

The little things that make a difference



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IT IS often the little things that make a big difference to our urban environment.

Each in their own way relatively inconsequential but together they create a picture of an uncared for street scene.

One issue which we receive many complaints about is the free standing advertising panels – known as A-boards – which shopkeepers and others place on the pavement outside their premises.

In difficult trading times it

is easy to understand why traders are keen to take every opportunity to attract custom and it would be churlish to ban A-boards altogether when other, possibly adjacent, businesses are licensed by the council to erect tables and chairs on the pavement.

But the present situation is getting out of hand with some premises having as many as three A-boards, often a long way from their entrance.

Not only are these unsightly but they can be dangerous to pedestrians.

What is needed is a voluntary code which restricts each shop to a single A-board placed no further than a metre from their entrance. We would urge the town's traders to act responsibly and exercise restraint before

public pressure insists on more formal controls.

Another blot on the town is the plethora of street signs which seem to spring up in an indiscriminate way.

New signs and posts are often erected, when with a bit of forethought the existing posts and lamp standards could be adapted.

The result is an unattractive mess which serves to confuse rather than inform and must be a safety hazard. It is time the council had a blitz on street signs, removing all but the most essential and rationalising those that remain.

And then there is street parking. The Causeway, perhaps the town's most picturesque location, has become a car park for the

disabled.

Blue Badge holders are allowed to park on double yellow lines if it is necessary to obtain reasonable access but this is not meant as a substitute for adequate dedicated parking spaces for the disabled.

It is a nonsense that we tolerate a situation in which the disabled routinely park in locations which would result in a parking ticket for anyone else.

Either there is justification for banning parking or not, and if there is it should apply to everyone other than in exceptional circumstances.

It is not clear whether the present situation is the result of some Blue Badge holders abusing their privilege, the council failing to provide

sufficient parking bays for the disabled in appropriate places, or the recent introduction of charges for the disabled in the car parks.

Whatever the cause, it is time that the access groups and the council got together to sort it out because the present situation is an eyesore, creates resentment and does nothing to further the legitimate case for better access for those with disabilities.

The Horsham Society is concerned about the town's past, present and future and seeks to promote good planning and design for the built environment and open spaces. For more information and details on how to join visit our website www.horshamsociety.org.