

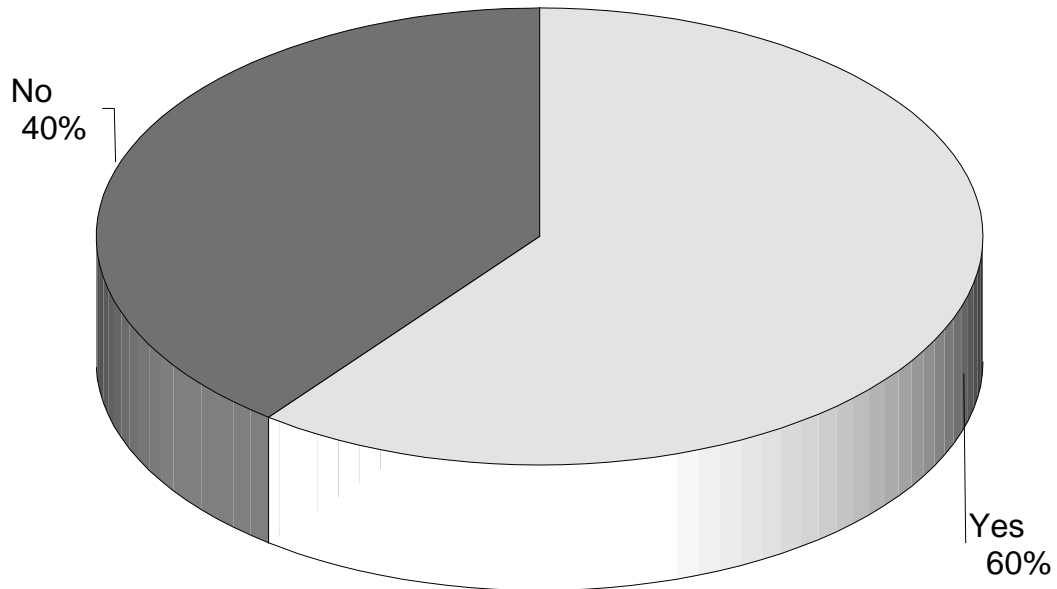
BABERGH DISTRICT COUNCIL

CAR PARKING SURVEY RELATING TO SUDBURY CAR PARKS

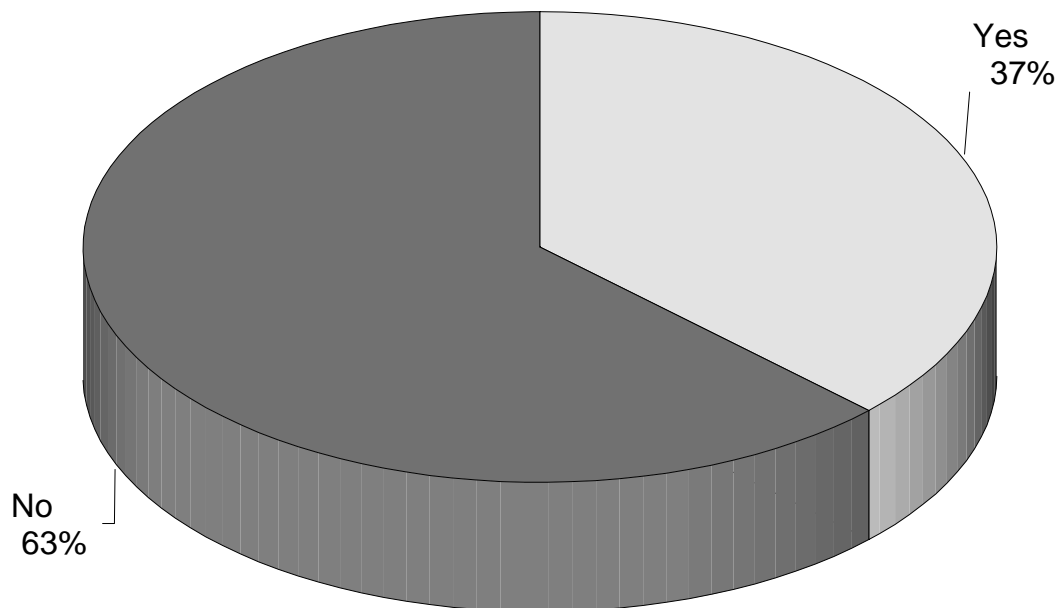
As at the end of 17 December 2001 we had received 43 responses relating to Sudbury Car Parks.

Listed below are the findings:-

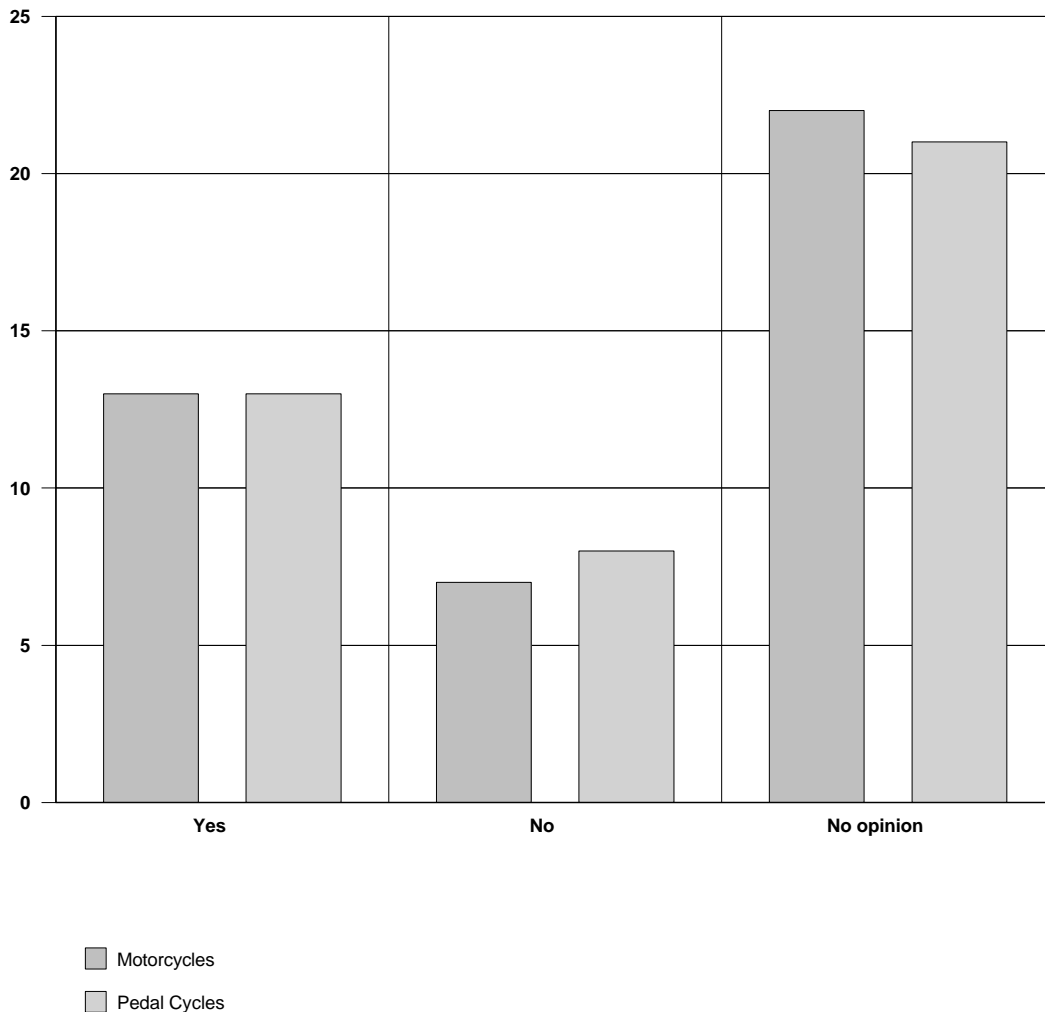
1. Do you think there are enough short stay (less than 4 hours) spaces in Sudbury:



