



Hanham Community Centre

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PUBLIC STATEMENT

Over the last 10 years the population of Hanham has grown significantly with housing and commercial developments – creating an increasing amount of traffic, and a growing demand for parking in the centre of Hanham. Many establishments in Hanham have reacted to this by limiting their own parking to their own users – the banks, many shops and the churches; and now the Community Centre has felt it necessary to do this also. Indeed, this is being repeated in other local communities (Kingswood, Keynsham, Longwell Green and Emerson's Green), as well nationally, where parking and parking charges are an emotive issue.

There is no doubt that Hanham lacks adequate public parking. The impact of the increasing demand for public parking, both short and long stay, over the past few years has meant (at many times) there were insufficient spaces for our users, and as a result the Centre was losing activities. As Trustees we had to act to preserve our patronage, and this resulted in the car park reverting back to being a private car park for our users in April 13. We did not take this decision lightly, for over 9 months we carefully considered many options – but the result, which (in our view) was the best for the community centre was to enforce private parking; because our users are our life blood – giving their time and income to support the centre.

It is worth noting, that for the majority (though not all) of its existence, the centre's car park had been leased to Avon County Council during the daytime, as they (quite sensibly) had foreseen the need for additional public parking in Hanham; and since 1998 the Trustees had continued this themselves for the good of the community while it was viable to do so. But since public parking began to directly impact the functioning of the centre it ceased to be a practical option to continue.

The lack of public parking in Hanham is an issue that South Glouc Council needs to address, but whilst the centre is willing to engage, and is able to assist, it should not, like other potential car parks in Hanham, be seen as the ultimate solution to the problem. It is probably true that the traders, council and ourselves thought the matter would be resolved by the opening of a Tesco store within metres of the High St (originally due to open by autumn 2013); and whilst the land (and a built and usable car park {the old Kleeneze car park}) languishes unused and deteriorating, the issue remains!

The Trustees do not know when (or if) the Tesco store will open and solve the majority of the issue (i.e. provide 200+ short term parking spaces). If it does, we (the people of Hanham) may need a short term solution – possibly the derelict Kleeneze staff car park (or an alternative), and the Centre has been and is engaged on addressing this issue. If Tesco does not develop the land, but retains it – there is a longer term problem that will need to be addressed. But even here, there is potential to significantly expand the Centre car park (with suitable funding and planning permission) to create both a user and public car park – but this wouldn't be economically viable if Tesco develop their land – an impasse.

So today, Hanham High Street lacks an adequate public car park – but it does have a small car park and available on-street parking (as some supermarket car parks). Now, the lack of public parking needs to be addressed by the council, if not already considered in their neighbourhood strategy for Hanham. It is not an issue for a small local charity, whose object is to enable activities, groups and events at the centre, and whose voluntary Trustees are primarily focused on maintaining a viable community centre.

The Trustees of Hanham Community Centre