

Holyrood – Bill on Responsible Parking could save council funds



The City of Edinburgh Council could save considerable sums of money if a bill launched today at Holyrood becomes law.

The Council has spent over £40 Million in the last 5 years on pavement repairs and compensation claims related to accidents caused by damaged pavements. Council officials at today's launch claimed that some of these repairs are necessary because of heavy vehicles driving or parking on the pavement surface. This is the kind of parking that the bill intends to outlaw.

SNP MSP Joe FitzPatrick, launched the consultation phase of his Members Bill on Responsible Parking at the Scottish Parliament today, and one of the main aims is to preserve the condition of our pavements, and to stop councils spending so much money on maintaining them.

This Bill also aims to allow all pedestrians to travel along the pavement and cross roads free from obstructions caused by vehicles which in extreme cases can leave people trapped inside their homes.

It includes plans to introduce a Scotland-wide ban on parking at dropped kerbs, on the pavement and double parking. There will be exceptions on the face of the bill such as for streets with extra wide pavements, and Local Authorities will be able to make exemptions based on local circumstances.

16 major charities have come together to support the bill which affects those with children in pushchairs as much as it

does those with visual or mobility impairments, wheelchair or mobility scooter users or even cyclists.

The MSP for Dundee City West has produced a detailed proposal which is now open for consultation by all interested groups until 30 June 2012.

Mr FitzPatrick, the MSP for Dundee City West, said:-

“Responsible parking enables everyone to move around our streets. It might not seem like you are causing a problem when you park over a dropped kerb or on a pavement, but it can be a major issue for some members of our community. There can also be very serious issues for the emergency services due to double parked vehicles.

“It is clear that the current situation with complicated police enforcement isn't working. We need to have Scottish legislation that enables local authorities to take action against inconsiderate parking.

“Through this bill we can raise awareness amongst drivers and bring in clear guidelines to end pavement and dropped kerb parking.”

Keith Irving, Head of Living Streets Scotland, said:

“Poorly parked vehicles restrict the independence of many vulnerable people including older people, families with pushchairs and those with visual or mobility impairments.

“Living Streets Scotland is supporting Joe FitzPatrick to work with local authorities, delivering effective parking legislation which treats all road users fairly and enables all of us to get around safely.”

Jane Horsburgh, Policy Manager at Guide Dogs Scotland, added:

“The impact of parking across dropped kerbs, crossing points and on pavements poses significant barriers to the mobility of

blind and partially sighted people, older people, disabled people, as well as families with pushchairs.

“Inconsiderate parking can render our streets into being inaccessible and hazardous areas that restricts people from going about their daily activities. That is why we at Guide Dogs Scotland support this proposal as an effective means of bringing about responsible parking.”