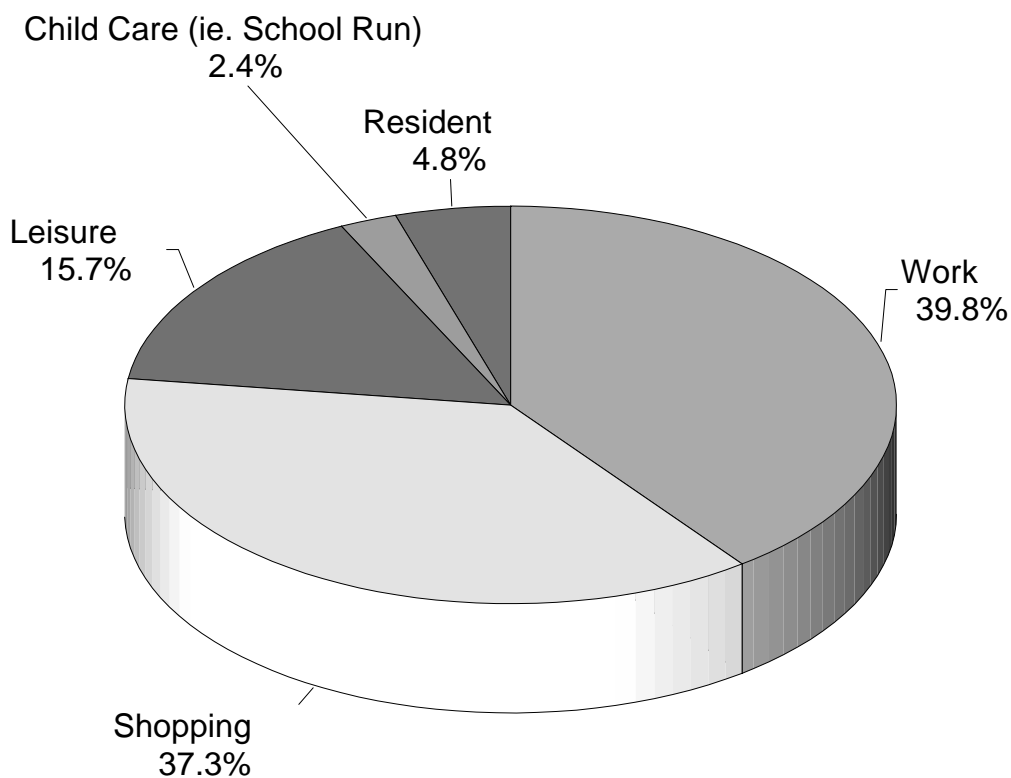
2. Do you think there are enough long stay (no restriction by time) spaces in Sudbury:



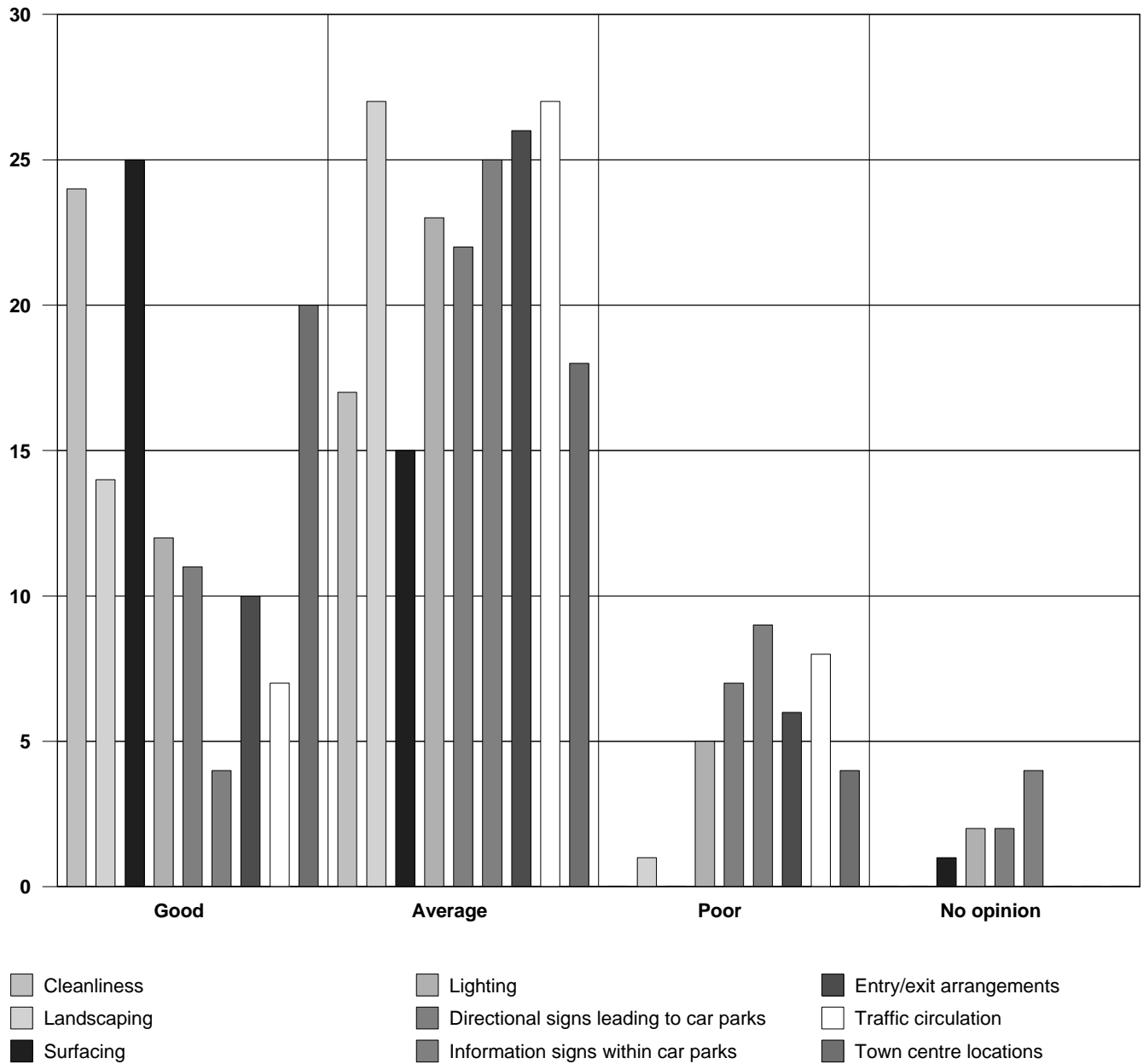
3. Would you like to see dedicated parking spaces for:



