

Draft letter to be sent to the new Essex Chief Constable. This letter should also be copied to the chairman of Essex Police, Robert Chambers at the same address.

Address: Springfield, Chelmsford, CM2 6DA

Dear Chief Constable Barker-McCardle

The issue of cars parking illegally on pavements in {add district/borough/constituency} has been brought to my/our attention as something of serious concern.

From information supplied by Essex Access Forums, RNIB and Essex Blind Charity I/we understand that this issue, of parked cars blocking safe passage along the pavements, is both an increasing and serious matter for many people. Blind and partially sighted people, parents with buggies and elderly people are forced to risk serious injury or even death by stepping out into busy roads to avoid cars parked on pavements, and wheelchair users have to abandon their journeys or take significant detours to get past.

Pedestrians in {area} are continually forced to choose between risking their safety, abandoning their journey or taking a significant detour to avoid these obstacles. What others may consider a small obstacle can change a trip from a simple journey to a major challenge - leading to fear, concern and inconvenience creating further social exclusion. Blind and partially sighted people and people in wheelchairs already face significant mobility challenges and are likely to experience increasing isolation, forced to rely on other people's support which in turn, damages an individual's wellbeing and their capacity to participate in community life.

The practice of parking on and blocking pavements is illegal and in many areas is a significant and persistent problem to whole communities. Across Essex I/we know a number of groups are working together with local police officers to tackle the issue. However, our partners are finding that Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs) are not able to help resolve this issue in the communities they represent as they do not have the appropriate powers to ticket offenders. Too often, the warnings that PCSOs give to drivers go unheeded and the problem remains causing frustration for pedestrians, police and PCSOs.

I/we therefore encourage you to reconsider the powers given to PCSOs in Essex and urge you to give them the power to enforce the law on pavement parking. We believe that additional powers for PCSOs, coupled with a local awareness raising campaign like that being piloted in Tendring, could make a significant difference.

I/we hope that you recognise the importance of this issue and can support our local action through amending PCSO powers. I/we believe that together we can start to change the culture and make life easier for everyone using the pavements and look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely