

Pay Parking Survey

Wednesday, 31 March 2010



Labour
Bandon Branch

Foreword



A Chara,

After last year's election campaign, it was evident that the people of Bandon did not want Pay Parking introduced. When I was elected in June I saw that my mandate was to oppose Pay Parking.

I publically opposed its introduction by organising two protests, several public meetings and proposing a motion for Town Council, in conjunction with other Councillors. However, because the wheels were in motion and contracts were signed before we were elected, our efforts were in vain.

I subsequently tabled a motion to the Town Council in November calling for free parking during Christmas week and for free parking on Saturdays. I was forced to withdraw this motion because the amendment of a Pay Parking by-law had already been tabled in July, and under the existing Standing Orders of the Town Council a motion on the same issue cannot be tabled within a six month period.

I was given a commitment by Cork County Council that Pay Parking would be reviewed at Easter, which is now nearly upon us.

I stand by my pledge to listen to you, and to be your voice on Bandon Town Council. With this in mind, we in the Labour Party have carried out a survey of people's views on Pay Parking. I now present the findings of this survey. It is clear that the feelings toward Pay Parking have changed considerably since its introduction. Such findings also change my original mandate from opposing Pay Parking, to making Pay Parking work more efficiently and effectively for the people of Bandon.

Yours truly,

Gearóid

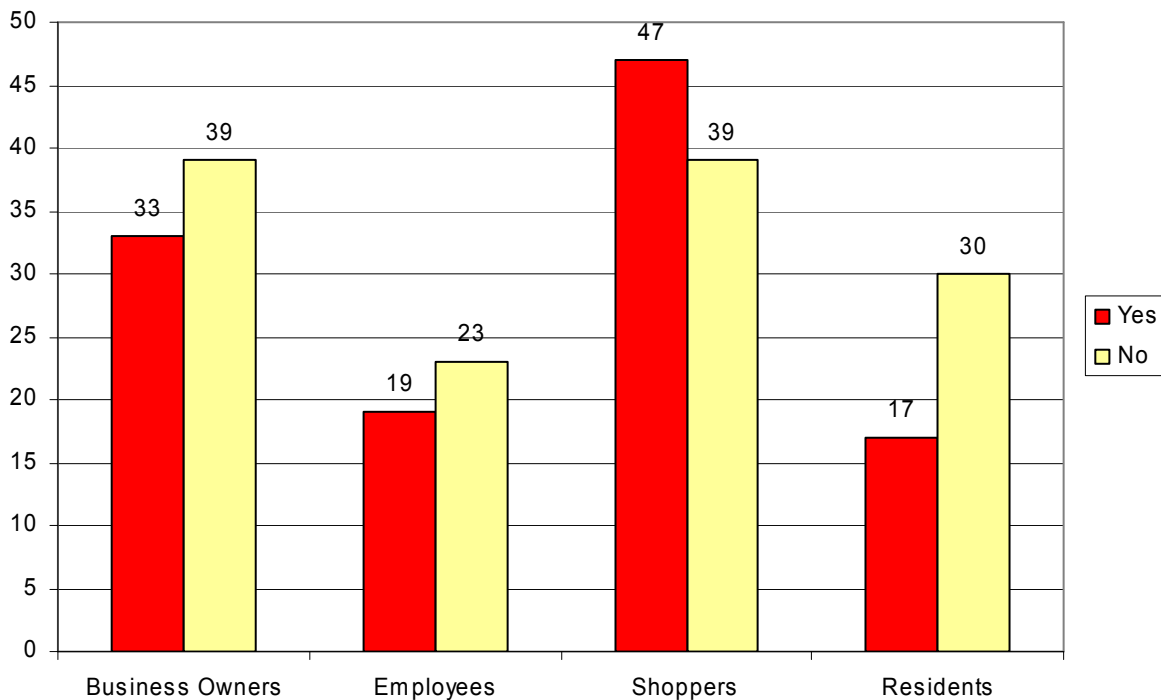
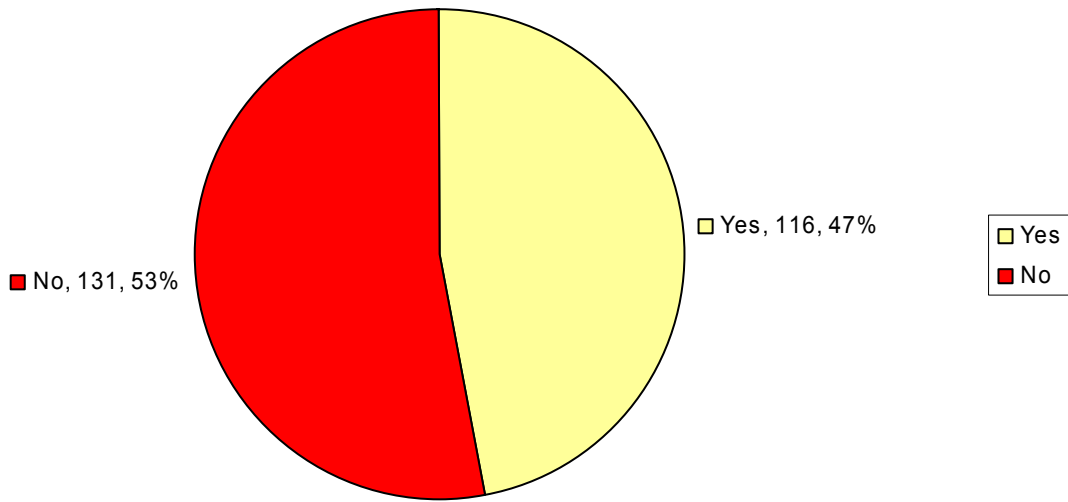
A sample of 247 people were surveyed in Bandon on
Saturday 27th March & Tuesday 30th March 2010

