

Parking restrictions could end misery blighting lives of fed-up residents

Yellow lines move welcomed

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A plan to paint more double yellow lines to tackle problem parking in Tenterden has been met with a cautious welcome.

The Rev Jolyon Vickers spoke out on the issue after Eastwell Barn Mews was overrun by commuters and blighted by inconsiderate and unsafe parking.

Now Ashford Borough Council wants to put in the restrictions in the mews and across a number of locations in the town.

Mr Vickers says he is glad that safety concerns have been recognised, but that he and fellow campaigners will not be able to rest easy until the lines are in place and signs put up.

Abysmal

Tenterden town councillor Sue Ferguson has described the move as a "positive start". The Tenterden parking forum member said: "The situation in Eastwell Barn Mews was absolutely abysmal as there were regularly more than 100 cars there every day either parked or looking for a space.

"It was a constant flow of traffic in an area of many retirement homes and residents' lives were being blighted."

Fed-up Eastwell Barn Mews residents even created a desktop calendar illustrating problem parking, showing a fire engine trying to negotiate a way around the parked vehicles, as well as making a YouTube video to highlight their case.

Mr Vickers has also expressed his fears over the enforcement of any restrictions because he witnessed cars parked on double yellow lines unchecked during the bank holiday May Fayre, where he says "parking chaos was rife".

There are concerns too that the lines may simply displace the problem and Mr Vickers said he was worried that "the illegal and dangerous parking in Eastwell Barn Mews will now move down the road to Turners Avenue and its feeder closes - Wrights, Forsons and Wells."

Permits

Cllr Ferguson echoed his thoughts, adding: "The worry is that commuters will now go elsewhere to park so we might also need to consider a system of residents' permits."

Plans to paint double yellow lines in the High Street have also provoked discussion, particularly as the proposal includes extending them into some of the lanes off the road.

Businesswoman Tara McCarragher, of the Rising Star gift shop in the High Street, said: "Tenterden is a great, bustling town and more restrictions will mean less people coming here."

"Towns like Cranbrook have



The Rev Jolyon Vickers - parking restrictions can't come soon enough



Town councillor Sue Ferguson - residents' lives were being blighted



A rubbish lorry struggles to get through parked cars in Eastwell Barn Mews; right, a fire engine tries to squeeze through



a lot of free parking available, but Tenterden with all its shoppers is a money machine so I don't think anything will be done."

Cllr Ferguson said new restrictions on lanes running off the High Street might be problematic for residents who do not have parking outside their town centre homes, or for the disabled.

Jane Lilley, team leader at Tenterden Day Centre, said she feared that any extra restrictions could exclude some disabled people from the centre and that they needed to

be able to park near it for long periods.

Cllr Ferguson said: "ABC has been a fantastic help but I think a parking consultation for the whole town is overdue. It should also be one involving the people of Tenterden and not just councillors as we need to find out what residents want."

TARGET STREETS

ABC proposes to introduce double yellow lines at the following locations: Ashford Road (junction with Rothley Close); Eastwell Barn Mews; Haffenden Road/Turners Avenue; High Street; Oaks Road; Rogersmead; Rothley Close and Westwell Court.

Objections must be made by Friday, May 29, quoting reference 2015/Am3, via email to consultation@ashford.gov.uk

What do you think? Write to Kentish Express, 34-36 North Street, Ashford, TN24 8JR or email kentishexpress@thekmgroup.co.uk