experiences of a resident in her ward and explained that problems with parking had caused the resident additional stress. She said that parking arrangements should be such that they improved

residents' quality of life and suggested that each bay should be identified by the numbers of both the blue badge and CPZ permit.

The Chair agreed with Councillor Lynch but said that the issue for the Task Group at this point was to examine the situation with advisory disabled bays. The point made by Councillor Lynch, however, could be considered at a later date or when the group was considering ways to address problems identified through the survey.

Councillor Brandon suggested that one question on the survey could identify whether the types of problem Councillor Lynch had referred to were widespread. He agreed that a survey of residents would be wise.

The Head of Planning noted that there had been very little casework on the subject so far but agreed that a questionnaire could be sent out to ask those with advisory bays if they did have problems. She referred to Councillor Lynch's suggestion regarding displaying numbers of both the blue badge and the permit number and said that the Traffic Regulation Order for the CPZ could be amended to require both a resident's permit and blue badge to be displayed in marked disabled bays. Outside the CPZ, bays would have to be made statutory.

Councillor Mills expressed concern that blue badges would be stolen if left in cars over night.

Councillor Greenslade referred to the proposed loss of eleven parking bays at the Town Hall end of Watford and advised that motorists would then be inclined to use residents' bays.

The Head of Planning pointed out that the eleven spaces would be re-provided in Church car park and further noted the number of existing disabled bays as listed in the agenda.

Councillor Lynch advised that a permit for parking in the multi-storey car parks could be purchased for £10. She felt that a question for the survey could be whether, were residents to buy such a permit, they would use the multi storey car parks more frequently.

The Chair said that this and other related issues could be considered by the Task Group as a separate piece of work.

The Head of Planning advised that any new work would require a fresh proposal form.

## **9. SURVEY FOR RESIDENTS**

The meeting agreed that they would conduct a survey and then discussed how this could best be achieved.

The Head of Planning considered that the list of questions as detailed in the agenda could be reduced and suggested that officers revise the list and forward on to the task group for their consideration.

The Chair agreed that the survey based on the questions proposed by members of the Task Group should be conducted by officers and the results considered at the following meeting of the group.

The Head of Planning offered to draft the survey and to circulate to the Task Group members prior to conducting the exercise.

In reply to a query from Councillor Brandon, the Head of Planning said that two people from her team could work on the survey. She pointed out that to receive a reasonable number of returned surveys it would be wise to wait until after the schools' half term break so that residents had sufficient time to consider their replies. The Head of Planning would advise of the timeframe for this exercise.

**ACTION:** Head of Planning

In view of the above, the committee noted that the original date of 9<sup>th</sup> March 2013 to report back to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee would now need to be revised.

**AGREED –**

1. That officers will conduct a survey, based on the questions proposed by the Task Group members, of the 170 households who currently have advisory disabled bays and prepare a report for the task group to consider.
2. That the next meeting of the Task Group would take place on 25<sup>th</sup> February 2013 starting at 6.00 p.m.

**10. DATE FOR NEXT MEETING**

- Monday 25<sup>th</sup> February 2013 at 6.00 p.m.

Chair  
Management of Disabled Parking Bays Task Group

The meeting started at 5.30 p.m.  
and finished at 6.00 p.m.

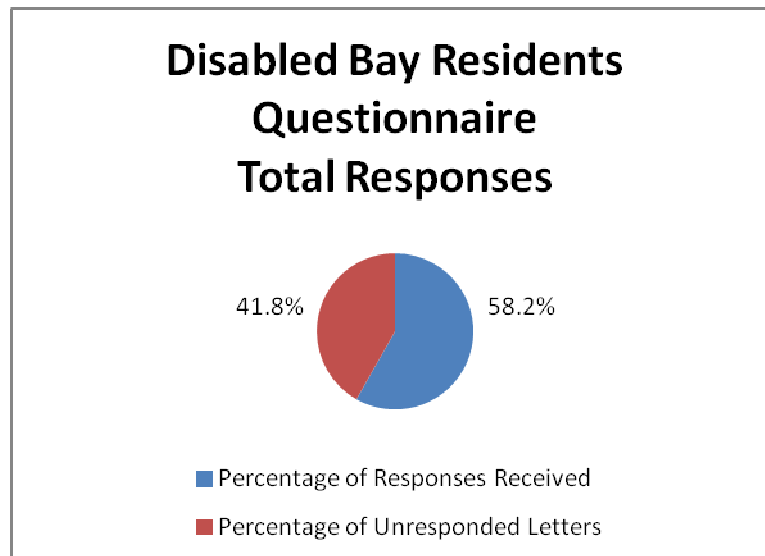
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## Disabled Bay Scrutiny Panel

A total of 170 questionnaires were sent out in mid February to residents in the Borough who currently meet the criteria and have a disabled bay marked on the road within the public highway.