Business Owners	72	At premises
Employees	42	At workplace
Shoppers	86	On Street
Residents	47	At Residents

(A sample from Kilbrogan, New Road & Oliver Plunkett Street)

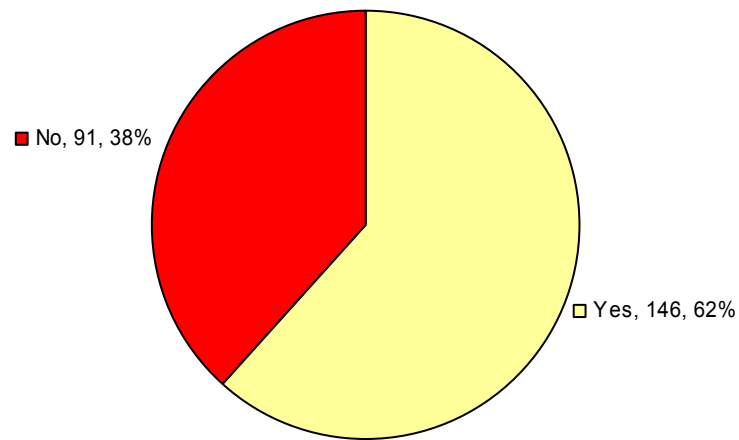
Q1. Do you think Pay Parking has had a positive affect in Bandon?

	Yes	No
Business Owners	33	39
Employees	19	23
Shoppers	47	39
Residents	17	30
	116	131



