

Parking Charges Consultation



Summary Report November 2020



THE
ROYAL
PARKS

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INTRODUCTION

This report presents an analysis and summary of the responses to the consultation for the proposed implementation of parking charges in both Bushy and Richmond Parks.

This report sets out:

1. Introduction and background to the consultation
2. Consultation results
3. Conclusion

BACKGROUND

The Royal Parks (TRP) proposes to implement car parking charges in both Bushy and Richmond Parks. TRP propose to undertake this park regulation change for the following reasons:

- Introducing parking charges in Bushy and Richmond Parks is consistent with parking across the rest of the Royal Parks' estate and aligns with principle three of the Movement Strategy: We will encourage the use of more sustainable ways to access and travel through the parks.
- It will also discourage the use of the car parks by commuters who are not visiting the park
- The principle of paid parking is long established and most authorities surrounding the parks with public parking provision apply charges. Parking charges are already in place at the other parks we manage that have public parking. While not being punitive to those who wish to visit by car, we hope the charges will encourage people to use more sustainable means of visiting.
- The scheme includes a maximum stay, intended both to ensure a reasonable turnover of spaces (which would be fairer to people than our current system) and minimise the impact of non-park visits who use our car parks.
- The proposed scheme would also raise revenue towards the maintenance and upkeep of related park infrastructure

SUMMARY OF RESULTS

We reviewed all consultation responses and identified key trends and themes, which are outlined in this report. Whilst this survey does not represent all park visitors, it does provide a valuable in-depth look into their views, issues, and expectations. A brief executive summary below:

- 81.% of all responses were opposed to the introduction of parking charges
- 84% were opposed to the charging schedule of 9.00am – 6.00pm 7 days a week
- 83% considered the proposed rates too high
- 46% considered the 6-hour maximum stay about right

CONSULTATION METHODOLOGY

This consultation was open to all key stakeholders and the public for a total of 8 weeks from 14 September to 01 November 2020, a total of received a total of 11,689 completed survey responses and an additional 522 written submissions were received.

TRP sought feedback via an online survey hosted on our website, although Park visitors were also invited to make submission in writing or via email.

Promotion of the engagement was undertaken through a variety of channels, including:

- On the Royal Parks website homepage, social media accounts.
- The consultation was introduced to Park Stakeholders' groups that includes to a range of interested parties including local boroughs, Friends groups and resident groups – many of whom shared the news with their own stakeholders.
- Posters displayed on Park notice boards and at cafes within the parks.
- The consultation was also covered in a range of press and alternative communications (detailed in appendix 1)

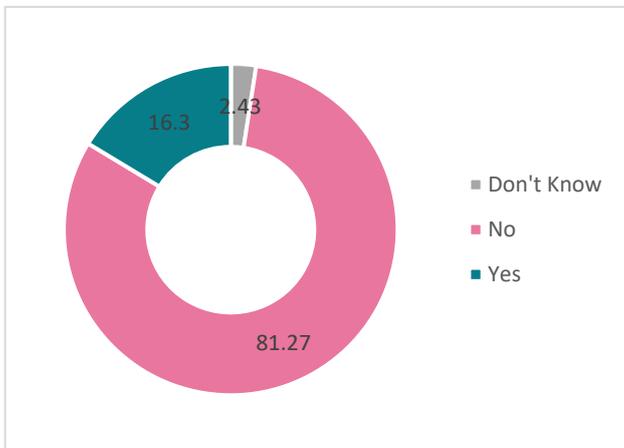
CONSULTATION RESULTS

This section of the report provides a summarised overview of the 11,689 online survey responses and the 522 written submissions received.

The survey consisted of five questions relating to the proposal to implement parking charges across both parks.

Question 1 – Introduction of parking charges

(Q1) Do you support the introduction of parking charges in Bushy and Richmond Park?



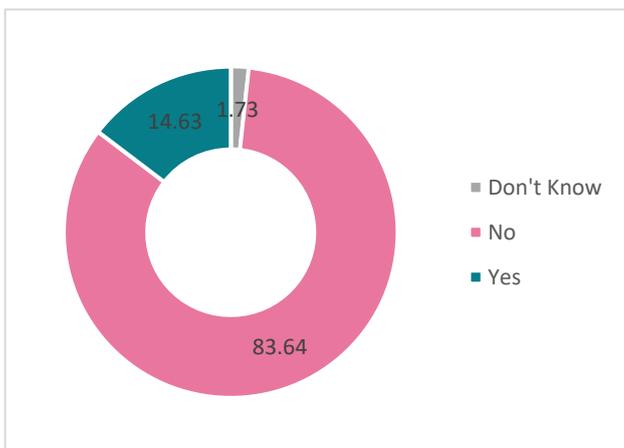
81.27% of all survey participants did not support the proposed introduction of parking charges in Bushy and Richmond Parks.

