

QUESTION BY COUNCILLOR



Question submitted by: Cllr Terri Beer

To Cabinet Member: Cllr John Stephens

Question:

Since the introduction of a previous Conservative administration we have suffered many complaints as councillors about the issue with parking machines in our local shopping centre car parks. Screen steam up in the winter and sun on screens in the Summer making it difficult to confirm you have entered details. Even when people have pressed the green button twice they still receive tickets. Photo proff or video proof isn't accepted on appeal. Making proving an issue a major problem. Fault has often been directed at users. What are you doing to remedy this situation? What measurers are you putting in place to ensure screens are covered by all weathers? will you apologise to residents for blaming them?

Response: (for completion by City Council officers and Cabinet Members)

Thank you for your feedback. I'm sorry to hear that you believe there is an issue with the parking systems in Plympton.

As you mentioned, the current parking system was introduced under a previous administration in May 2023. At that time, the maximum stay in Plympton's short-stay car parks was extended from 2 to 3 hours, alongside the introduction of a requirement to register for a free parking session. These changes were made to encourage fair use of the free parking and to help ensure availability for those visiting local shops and businesses. Across the city's district car parks, there had been issues with overstaying, which made it difficult for others to find parking in short-stay areas.

We understand that parking can be a sensitive topic, and there are many perceptions around it. That's why we rely on facts and data. There are over 70 of these machines in operation across the city, and they've been in use for more than two years. In Plympton alone, over 10,000 motorists register free parking sessions each week.

While we acknowledge your concerns, we have not received customer complaints about the screens being illegible, and the systems are functioning as intended. Of course, mistakes can happen—people may forget to register or accidentally enter an incorrect registration. We take a balanced approach in these cases. While we cannot cancel fines for unregistered sessions, we do cancel fines on a first occasion if we can see that a session was registered but the registration number was entered incorrectly. All sessions are logged, allowing our Parking Team to investigate any queries.

It's also worth noting that fines issued in Plympton car parks account for less than 0.0009% of users, which suggests that the system is working effectively.

If need be, I would be happy to discuss your concerns further when we meet, as mutually arranged, on Friday 11 July.

Signed:



Dated: 08th July 2025