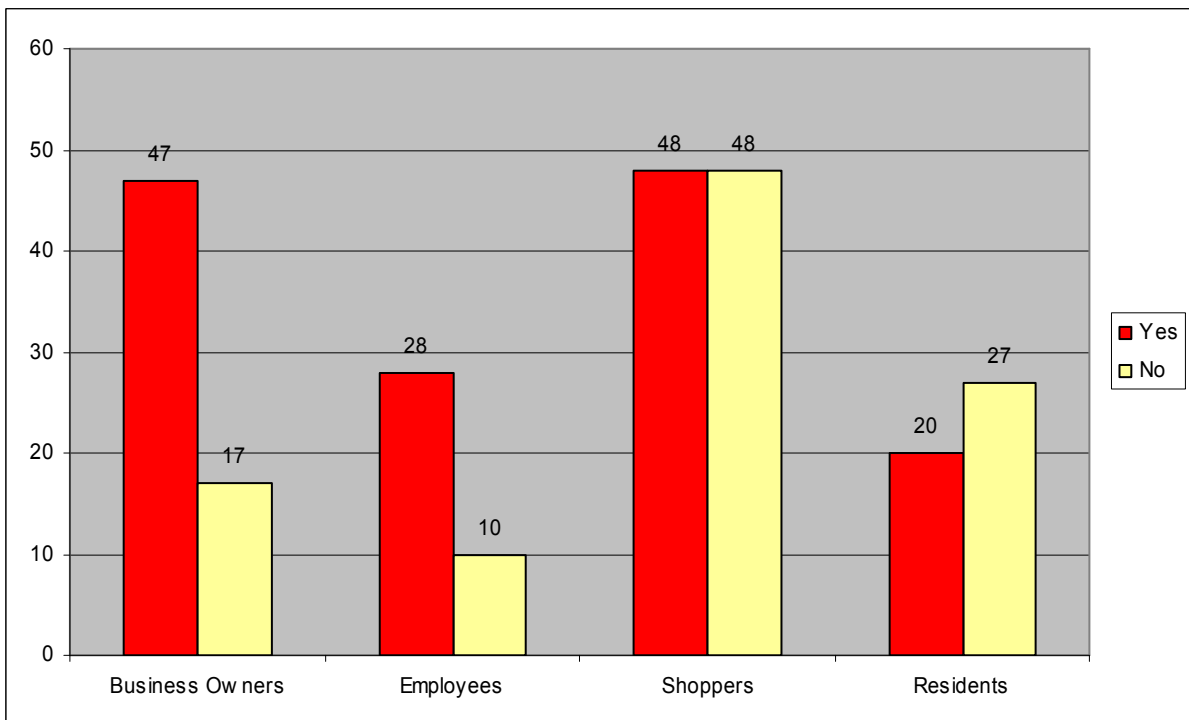
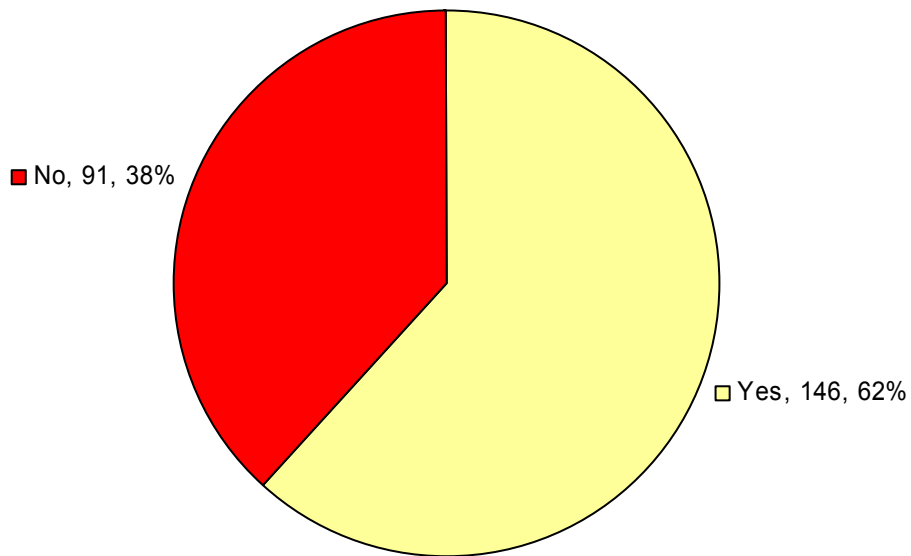
Q2. Were you opposed to Pay Parking before it's introduction?

	Yes	No
Business Owners	54	15
Employees	22	20
Shoppers	62	24
Residents	8	32
	146	91

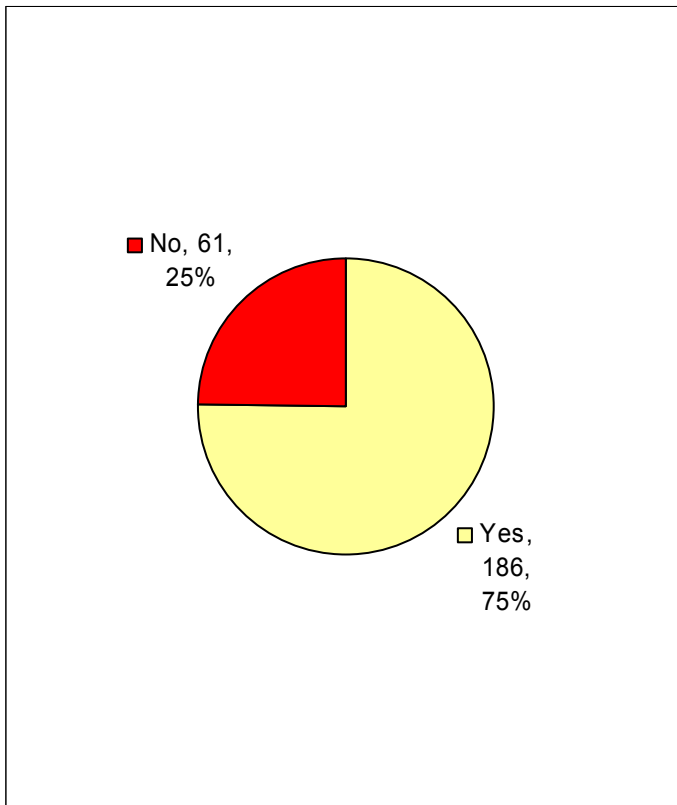


Q3. Are there a lot more car parking spaces available since the introduction of Pay Parking?

