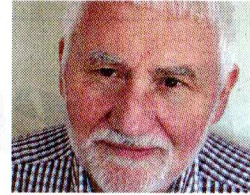


Horsham Society

with Malcolm Willis



Please think before you park

Do you know your Highway Code? For many people it has been a while since they read this, yet everyone should abide by it. The rules therein apply to pedestrians as much as to motorists and cyclists, but are often blatantly disregarded.

This particularly applies to parking. For example, walk along the Bishopric in Horsham at lunchtime or early evening and you will frequently see cars parked on double yellow lines adjacent to the fast food outlets.

Even when there are empty parking bays a short walk away, drivers still illegally stop outside their chosen take-away. This causes problems with the left turn into Albion Way being greatly restricted. A tailback quickly forms, and this has implications for other cars approaching the traffic lights as the sequence of lights adjusts to clear the tailback.

One thoughtless person delays countless others, and according to para 238 of the Highway Code these drivers are committing a criminal offence.

Parking enforcement is not the responsibility of the police, but of the



Inconsiderate parking can cause numerous problems.

local traffic authority. Back in 2003 WSSC contracted the management of on-street parking and loading bays to Horsham District Council. The Horsham Parking Services Team is tasked to oversee parking within our town and the Horsham District as a whole. This is carried out through the deployment of Civil Enforcement Officers (CEOs)

According to HDC's Annual Parking Report 2016, the CEO team are deployed across the district, with patrols being concentrated at those locations with the most parking issues.

Their main aim is to maintain the free flow of traffic and ensure compliance with parking restrictions. In doing so, they help to maintain road safety for pedestrians and drivers. They will respond to specific concerns from members of the public, and anyone can contact them at the HDC offices, Parkside.

Thoughtless parking not only causes problems for other motorists, but also for pedestrians. Parking on pavements is inconsiderate, and often extremely dangerous.

Para 244 of the Code states that parking on the pavement is only allowed if a sign permits it. We have many narrow streets and cars often park with one set of wheels on the pavement to allow access for emergency vehicles.

Drivers, however, must ask themselves whether they have allowed sufficient space on the pavement for all pedestrians. Is there room for parents with children to pass? What about people with walking aids or

assistance dogs, or wheelchair and mobility scooter users?

With an ever growing number of vehicles on the road, and continued illegal parking, there needs to be greater vigilance by the local authority. I am pleased to say that recently I have seen more enforcement officers checking areas at a variety of times (including outside of the permit parking hours in residential streets).

They now need to focus more on the Bishopric and similar roads to ensure safety is maintained and traffic can flow freely.

But, it is sad if only the fear of being caught makes drivers think about where they park. Our CEOs cannot be everywhere, and we would soon complain if our council tax was raised to employ more of them.

We, as drivers, need to ask ourselves whether we are being considerate to others when parking.

The Horsham Society is concerned about the past, present and future of the town. It seeks to promote good planning and design for the built environment and open spaces. Membership of the Horsham Society is open to anyone who shares these concerns. For more information, visit the website www.horshamsociety.org or phone 01403 259038.