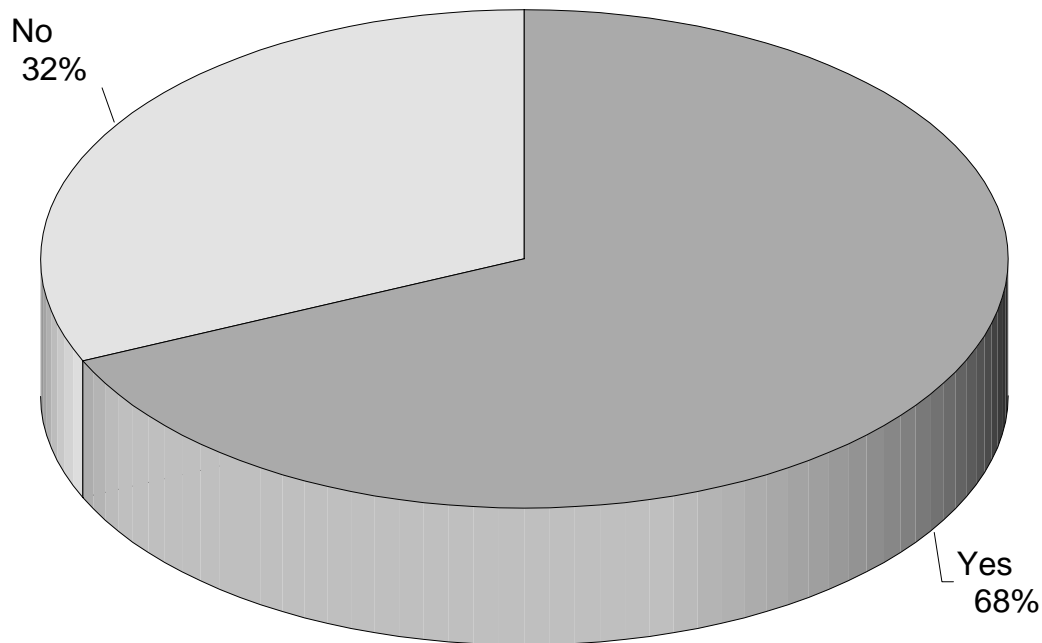
4. Do you have a view on the main reason for public's use of the off-street car parks in Sudbury?



5. Please indicate how you rate the following in relation to the Council's car parks in Sudbury.



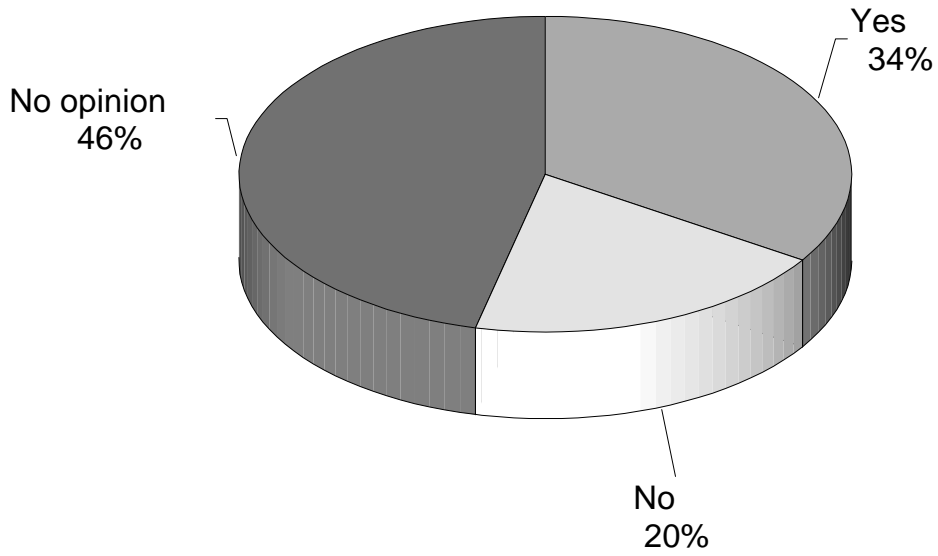
6. Would you like to see other information displayed in our car parks eg. town maps?



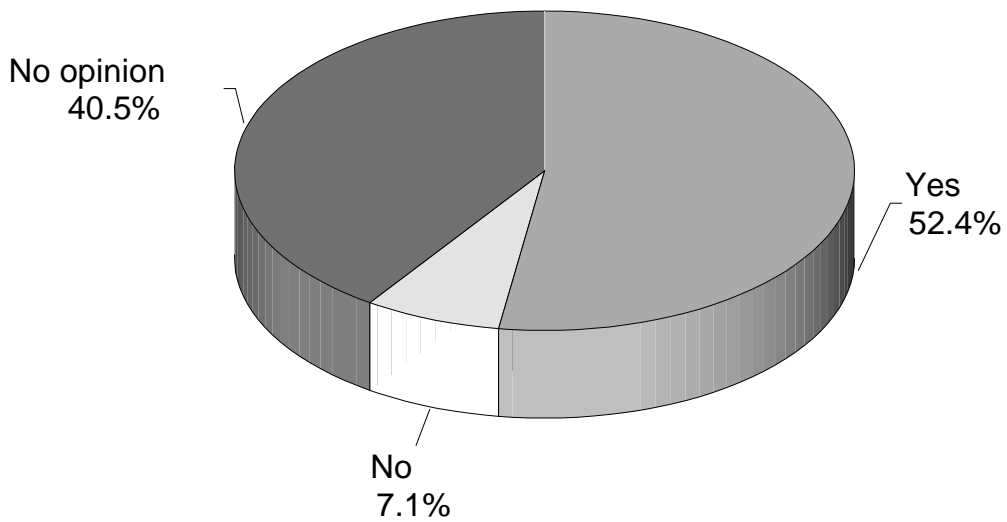
7. If yes, please indicate what information you feel would be helpful.