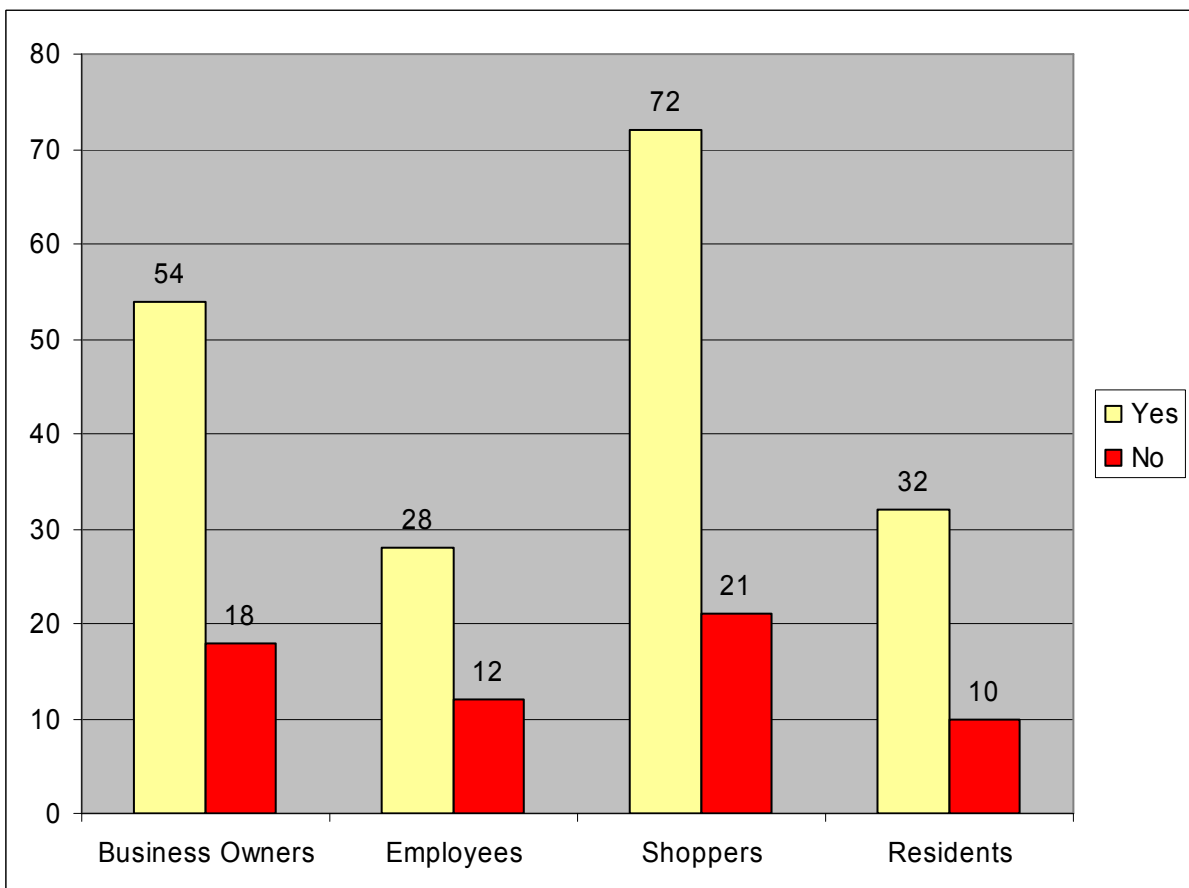
	Yes	No
Business Owners	47	17
Employees	28	10
Shoppers	48	48
Residents	20	27
	143	102



Q4. Do you think the current Pay Parking system could be improved?



	Yes	No
Business Owners	54	18
Employees	28	12
Shoppers	72	21
Residents	32	10
Total	186	61



Q5. If yes, how?

