

Local Government and Communities Committee**Post-Legislative Scrutiny of the Disabled Persons' Parking Places (Scotland)
Act 2009****Submission from Laurie Richards**Background

I am responding as an individual. I am male. I am registered War Disabled, and in receipt of a War Pension Mobility Supplement. I made submissions to Jackie Bailie when she first proposed the legislation so hope I have a subjective view. I carry a power wheelchair in my car so do need the extra space of a dedicated car parking space. I am willing to amplify any points I can, and in person if necessary, though my mobility will obviously make this difficult.

Response**Do you think the Act has achieved its aim of preventing disabled person's parking spaces being used by those who are not entitled to?**

Not entirely though there has been a marked improvement, particularly in the case of individuals. However, trade vehicles continue to use dedicated spaces as loading bays or work spaces, and in the main this is ignored by enforcement authorities. Armoured cash vehicles are marked offenders in this respect – they seem to park wherever they want without let or hindrance. It also seems to be a generally accepted policy that building skips are better placed in disabled parking spaces than on the road.

How well is the local authority in your area carrying out its duties required by the Act to convert all advisory on-street disabled persons' parking places into enforceable parking places, unless they are no longer required?

Well enough.

Any other issues relating to the Act which you wish to bring to the attention of the Committee?

Enforcement is a disgrace, both in respect of on street parking and private/retail car parks (I regularly use facilities in Angus and Perth & Kinross as well as Fife). LAs may wish to consider prominently displaying a reporting telephone "hotline" number, not just as a deterrent but so that people like myself can instantly speak to an enforcement officer.

I have had correspondence with Mr Roderick Campbell regarding the provision of blue badge spaces at newbuild premises. The number of spaces at a new retail premises seemed less than adequate, and on contacting the retailer was told that

since they only rented the premises, and the car park, it was not their problem, I should contact the landlord. I considered this a cop out and involved Mr Campbell.

He took the trouble to research the matter and report back. The retailer was legally quite correct, and it was explained to me that because another undertaking, a hotel, also shared the car park and as they also had blue badge spaces they were complying with the Scottish Government guidelines.

Technically they were, of course, but as the additional hotel spaces were perhaps 100 yards from the retail premises they were certainly not complying with the spirit of the guidelines.

The committee may wish to consider making the user of premises, not the owner, responsible for provision and enforcement. I should add that in this particular case extra spaces have now been provided, but whether this was as a result of Mr Campbell's efforts or the retailer forestalling some potential bad publicity I don't know.

Laurie Richards