



GREAT DENHAM

Parish
Council

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Practice Manager
Village Medical Centre, Great Denham

Mrs Panchal
Meiklejohn Pharmacy, Great Denham

NHS Bedford, Luton and Milton Keynes Integrated Care Board
Governance & Compliance Team, 3rd Floor, Arndale House, The Mall, Luton LU1 2LJ

11th May 2023

Dear Sirs

Parking Restrictions at Village Medical Centre, Kingswood Way, Great Denham

The Parish Council is receiving numerous emails from Great Denham residents with regard to the recent introduction of parking restrictions in the Village Medical Centre car park; we understand this has been done by the landowner of the Village Medical Centre. Whilst we are fully aware that this is private land, the Council is concerned about the detrimental effect of these restrictions on residents, particularly at a time of cost-of-living concerns for everyone. Residents report:

- Receiving penalty notices even though the “grace period” has not been exceeded.
- Receiving penalty notices although attending an appointment at the surgery.
- Receiving penalty notices even when the surgery itself is closed (outside surgery opening hours)

Additionally, a number of non-residents are contacting the Parish Council after being directed to Great Denham by NHS 111 or other NHS pharmacies, including during bank holidays, and incurring a penalty fine.

The Parish Council is aware of the many efforts being made by Great Denham Ward Councillor, Jim Weir to broker a revised approach that will meet the needs of both the Village Medical Centre landowner and the customers of the Meiklejohn Pharmacy. It is very disappointing that, in spite of all Jim's hard work, we understand that a suitable revised approach does not seem to be agreed.

The Parish Council wanted to place on record its own request for all parties to work towards an acceptable compromise:

- A solution by which users of the pharmacy can also register for permitted parking during Pharmacy hours.
- The “grace period” before penalties are incurred is extended to 10 minutes (we understand this is currently only 5 minutes) to give all drivers time to read and understand the terms and conditions of parking.

- An exceptions list agreed whereby all blue badge holders are exempt from parking restrictions, whether using the surgery or the pharmacy; in the event of a penalty being issued, confirmation of blue badge status would cancel the penalty with no payment required.
- The hours of operation should be reviewed to ensure that, when the surgery is closed (and therefore the need for surgery patients to park is not relevant) the car park is available to all users with no penalties.
- Ensuring that all surgery users are registered for parking when using the surgery, to avoid fines being issued in error
- The Parking Management agents to ensure its staff are fully trained to deal with appeals appropriately, including use of compassion and common sense.
- That the NHS Integrated Care Board for Bedford, Luton and Milton Keynes intervenes to support a suitable solution for all parties, acting to support NHS patients of both surgery and pharmacy, especially with the move of more NHS services to the pharmacy sector to alleviate the burden on GPs.

The Council is aware that all actions taken by the Village Medical Centre are within their rights as landowner. However, in the interest of all NHS patients, and in particular Great Denham residents, we hope that a suitable solution can be found which recognises the value of the services provided by both surgery and pharmacy.

Yours faithfully

A D O'Meara

Anna O'Meara
Clerk – Great Denham Parish Council

CC Jim Weir, Ward Councillor, Great Denham