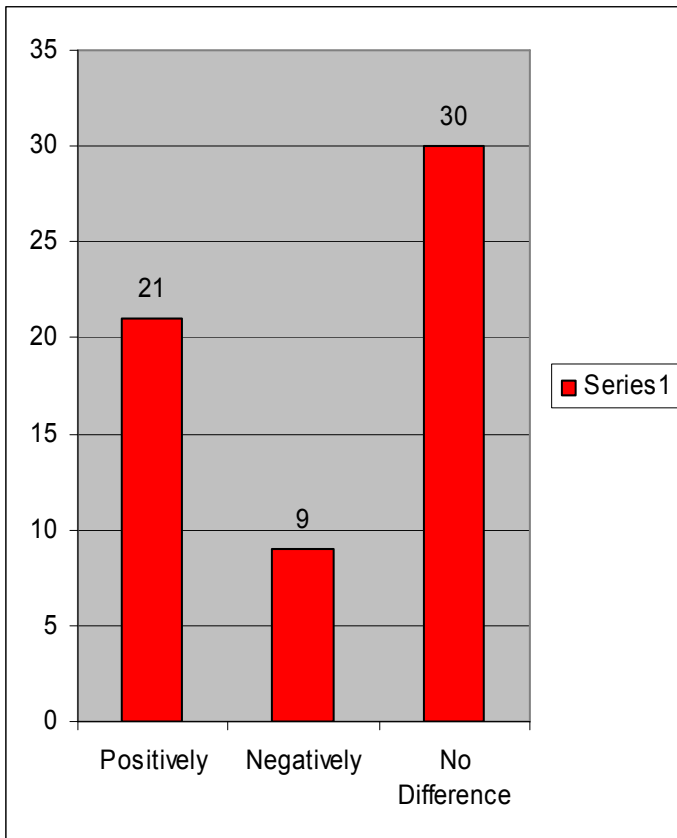


- Increase the current 30minutes free to 60minutes free.
- Offer free parking on Bank Holidays.
- Offer free parking during Christmas Week.
- Offer free parking every Saturdays in December.
- Offer free parking every Saturday.
- Offer free parking every Saturday morning.
- Erect signs on entry to town, advertising free 30minutes.
- Erect signs on entry to town, showing directions to free car parks.
- Erect signs on entry to town stating Pay Parking in operation.
- Pay Parking Machines should give back change.
- Increase information available at Machine (eg Free 30mins).
- Pay Parking should be limited to on the Street Parking.
- All car parks should be free.
- Hartes car park should be free.
- Introduce an employee car park.
- Limit the Pay Parking Zone to the Central Business District.
- Cheaper.
- Introduce a pay parking refund scheme with businesses. (eg make a purchase and redeem your ticket).
- Each car space should be identifiable with white lines.



Business Owners Section

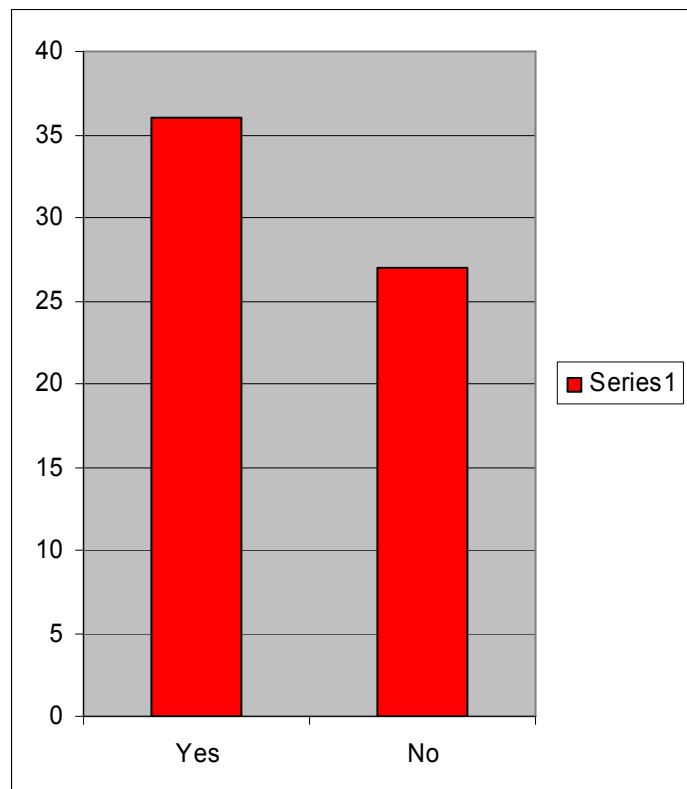
Q1. How has the introduction of Pay Parking influenced your business?



Positively	21
Negatively	9
No Difference	30

Q2. Do you think Pay Parking could impact positively on your business?

Yes	No
36	27



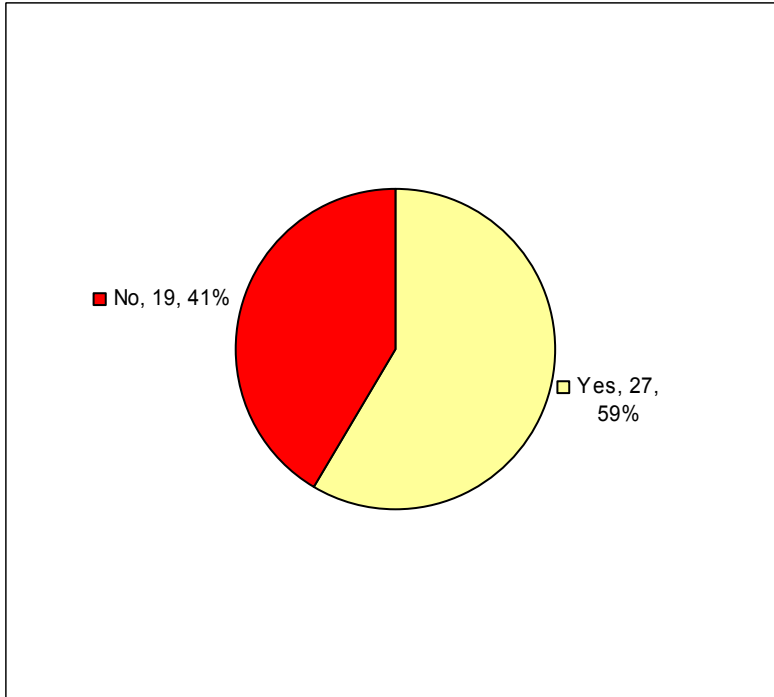
Q3. What other challenges are currently facing your business?

