

Dear Councillor Ernest,

I am writing on behalf of Penarth Yacht Club to express our concerns and objections regarding the proposed introduction of parking charges at Penarth Seafront. While we understand the Council's efforts to manage congestion and address financial shortfalls, we believe that the proposed charges could have significant negative consequences for local organisations such as Penarth Yacht Club, as well as for our staff who live on-site.

Penarth Yacht Club plays a vital role in promoting sport and recreational sailing, rowing, and other water-based activities for its members. Many of these individuals rely on affordable and convenient access to parking at the seafront, especially those who engage in longer-term activities such as competitive sailing and rowing. The introduction of parking charges—ranging from £2 for two hours to £8 for all-day parking—would place an additional financial burden on those attending events or participating in club activities. These increased costs could deter members from attending regularly, ultimately impacting their ability to access the club, participate in the activities central to the club's mission, and add additional financial stress on the Club.

As well as serving our active sporting members, we have many elderly members (former active sportspeople) who use the Club very regularly—some even daily—for social and wellbeing purposes. Given the Club's geographical location and steep hills surrounding the Club, these members are only able to access the Club by parking on the Esplanade. Parking further away, to avoid the charges, is simply not an option for these elderly members, many of whom have mobility issues. Therefore, the cost to these members could be so high as to exclude them altogether from continuing to benefit from the Club.

Furthermore, we would like to highlight the specific situation of the club's General Manager, who resides on-site and requires easy access to parking to carry out their role. The introduction of parking charges would impose a significant inconvenience and financial strain on the General Manager, who would be forced to pay daily for parking despite already being a resident and contributing through council tax. Additionally, the time restrictions on parking already in effect limit the General Manager's ability to effectively perform duties, creating unnecessary pressures on an already demanding role.

We are also concerned about the broader impact on local residents and the surrounding community. While the proposal includes free parking for local residents before 10am, this policy does not seem to take into account those who may need to park for longer periods, such as members involved in sporting activities or those working at the club. It also raises the likelihood of increased congestion in nearby residential streets as visitors, including those attending sporting events or recreational activities at Penarth Yacht Club, seek alternative free parking. This could create issues for local residents who already struggle with limited parking availability.

Moreover, studies by the Royal Yachting Association (RYA) have shown a worrying trend of decreasing participation in water sports, largely due to increased costs and barriers to access. The introduction of parking charges would only add to these challenges,

discouraging more people from participating in sport and further diminishing community engagement with the club's activities, including sailing and rowing.

Given these concerns, we strongly urge the Vale of Glamorgan Council to reconsider the introduction of these parking charges at Penarth Seafront. Such charges could disproportionately impact the accessibility of vital sporting activities, create undue financial strain on local residents and staff, and ultimately hinder participation in community-led water sports. It is essential that a balance be struck between generating income and ensuring that local organisations like Penarth Yacht Club can continue to thrive without placing additional barriers to participation.

Please could you convey our thoughts and position at the council meeting on 28th Jan 2025.

Thank you for your time and consideration. We look forward to your response.

Yours sincerely

For and on behalf of Penarth Yacht Club

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Commodore