16.3% did support the proposed scheme

2.43% Did not know

Question 2 – Proposed chargeable hours

(Q2) The proposed parking charges will only apply between the hours of 9.00am - 6.00pm, 7 days a week. Do you support this proposal?

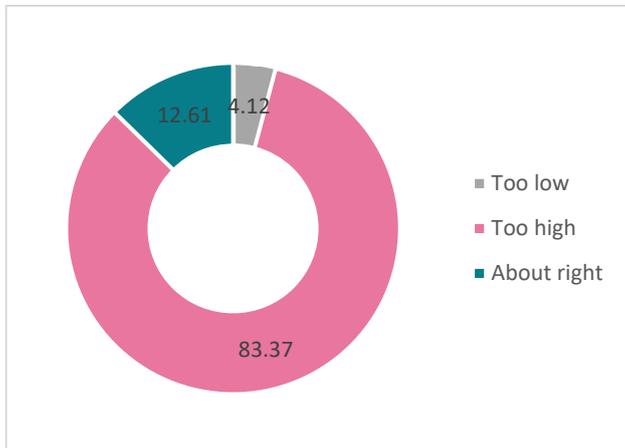


83.64% of all survey participants did not support the proposal to charge between the hours of 9.00am – 6.00pm

14.63% did support the proposed scheme

Question 3 – Proposed rates to be charged

(Q3) The proposed parking rates are £1.40 per hour for Monday - Saturday and £2 per hour on Sundays. Do you consider the charging rates proposed to be about right, too high or too low?

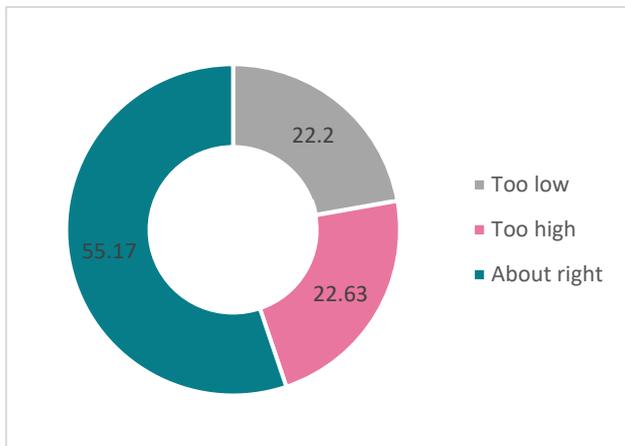


83.37% of all survey participants considered the proposed rates to be too high.

12.16% considered the proposed rates to be about right

4.12% considered the proposed rates to be too low

If we isolate responses of only those that supported, the proposal for the introduction of parking charges (1905 responses) we see the following results:



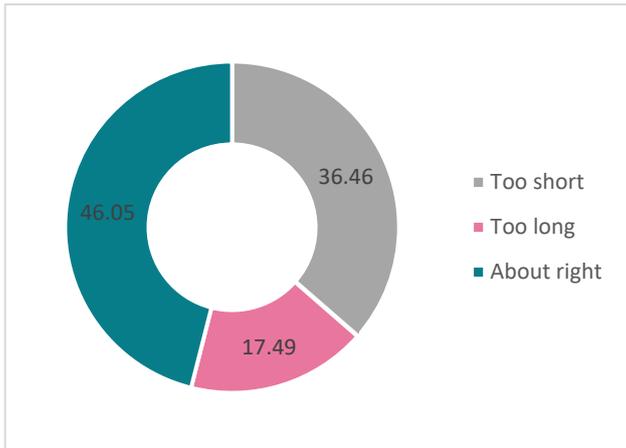
55.17% of all survey participants considered the proposed rates to be about right

22.63% considered the proposed rates to be too high.

22.20% considered the proposed rates to be too low

Question 4 – Proposed maximum stay limit

(Q4) We are proposing a maximum stay of 6 hours. Do you think that 6 hours is about right, too long or too short?