- Many businesses have highlighted the recession as their single biggest challenge.
- Many have stated that rates are a significant expense which are putting strains of their business.
- Many have been affected by the recent flooding, thus are still awaiting insurance monies and renovating their premises.
- A lack of credit is a big issue from many businesses on the street.

Many left this empty.

Residents Section

Q1. Has the introduction of Pay Parking in Bandon improved the availability of on street parking for residents?

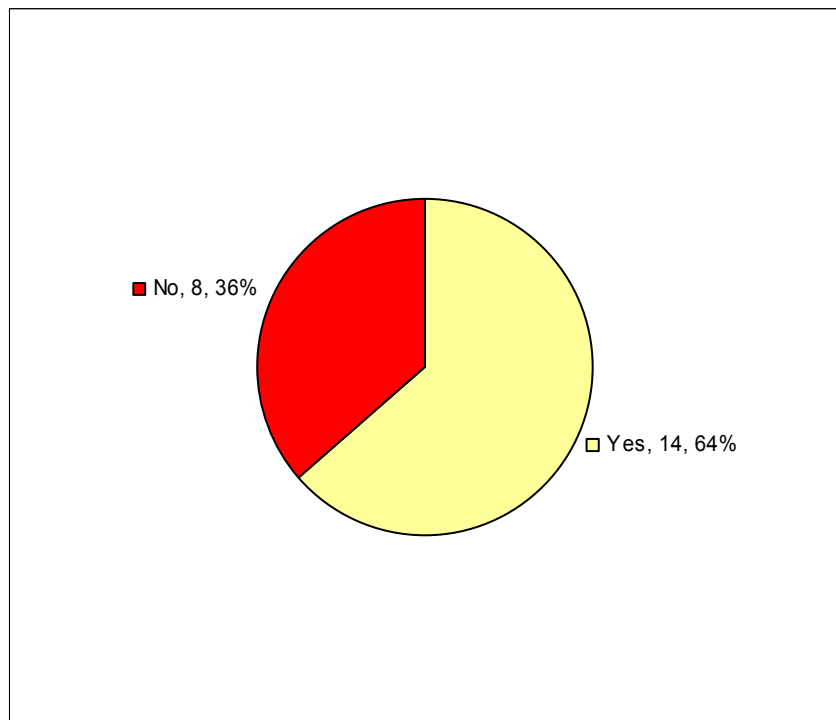


Yes	No
27	19

Q2. In your view, is the current parking permit system working?

Yes	No
14	8

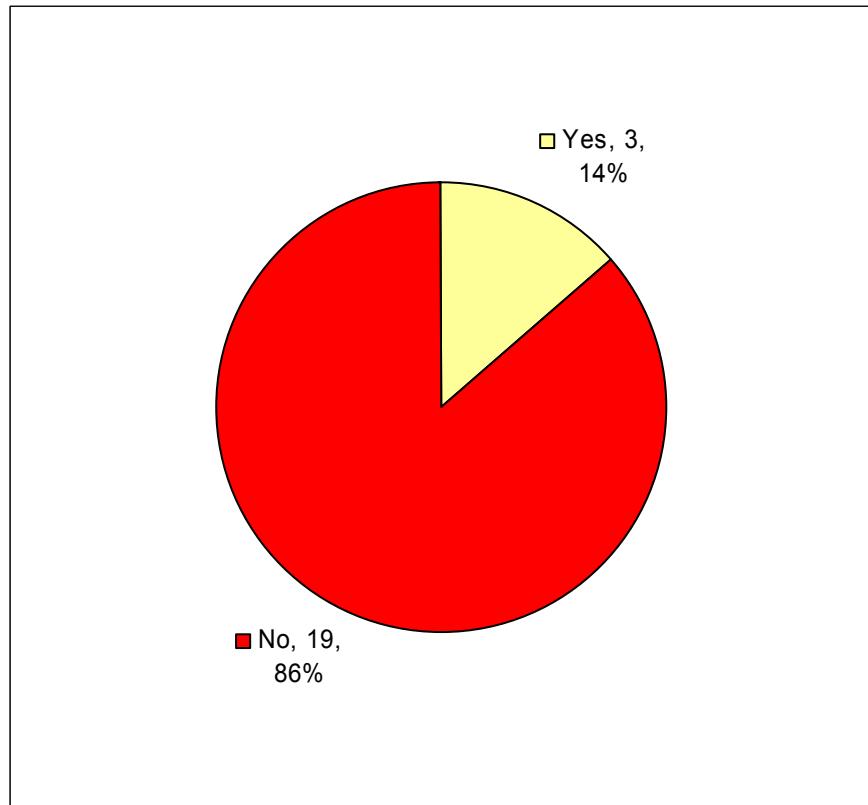
Not all residents surveyed live within the Pay Parking Zone. Thus this question was not relevant for all residents