- map for visitors
- promoting local business
- chemists rota, p.o, toilets
- Maps with indicators of key facilities and information sources.
- details of future roadworks
- maps
- location of main shopping areas.
- street map, especially in Sudbury Town Centre car park, north st)
- tourist information
- Tourist information - places of interest, b&b's, tea shops etc.
- town maps
- map showing layout of town centre
- Directions to all shopping areas
- Directions to shops
- Maps - always being asked directions.
- Library, Town Hall etc.
- Shop and facility locations
- Signs to indicate when full.
- Street maps
- Street maps saying "You are here".
- Town maps - toilets etc.
- Town map (large display)
- Various routes
- Highlight places of interest etc.
- Information of where certain shops are situated
- Town Map
- Town maps showing everything available

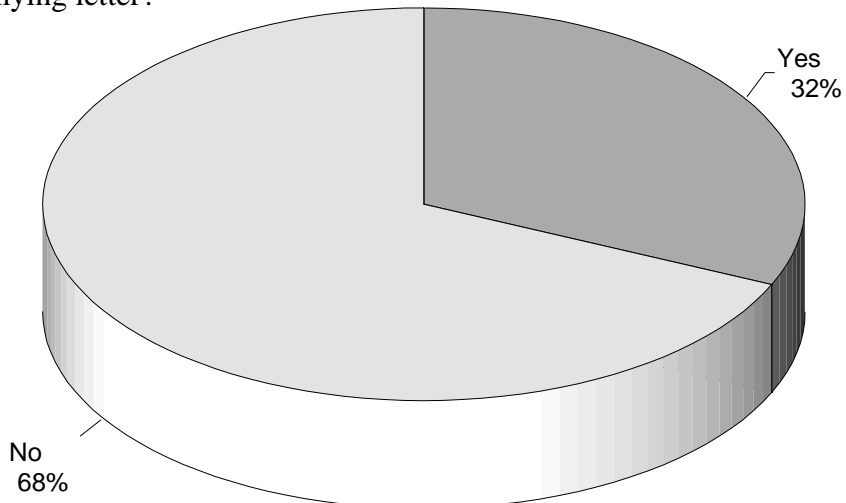
8. Would you like to see emergency contact points in our town centre car parks?



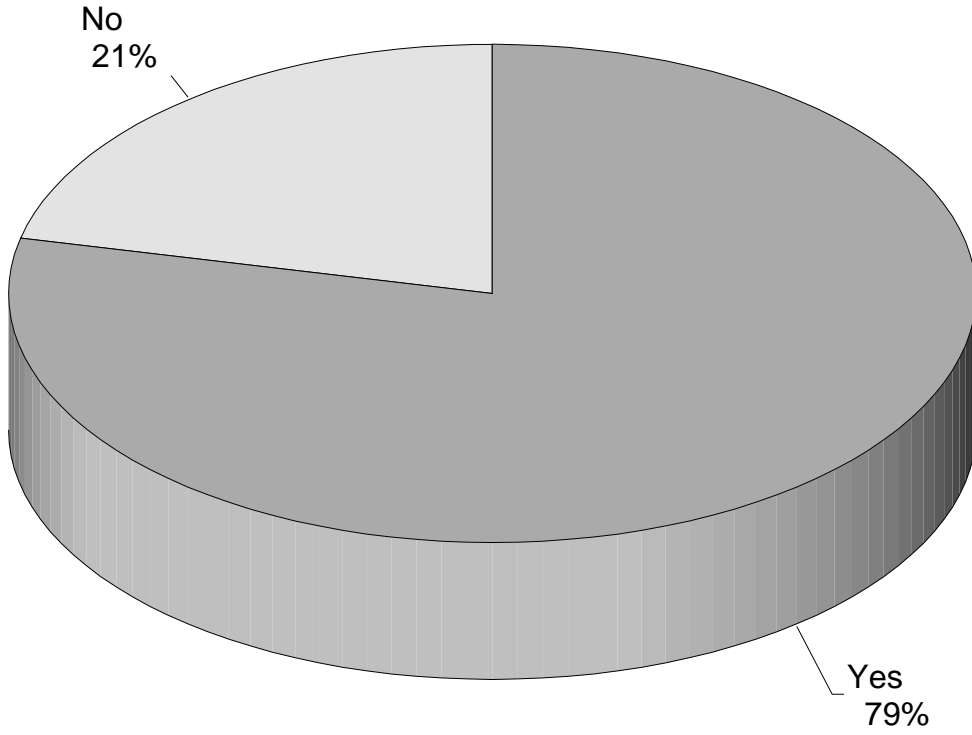
9. Is there enough parking provision for the disabled in our car parks?