We received 99 responses which provided a 58.2% response rate to the questionnaire which is a very good response for surveys of this type.



### **Question 1. Do you have problems with your Disabled Bay?**

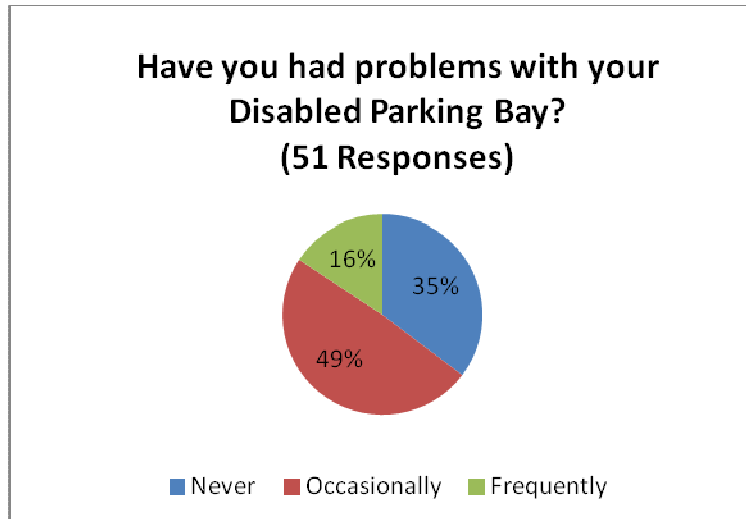
We received a total of 51 replies from residents living outside the CPZ.

18 residents have never had problems with their bay.

25 residents told us that they occasionally had problems and this included things like tradesman working at neighbours parking in their bay

8 residents reported that they frequently had problems with their bay and this included inconsiderate parking at school times and when there is football on.

The pie chart below shows the response as a % of the 51 residents who completed and returned the questionnaire.



**Question 1. Do you have problems with your Disabled Bay?**

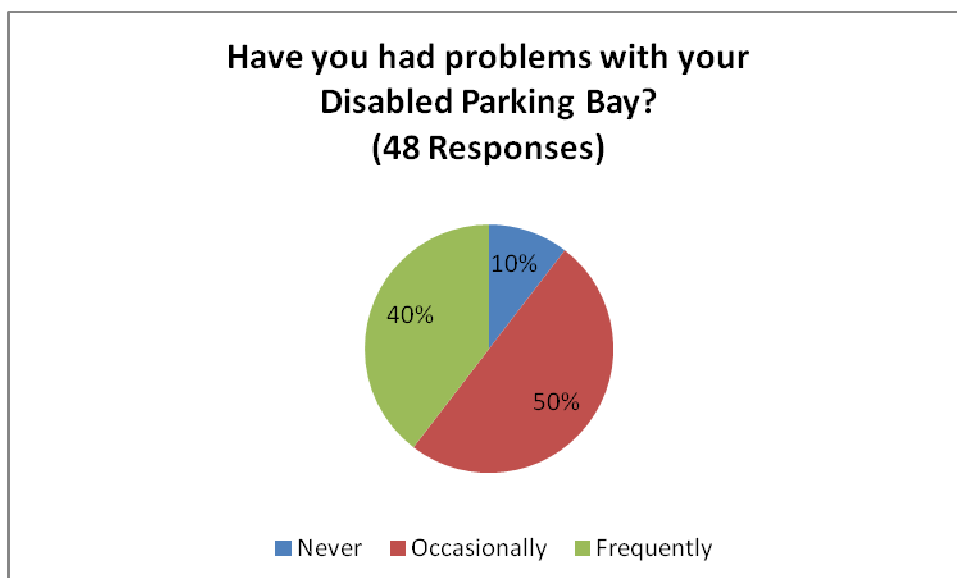
We received a total of 48 replies from residents living within the CPZ.

5 residents have never had problems with their bay.

24 residents told us that they occasionally had problems and this included things like tradesman working at neighbours parking in their bay

19 residents reported that they frequently had problems with their bay and this included inconsiderate parking at school times and when there is football on.

The pie chart below shows the response as a % of the 48 residents who completed and returned the questionnaire.



