



Media Release

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PUTTING THE STORY STRAIGHT – KNARESBOROUGH’S WINDOW BOXES

WATERING tenants’ window boxes in Knaresborough has today hit the headlines. The clear implication was that Harrogate Borough Council’s parks staff are arguing with colleagues in the parking section. This is not the case.

In a press release issued by a local ward councillor, it is stated the council is removing first floor level window boxes on Windsor Lane and Gracious Street because the council’s own traffic wardens are threatening parks staff with parking tickets as they stop in the highway to water the boxes.

Although Harrogate Borough Council took over responsibility for the enforcement of breaches of double yellow line restrictions, the police retained enforcement on hazard and zig zag lines. It is the latter which is causing the problem for parks staff who have been warned by the police that they deem this an obstruction. This is classed as a ‘moving traffic’ offence and therefore regulated by North Yorkshire Police.

Council Leader, Councillor Mike Gardner said: “Of course departments do talk to each other to resolve problems when services overlap. But on this occasion, it is the police who have intervened. They are concerned with the obstruction caused on these narrow streets and because of the way in which the park section’s ‘cherry picker’ – needed because of the height of the windows – overhangs traffic flow and crosses zig zag lines.

“This was observed by the police CCTV cameras as causing an obstruction and they threatened to take action against the drivers. We have to respect what the police are telling us. It is a shame that comment was made without checking the facts first. Council officers should not be criticised as a means of attacking the administration.”

These floral facilities won’t be lost to Knaresborough’s in Bloom efforts, which are an important part of the town’s calendar.

“We have offered the boxes to the local In Bloom committee and have offered to plant them up and maintain them once they have been relocated, added Councillor Gardner. “I also understand that our housing staff are looking at ways in which the first floor boxes could be replaced with wall mounted displays between ground and first floor level. In the meantime, the ground floor boxes will be watered by hand as would any future wall displays. This can be done without the need for staff to stop on the highway.” ENDS

FURTHER INFORMATION: Councillor Mike Gardner is available for comment on 01423 500600 ext 6299.