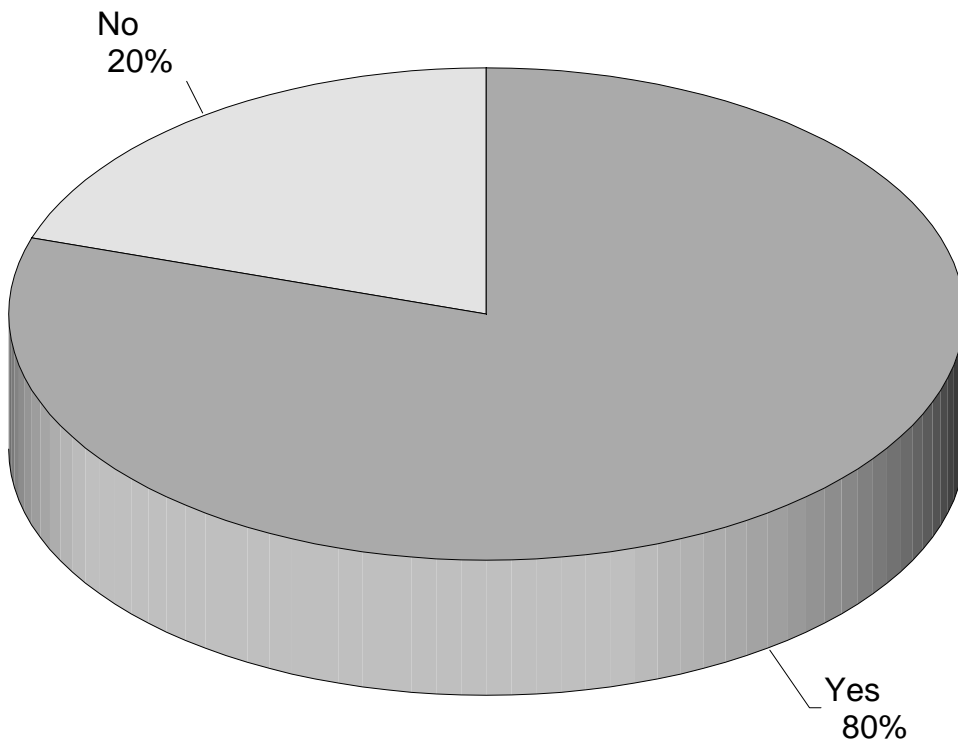
10. Were you aware of the level of spending on the Council's car parks, as set out in the accompanying letter?



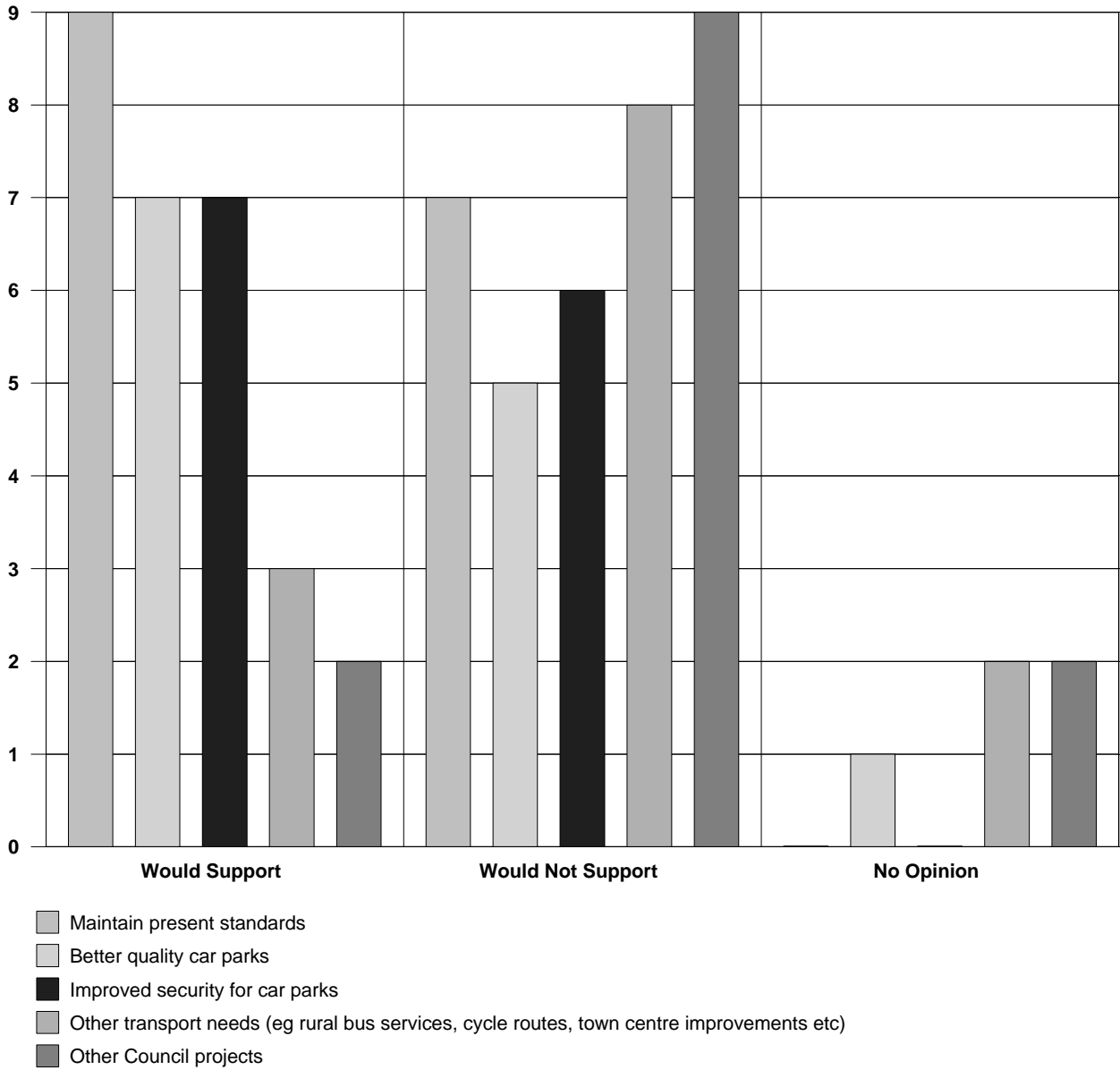
11. Are you happy for these costs to continue to be met by Council Tax payers?



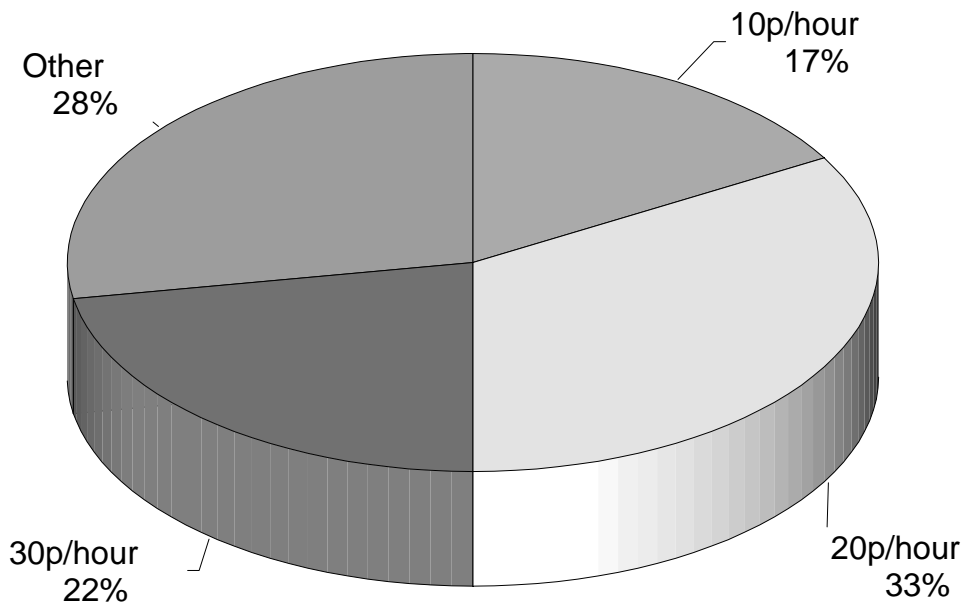
12. If no to question 11, would you support meeting these costs through car parking charges?