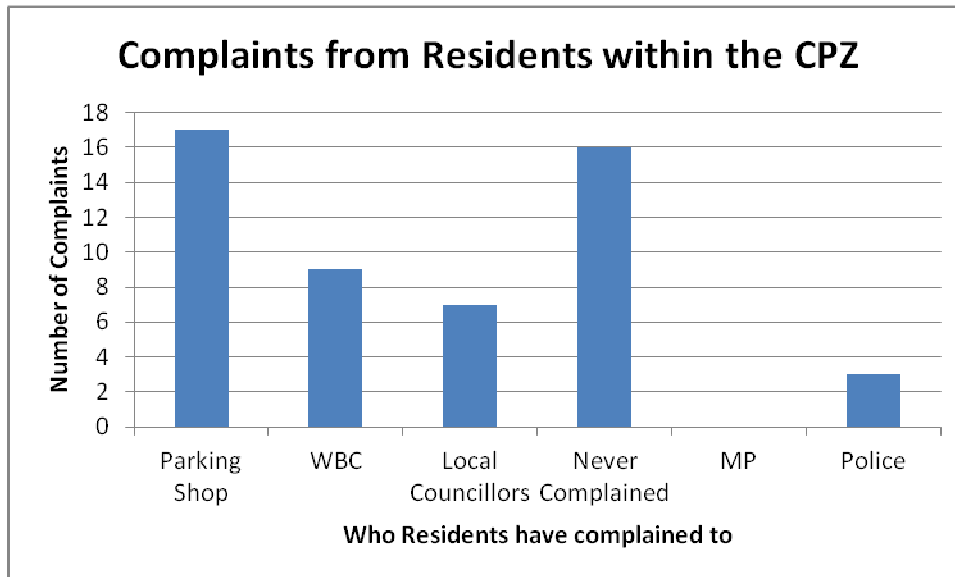


## Question 2. Who have you complained to?

The column chart below relates to question 2 of the questionnaire.

Some residents told us that they had complained to more than one person. We received a total of 52 replies from residents living within the CPZ.

All of the responses have been included within the analysis.

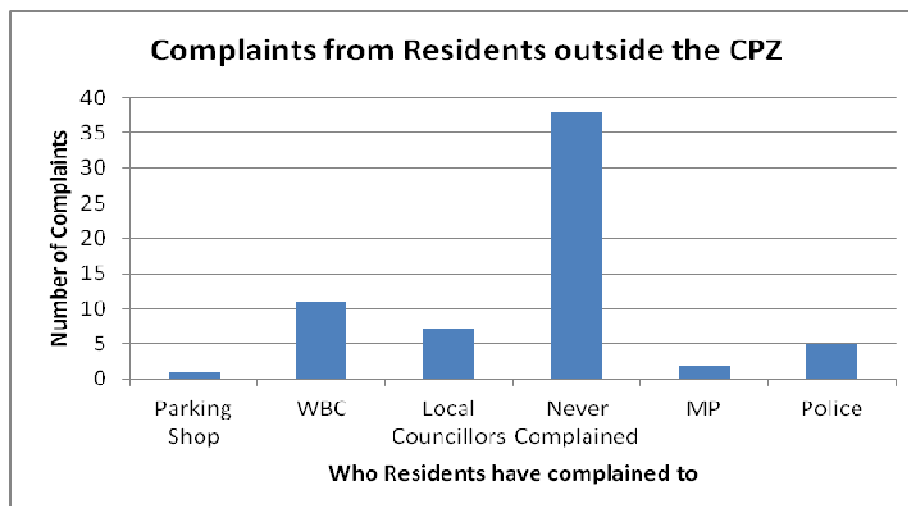


## Question 2. Who have you complained to?

The column chart below relates to question 2 of the questionnaire.

Some residents told us that they had complained to more than one person. We received a total of 54 replies from residents living outside the CPZ.

All of the responses have been included within the analysis.



### Other General Comments received from residents

We received a wide range of General Comments from residents which included the following:

4 residents told us that they had contacted the Council and letters had been sent by the Council which resolved problems with neighbours using their bay.

A total of 10 residents would like their Disabled Bay to be made larger with hatching placed either side to help with access.

11 residents told us that they have problems during school times and on match days.

7 residents told us that they would like the bay repainted in yellow paint, would like a sign as this would help during snow and would also like their house number put within the bay.

