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Parking

1 The Issue

High parking charges, aggressive enforcement and a lack of available spaces in many areas have discouraged shoppers from visiting traditional town centres and high streets. Combined with a fundamental change in the way people shop in the UK (economic changes, e-commerce, lifestyle changes), the impact on the high street is being most seriously felt by small retailers in smaller town centres.

Our research shows seven in ten small firms think parking is a priority for the future of independent shops.

2 Action FSB have taken

We're campaigning for local authorities to address high parking charges.

Our Keep Trade Local campaign asks customers to think local and shop on their high street first.

We continue to campaign regionally and nationally with MPs, for a more business friendly approach to parking through the Small Business Saturday campaign.

3 Our Ask

High parking charges have a negative impact on the high street. As no two high streets are the same, we want parking strategies to be long-term and inclusive with the aim of promoting local economic growth. We're lobbying local authorities and organisations to come together, to discuss parking provisions for businesses and customers.

FSB Vehicle Services

In this section

Ways to join FSB

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23 February 2017

Parking reforms move one step closer

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The Federation of Small Businesses (FSB) has urged members of the House of Lords to pass a Bill being read in Parliament tomorrow which gives Government the power to force councils to consult before hiking parking charges. It will also make it easier for councils to drop charges for special events like Small Business Saturday.

The Bill comes at a time when many small businesses, including independent town centre shops, are under threat from economic uncertainty and rising costs. FSB research has shown seven in ten small firms think parking is a priority for the future of independent shops. High parking charges, over-aggressive enforcement and a lack of available spaces in many areas have discouraged shoppers from visiting traditional town centres and high streets.

The Bill – called the Parking Places (Variation of Charges) Bill – will give Ministers powers to make councils consult before raising parking costs. At the same time, it will remove the automatic need for 21 days advance notice when councils reduce or suspend parking charges. The Private Member's Bill has secured cross-party support, and so passed all its stages in the House of Commons. It now passes to the House of Lords.

with the second reading taking place tomorrow (Friday 24th February). Today FSB is asking all Peers to back the Bill, as a simple mechanism to improve parking arrangements for local business communities.

In the House of Commons, David Tredinnick, the MP responsible for introducing the Bill said this is “about lowering charges and raising consultation levels”. Labour MPs as well as Government backed the Bill, with DCLG Minister Marcus Jones saying “The Government are committed to promoting town centres and high streets as thriving places at the heart of communities”.

FSB National Chairman Mike Cherry, said:

“The Lords should back this Bill. Parking remains a huge issue for local businesses, most of whom rely on the car for customers, staff and supplies to reach them. The high level of parking charges and fines raise billions for local councils, but put FSB members and independent retailers in town centres at a disadvantage. Customers who would otherwise choose to use independent shops are more likely to take their business elsewhere.”

“This Bill will help allow independent small businesses to thrive. It makes it easier to lower or suspend charges for moments such as Small Business Saturday, while giving businesses a greater opportunity to have their say if hikes are proposed.”

Ends

Notes to editor

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1. The Parking Places (Variation of Charges) Bill, can be read at <https://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/bills/llbill/2016-2017/0098/17098.pdf> (<https://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/bills/llbill/2016-2017/0098/17098.pdf>)