13. Please indicate whether you would support the following issues through raising income from parking charges.



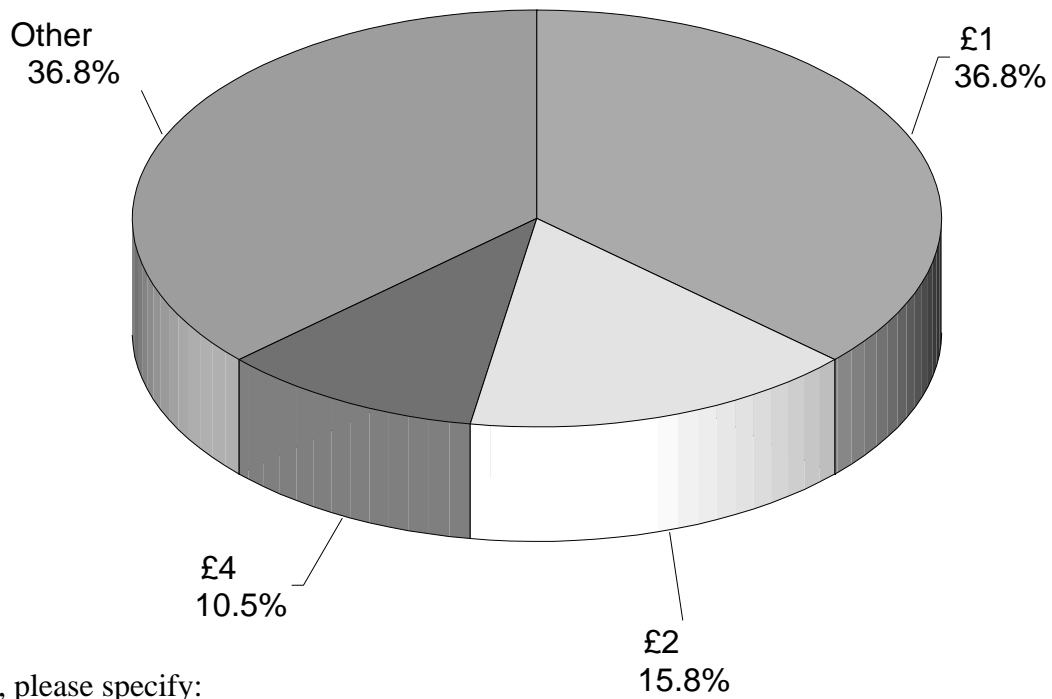
14. What would you consider to be a reasonable charge for short stay parking?



Other, please specify:

- As little as possible!
- Minimum £1.00
- Nil
- No charge
- None

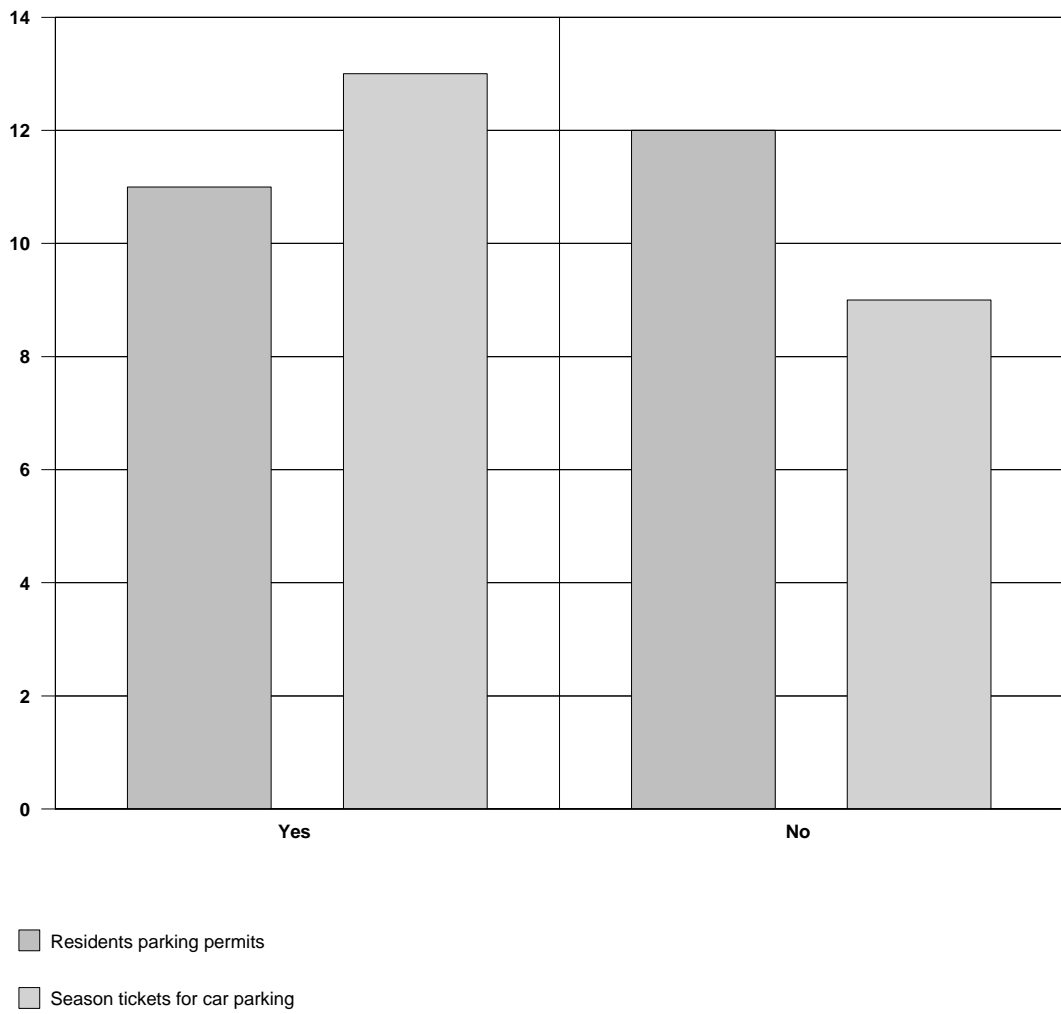
15. What would you consider to be a reasonable charge for long stay (over 4 hours) parking? (Per day)



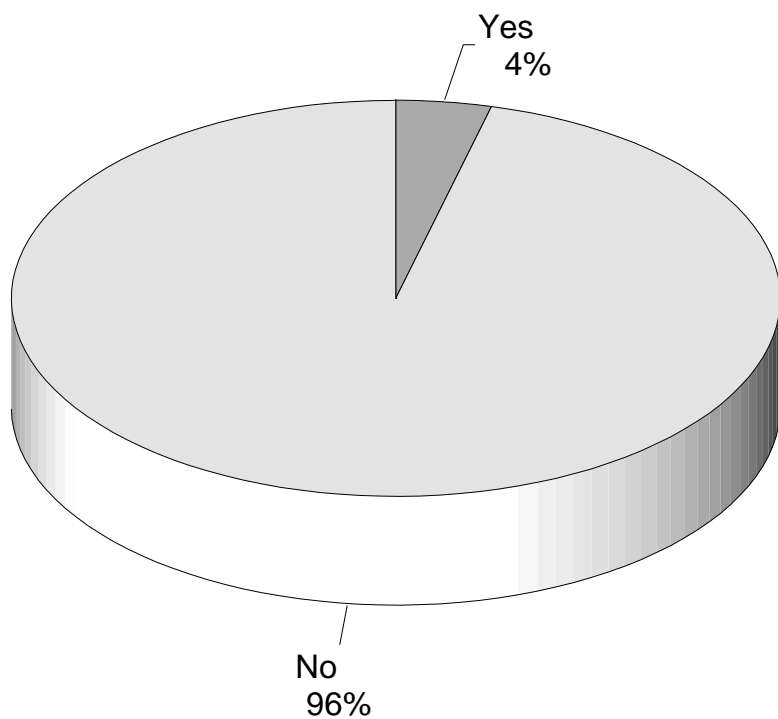
Other, please specify:

- 60p
- As above.
- Depends on closeness to town centre
- Nil
- No charge
- None
- None

16. Do you think the following should be considered for the Sudbury Town Centre car parks or on-street parking?



17. Do you think there should be parking charges on Sundays and Bank Holidays?



18. Are there any other comments you would like to make about our off street car parking service?

- The car parks in Sudbury make the town more successful due to the fact that the car parking is free. We as a business find many of our customer tell us they are from larger towns, i.e. Colchester, Bury St Edmunds, Ipswich and that they like coming to Sudbury to do shopping as the parking is free. If this changes, then Sudbury in general will loose a lot of customers, and I don't just mean retail shops, it will include the Kingfisher, Taxis etc. The question of free parking n Sudbury is something we have asked a lot of our customers and have yet to find a single one that wants any charges for car parking.
- What's the point of this, you already made your mind up that you are going to charge so that's that!
- As the owner of a small shop in Sudbury I am completely against ANY car parking charges. I pay 3 times the equivalent domestic rate for my shop and this more than pays towards the car parking costs. What else does it pay for?. We are just about making a living in Sudbury and anything that deters shoppers will kill the town!. Our customers will go to Colchester instead - why come to Sudbury?. Unlike you, we have asked our customers about parking charges and they are all against them. They say they will still go to Tescos and Focus where the parking will still be free, but not bother with central Sudbury. In any event, no conclusions can be drawn from this ill-received and biased so-called survey. The costings you have quoted are completely un-substantiated. You have not mentioned the cost of collection. What would the net income be?. I think it totally wrong that I should have paid towards this unprofessional, unscientific exercise n.o.p or Gallup should have been used instead
- I am a regular daily user of the Kingfisher Gym and find it extremely annoying that particularly on a Thursday I find it very difficult to find a car parking space near to the centre. I often have to resort to parking in Roys car park which is not so convenient. The leisure centre should have a larger car park for the sole use of the members of public using the facilities.
- If parking charges come to Sudbury, which I strongly hope they do NOT (as do most residents in and around the area) will the council levy charges on land adjacent to supermarkets which is owned by the council. Many shoppers come to Sudbury especially for the free parking. If Sudbury is to remain a vibrant shopping centre it is essential to keep this facility as it always has been free. This will also give Sudbury an edge over other larger towns in the area.
- Good access to car parks is an integral part of making for a successful town centre. Facilities are reasonably well balanced at the moment I believe between charged and free parking and I wouldn't want to see this balance changed. Charging for what is now free parking space would only be further discouragement to visitors, shoppers and businesses in the centre following a period of extreme disruption caused by the extended drain work and with the bridge work yet to come, we should not be considering moves that will cause further aggravation.
- Free parking for HSBC employees!
- As an ex londoner I feel that car parks in Sudbury are very good they are clean well managed and at the moment free.
- Sudbury town benefits greatly from Babergh's enlightened policy of not levying parking charges. Therefore it is entirely reasonable that the funding should come from local council tax payers.
- As we are an office and work 9-5 we already pay car park fees in the private car parking area at the back of the flower shop in North St car park. Sudbury needs a further car parking area (short stay) close to the town centre as on a Thursday and Saturday people often park in this area because there is nowhere else in the North St car park available - this is extremely annoying.
- I do feel from the tone of this questionnaire that you have already reached a decision on funding the car parks. The fact that it is free to park in Sudbury is an asset to the town which

should not be lightly given away. It's the access to Sudbury that puts people off coming here. It's a daily complaint.

