



## **Statement by Ilkley BID about the Parking Scheme in Ilkley – 11<sup>th</sup> March 2020**

We acknowledge concerns by all groups of stakeholders within Ilkley about the impact of the parking changes that were introduced in the summer of 2019 and are aware that emotions are still running high about the impact of the scheme. As an organisation, we have to remove ourselves from the politics of the situation, and we have chosen not to respond directly to the high amount of individual online comments and social media posts relating to this subject.

However, we would like to make it very clear that Ilkley BID is as committed as ever to represent the businesses in the town centre in this matter and we are maintaining a constant dialogue with the relevant decision makers to ensure businesses' voices are heard.

In the 9 months since its inauguration, Ilkley BID has been very vocal and proactive in accessing and responding to business needs with regard to the parking changes, ensuring that concerns are being shared with the relevant parties, and changes actioned. We have liaised with the council and achieved solutions to very specific problems some of our businesses have experienced. This has included supporting several businesses who had a requirement for parking in specific areas for a genuine business need.

Within a month of the parking scheme launching and following feedback from retailers, who were reporting adverse effects on their footfall, the BID was the first organisation to put in a formal request for a series of amendments to the scheme which were echoed by some of the District and Town Councillors.

These amendments included:

- An increase of free parking from 30 minutes to 1 hour
- An increase of the maximum 2 hour parking limit in many areas to 4 hours to allow visitors to enjoy the shopping opportunities available in the town as well

as the local restaurants, cafes and bars within a single visit. This request was echoed by many of the hairdressers, opticians and dentists

- More signage highlighting long stay parking areas
- Provision of long stay coach parking
- Multiple day parking, following feedback from hospitality businesses that rely on custom from weekend and long stay visitors to Ilkley

The ability to purchase parking tickets to cover multiple days has now been introduced thanks to our lobbying, with new software installed in the meters of all long-stay car parking areas including the car parks on Wharfe View Road and Railway Road.

Ilkley BID was the only organisation to conduct a professionally advised survey to gather data from town centre businesses, residents and visitors to assess the impact of the new parking scheme.

Organised in consultation with Leeds City Centre based market research agency Trinity McQueen, the survey attracted approximately 1500 responses and the findings were presented to Bradford Council and shared with the District Councillors and the Town Council.

Following submission of these initial findings, Bradford Council subsequently undertook it's own consultation to research and review the impact of the scheme. Ilkley BID was instrumental in extending the deadline for this process to enable all stakeholders to be able to have their say.

Many months before the introduction of the scheme and after discussions with people who own and run businesses in Ilkley, as well as people who travel into Ilkley for work, the BID was responsible for highlighting to the Council the lack of parking provision for this group of people. We are of the opinion that these particular audiences were not well represented in the initial consultation and we have been lobbying for the continued provision of Special Permits on their behalf. We acknowledge that the allocation of Special Permits to the residential streets caused problems in some areas and we have worked with Bradford Council and have been pleased to see them make amendments in areas of particular concern.

Of course, we acknowledge wider concerns about the parking changes and we will continue to liaise with businesses and Bradford Council as well as maintaining contact with the District Councillors and the Town Council.

Please rest assured that we will keep you informed of all developments via our website and our Facebook page (<https://www.facebook.com/IlkleyBID/>), as well as sharing information with the Ilkley Gazette and Ilkley Chat.