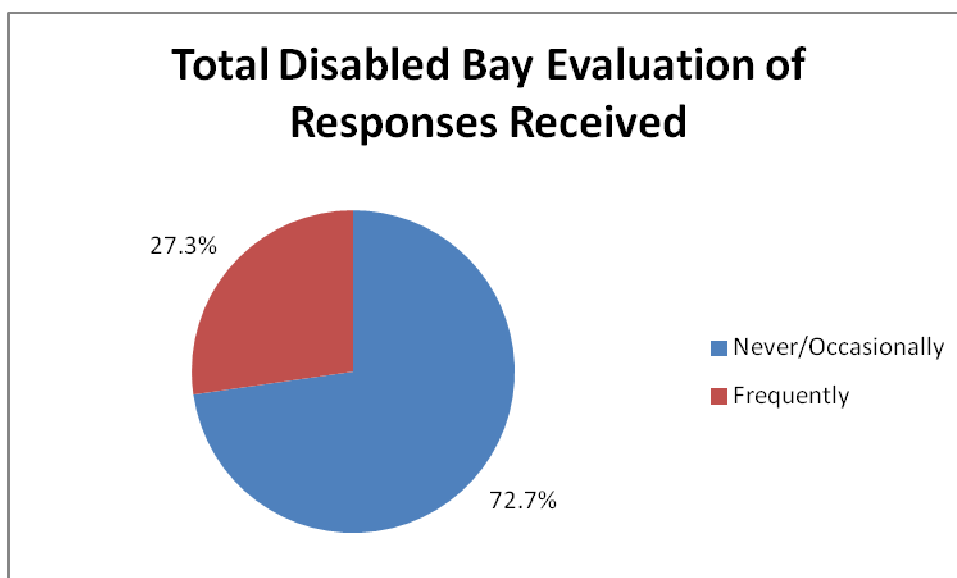
16 residents told us that they understand that the bay is advisory only.

13 residents told us (9 within the CPZ area and 4 outside the CPZ) that their bay had been used by other blue badge holders.

### Overall summary and evaluation of the questionnaire

The pie chart below shows that of the 99 responses 72 % of the residents never or only occasionally had problems with their Disabled Bay.

A total of 27.3% (19 within the CPZ and 8 outside the CPZ) had frequent problems with other motorists using their bay. Many of the problems occur during school times or on match days.



## **Response to the General comments**

We have enforcement powers available to us to deal with non permit holders parking in Advisory Bays located within the CPZ areas that is associated with school traffic and (where the match day scheme applies) football related traffic. For permit holders who use Advisory Bays inappropriately the Council already takes action by way of correspondence and this has proved to be effective in addressing the issue.

Outside the CPZ areas the level of problem is significantly less with only 16% of respondents indicating frequent problems.

The Traffic Signs Regulations and General Directions 2002 regulation 1028.3 provides the dimension details for Disabled Bays. The size for bays is a minimum 6.6m in length and a width of between 2.7m – 3.6m. To maximise road space Disabled Bays in Watford are marked out to the following dimensions L:5.5m W:2m and lettering size of 330mm.

The Regulations require Disabled Bays to be painted in white, lettering on the outside of the bays and no symbol required.

## **Officers Recommendations as a result of the survey**

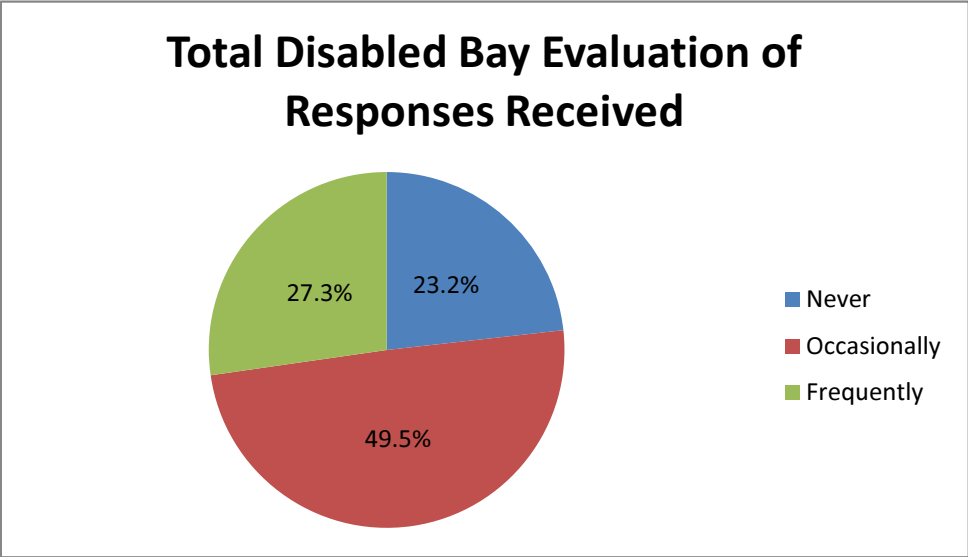
Highlight to the applicants the powers the Council has to address inappropriate use of the Advisory Bays. This advice could readily be included in the application paperwork and within routine correspondence sent out to existing residents with bays.

That the recently completed residents Disabled Bay survey/questionnaire be repeated in three years time to identify if the level of abuse has changed.

Consider the outcome of the survey in relation to the forthcoming CPZ review in relation to requests for expansion of zone operating hours to incorporate match day. This will provide addition protection for Advisory Bays from football related traffic.

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Never	23.2%
Occasionally	49.5%
Frequently	27.3%



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