- Sudbury town centre vitality & success to same extent is reliant upon free parking. Parking charges would be a detrimental move.
- As part of a customer service outlet I think it is imperative that the present parking arrangements remain fee free to ensure the town centre continues to thrive. Long term parking at no cost to the work force is essential in rural communities where public services are very scarce in the transportation areas. The employers/businesses already pay high community rates to the council for the locations they occupy & these rates should accommodate the provision of parking spaces for staff & customers alike without any further charging. I am strongly opposed to any scheme which may encourage customer (the life blood of town centres) to go to large out of town locations due to convenience & free parking.
- I feel that the article in Babergh Focus, that accompanied the questionnaire put out to households was unbalanced in favour of charges. The facts should have been presented and the individual should have been trusted to weigh these up and express their own opinions. For this reason the results of the survey have limited validity. The costs of £242,333 for financial year to 31st March 2001 are difficult to believe. Are these running costs on an annual basis or capital costs which should be effectively written off over a number of years. Surely these costs can easily be reduced!. I believe that car parking should remain free to the user and the institution of charges would be to the detriment of the town as a whole.
- Just to say there isn't a lot of long stay car parking facilities for the person who works. We're fortunate we have spaces available at the back of the shop but others are not so fortunate.
- It is very difficult for workers in the north of the town to park near work. The parking in Gainsborough street area is very difficult particularly with the video shop/shop member being one stop chops. The lack of adequate short stay parking is stopping many people from shopping here. consequently go to Bury or Colchester instead.
- I feel that car parking should remain free to encourage shoppers to shop in Sudbury. If they have to pay they might as well go to a larger town & pay. I also feel there should be a long stay section in all the car parks as I am at work from 8am till 6pm with nowhere near the store to park, so I have to walk quite a distance in the dark.
- I feel Sudbury Town as a shopping centre has few aces left. Parking charges for short term use would be another nail the coffin for town centres. Charge long term users (town station, commuters workers) should pay to fill spaces all day. You could raise revenue by charging out of town supermarkets rates income with town centre businesses or reduce ours to their per mtr cost & we would happily pay a little more to maintain off street car parking, but don't deter people any further.
- Free car parking in Sudbury is the one thing that keeps people coming to Sudbury - because it is free. If charges are made it will affect the trade in the town as people will say we might as well go to larger towns or out of town centres. Staff need free parking too - wages are low in this town and staff cannot afford parking fees. All North Street shops have lost trade in recent years - due first to the North Street alterations, now to the sewerage works and soon the Ballingdon Bridge works. Give the traders a chance - if you charge to park you may well put more out of business.
- We are a small retailer in Sudbury and have suffered badly in recent years from road works, road closures and traffic disruption - all discouraging shoppers and visitors from coming to Sudbury. We feel that one of the few attractions to shoppers is the free car parking and that if we lost that too it would probably be the kiss of death to what is already a struggling shopping centre!
- Sudbury town centre has always been known for free parking. All shop holders are struggling for business now - let alone when and if we start charging for car parking. This will push people to bigger and better sites such as Colchester and Ipswich.
- Free parking is essential for market towns such as Sudbury to survive.

- As a business that has been severely affected by the sewage/road works I am completely against parking charges in Sudbury. Until recently I was also a resident of Sudbury and was paying both residential and business rates which I feel is adequate to pay for maintenance of car parks. As I feel that my industry is considered luxury/leisure I feel that my clients would resent adding parking charges.
- The situation as it exists is entirely satisfactory: people may have to stagger their car parking times as car usage increases but this is a predictable situation with all car use. The customers seem very happy with the 3-hour restriction in Sudbury. If charges are brought in with a corresponding overflow of vehicles to surrounding residential streets the impact will be severe for people like myself who both work and live in the town centre. Also raising revenue through car parking can become a progressive spiral until (like Colchester) the retail trade of the town suffers.
- The present system works adequately for residents, visitors and casual visitors. It may be necessary to look for a place in adjoining streets but it is possible. If all areas are totally restricted or residents parking only then without owning a permit, parking is impossible and even then it is on a ration system with no guarantee of any place. I would only agree to parking charges if there was a restriction on the council using it as a bottomless well for raising revenue - eventually charges become so high that shoppers visiting the town are put off by the cost and the retailers suffer.
- Girling Street should obviously be a short stay shoppers' car park. There needs to be additional long stay parking further from the centre, in order to free off the central car parks. This could be very low charge (or free) relative to the premium rates that need to be charged in the short-stay parks. There could be thought given to (possibly free) short-stay spaces operating as the on-street parking. Companies such as ours that were obliged to provide expensive car parking facilities under earlier regimes should be compensated via their council taxation.
- We have been in business for 16 years and attract clients from all over Suffolk, Norfolk and Essex. They all enjoy Sudbury's 'free parking policy' and take time to visit the towns shops and attractions etc. Those from outside the immediate area often revisit the town because of its 'free parking policy'. Furthermore our staff all utilise the Station Road long stay car park from Monday to Friday and would be financially penalised if the Council decides to impose car parking charges. Finally as business rates are already high and refuse no longer collected from our premises within these charges we feel fully justified in backing the 'keep Sudbury Free Parking' lobby.
- So let me ask you this: If Council tax payers say no to supporting the car parks will we then see the benefits in reductions of our tax contributions currently in place - I do not think so! that money will then be plugged into something less beneficial like digging up another road in Sudbury. Sudbury needs help to continue to flourish as a town, as it is we have had to put up with endless closed roads, road works - putting shops in profit loss situations, please do not make it even harder. A lot of people in Sudbury park in these car parks to work by enforcing charges this will force people to try and park elsewhere causing more congestion on our roads. Doctors and Dentists also use these car parks for business. I feel it would be a big mistake on the town to enforce any charges.
- The environment for trading within the Sudbury area is extremely volatile and everything possible needs to be done to maintain or indeed improve the ability of the town to survive. Free car parking is a significant element in that equation otherwise Colchester, Bury St Edmunds or Ipswich become more attractive. Trade in Sudbury needs to be vibrant for the benefit of the whole community!! Employers already pay significantly towards rates etc and free car parking for staff should be available within the community budget thereby helping the local economy across the board. Attracting staff to the area is already difficult enough and car park charges would work against that need too! Many people from outside recognise and comment positively on the free car parking as a very favourable feature of the area.
- Should be free for business and businesses.

- Sudbury needs free parking. We have lost endless trade through all the road works in Sudbury. We do not know whether these lost customers will ever return to the town to shop. If you charge for car parking it will kill trade in Sudbury for good.
- Move market to North Street allowing cars to park in Market Square on market days.
- If you charge £4 per day for parking, local businesses would have to put their prices up to cover the costs as this would amount to £24.00 each per week.
- Re: School Street, Stour Street Car Park - As a daily user of the above car park I would like to make the following comments:- I am amazed at the number of cars (some without road tax) that never seem to move from this car park, also large commercial vans that seem to be left for (sometimes weeks) before they move. I would like to see regular checks made on car parks and unlicensed cars etc moved.
- Monitoring of North Street car park did not produce an accurate report because of restriction to usage at that time (barriers erected). Normally the car park has only a very small number of spaces available from early morning until late afternoon, the same as Girling Street and Station Road Upper.
- We consider our existing generous car parks provide a tremendous boost for trade compared with other Towns. Well worth the Council Tax used to pay for them, therefore this is money very well spent to increase the prosperity of Sudbury. If car parking charges were introduced many more local residential roads would become full of cars from motorists avoiding paying car park charges, causing more congestion and causing problems for local residents trying to park outside their homes. At the rear of our premises is a private car parking area this would also cause problems as motorists will try to park there.