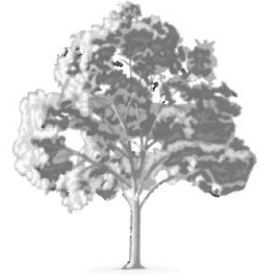


BURDWOOD SURGERY

WHEELERS GREEN WAY
THATCHAM
BERKSHIRE RG19 4YF
Tel: (01635) 868006
Fax: (01635) 867484

28 MAY 2012



WEST BERKSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Nick Carter
Chief Executive
West Berkshire District Council
Council Offices
Market Street
Newbury
Berkshire RG14 5LD

25th May 2012

Dear Mr Carter,

Re: Burdwood Centre Car Park

I am writing on behalf of the 4 Partners at Burdwood Surgery, the 9893 patients we serve and the 25 members of staff we have currently in employment here.

We would like to strongly object to the application of car parking charges which are due to come into effect shortly at the Burdwood Centre Car Park. I cannot quantify the number of complaints we have been receiving from our patients and the stress it has caused for patients and staff alike. What type of consultation process is required for this change and was it followed correctly as there has been no formal consultation for the users of this car park through our surgery. Is this permissible? After a phone call with the planning department, I was made aware of the sign on 2 of the lampposts indicating proposed charges but I would like to understand how such a significant change like this can be made without due consideration of public impact.

Our patients will be affected, our staff will be affected and there has not been enough notice around this to allow sensible discussion. As far as we are aware the car park land had been donated by the developers for use of the community. Does this use allow the charging of the car park for members of this community?

After speaking to one of the planning officers – I believe the concern is of train commuters parking their cars, leaving them for the day and filling the car park. We use the car park every weekday and occasionally at weekends and it is very rare and very noticeable when a car has been parked here for the station. If anyone has protested about this they may well be confused with our staff parking their cars here. I have 25 members of staff of which all but 2 are part time so the application of car park charges for this group will be a significant increase in cost in an already difficult financial climate.

This will also affect our patients, people who are feeling ill or most vulnerable. Has the impact of this been taken into account? Although for most patients the permitted 1 hour free parking will cover the time of an appointment for others who have multiple appointments or longer procedures this will not be the case. We are going to be affecting exactly those members of the community that we have been put into place to serve.

I am enclosing copies of a petition that patients are using to demonstrate against the car parking charges and you can see from the number of pages that it is against local opinion and the public are outraged. This representation has been collected over a matter of 2 days from patients who have been visiting the practice – what about people who still are not aware of the changes.

I am writing to you to request that you reconsider this proposal and reflect on the implications for local residents, our patients and staff. In the very least I would like the minimum time for free parking to be reconsidered and increased to 5 hours and I would like my staff to be given permits for free parking.

Please can you consider this at your earliest opportunity and let me know what can be done as it will be affecting everyone very soon. My direct dial is 01635 292600.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'K Bahia', written in a cursive style.

Kamal Bahia (Mrs)
Practice Manager

Encl. Petition

cc.
District Councillor Roger Croft
District Councillor Dominic Boeck
Thatcham Town Council