Q3. Have you had difficulties obtaining a parking permit?

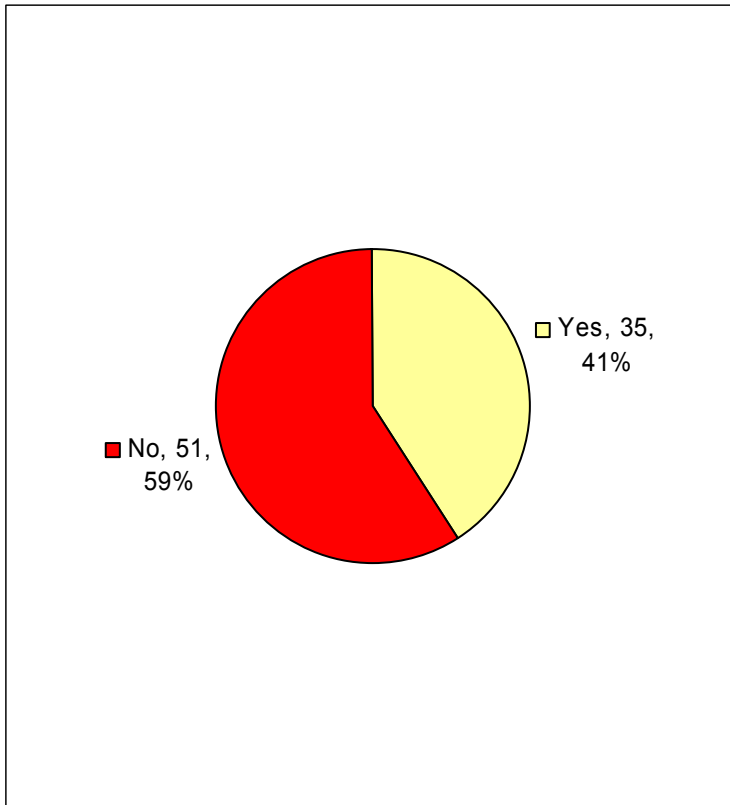
Yes	No
3	19

Not all residents surveyed live within the Pay Parking Zone. Thus this question was not relevant for all residents