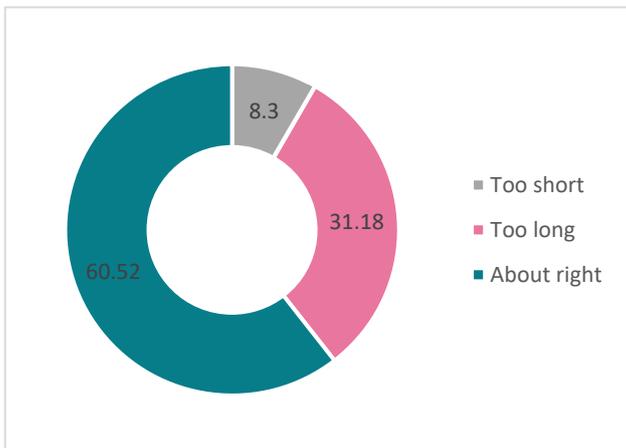


46.05% of all survey participants considered the proposed maximum stay to be about right

36.46% considered the proposed hours to be too long

17.49% considered the proposed maximum stay to be too short

If we isolate responses of only those that supported, the proposal for the introduction of parking charges (1905 responses) we see the following results:



60.52% of all survey participants considered the proposed maximum stay to be about right

31.18% considered the proposed hours to be too long.

8.3% considered the proposed maximum stay to be too short

Question 5 – Other comments

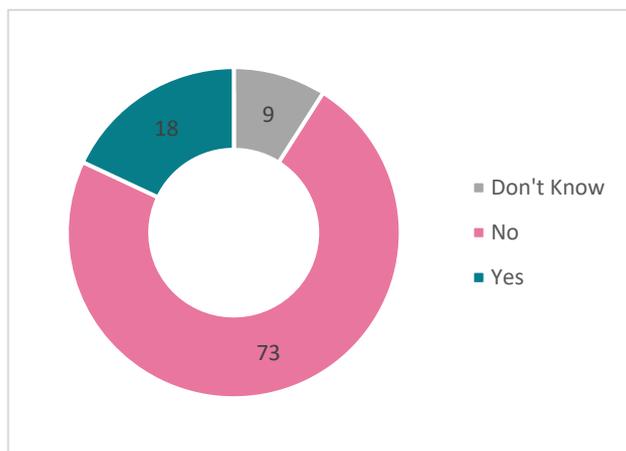
Question 5 of the consultation survey invited participants to add any other comments directly related to the proposals. A total of 9532 comments received, upon analysis a range of common themes emerged from the responses and these are set out below.

- Public parks should always be free and parking charges will discourage visitors
- Concerned about the impacts of increased congestion and parking problems in local streets adjacent to the park as visitors seek out free parking
- Parking charges will do little to discourage car use in the park, TRP should be targeting further cut through traffic restrictions as a priority
- Visitors who visit regularly want to see a season pass or membership scheme implemented so visiting the park regularly does not become cost prohibitive
- Bushy and Richmond Park has substandard public transport access when compared to the central parks

- Concerned about the negative affects this scheme could have on sporting clubs within the parks
- Scheme impacts low income earners more than the wealthy residents who can walk to the parks
- Visitors who visit regularly want to see a season pass or membership scheme implemented so visiting the park regularly does not become cost prohibitive

Written submissions

Additional to the online survey TRP accepted written submissions in both email and hard copy. We received a total of 522 written submissions during the consultation period. The below charts demonstrate the key concerns understood from the submissions.



73% of all survey participants did not support the proposed introduction of parking charges in Bushy and Richmond Parks.

18% did support the proposed scheme

9% Did not know

Upon analysis of the written submission a range of common themes emerged from the responses and these are set out below (in no particular order).

- Concerned about the impacts of increased congestion and parking problems in local streets adjacent to the park as visitors seek out free parking
- Unhappy with how the cost of parking would impact their visit, especially for those of low incomes and those that are not able to take alternatives to driving to the park
- Public parks should always be free and parking charges will discourage visitors

CONCLUSION

This report is intended to provide clear presentation of the consultation responses. It does not draw out any conclusions or make judgements on the results.

The Royal Park's consultation received a large response from a wide range of people with an interest in the proposed amendments to the Royal Parks Regulations. These ranged from individual park visitors to MPs and local authorities and included Park Friends and Resident groups, sports clubs, trade bodies and those who operate businesses in the parks.

The proposal to the introduction of parking charges generated a significant response.

Analysis of these responses has shown that many respondents are opposed the introduction of parking charges in Bushy and Richmond Parks. They consider that parking charges would discourage use of the parks, alter the atmosphere of the park and the nature of a park visit, and displace visitor parking to local residential areas.

Respondents also cite problems with a lack alternative methods of transport, suggest a more flexible charging scheme than that proposed, and raise questions about the cost of implementing the scheme.