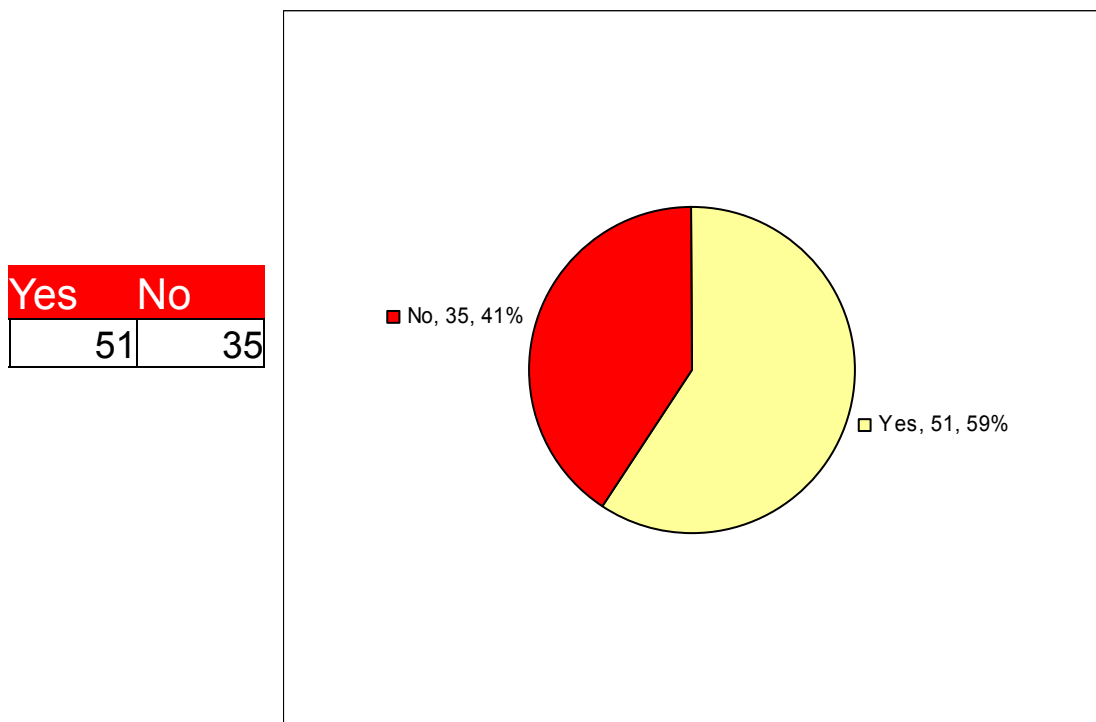
Shoppers Section

Q1. Does Pay Parking encourage you to shop in Bandon



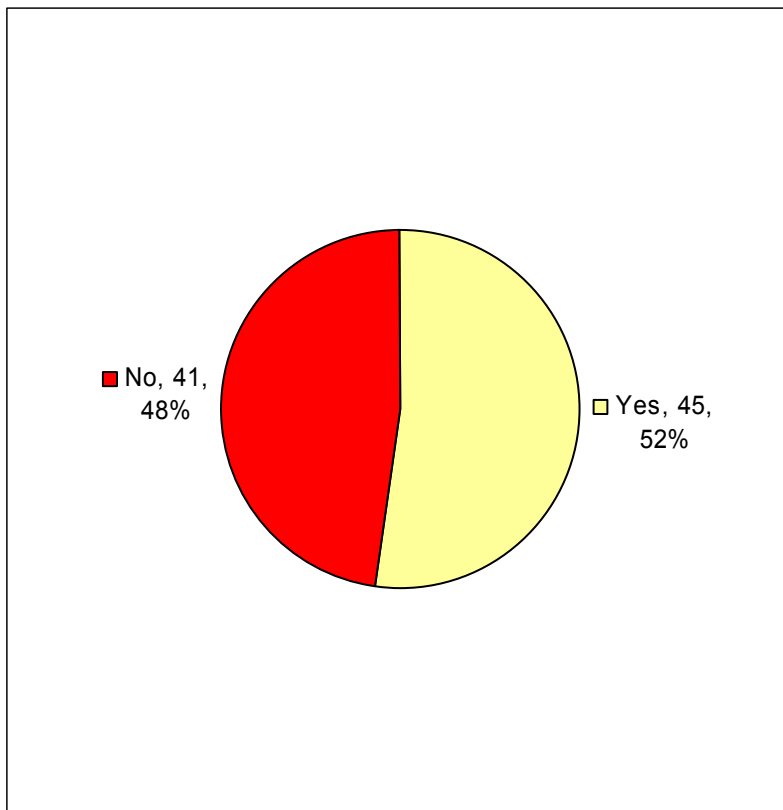
Yes	No
35	51

Q2. Do you find Bandon pleasant to shop in since the introduction of Pay Parking?



Yes	No
51	35

Q3. Is Pay Parking a deterrent to shopping in Bandon?



Yes	No
45	41

Comment

- Interestingly Q1 has yielded a result which is poles apart to survey's carried out last June. It appears that over the past nine months the reaction towards Pay Parking has changed considerably.
- This is mirrored by Q2, where many who opposed it's introduction, have now stated that they believe Pay Parking is having a positive effect on the town.
- Due to the current economic recession many Business Owners stated that it was difficult to assess the full effects of Pay Parking.
- It should be noted that although Business owners and employees have noticed an increase in car parking spaces, customers are divided on the issue (50%-50%).
- Q4 clearly indicates that there is a need to improve the current Pay Parking System. All survey groups have significantly (75%) agreed. Q2 in the business section also states that three out of four business owners believe that Pay Parking could impact positively on their business.
- Residents living on the border of pay parking zones find it difficult to find parking within the vicinity of their homes. Employees in the town are now parking in these areas. Many elderly people are effected by this and must park some distance from their homes. Some residents have stated that increasing the pay parking zone will alleviate this problem. However I believe this will just push the problem further out of the centre of Bandon as people will always park outside the pay parking zone. The only way to alleviate this problem is to provide staff parking within the town. The Free Car Park (near Cluid) is not fully utilised and it may offer some improvement to many residents, once staff begin to park there. This is not an issue for some residents whom are working themselves and return when spaces are vacant again in the evenings.
- Many people raised the issue of policing Pay Parking. As there is only one Traffic Warden employed, the current Pay Parking timetable cannot be fully supervised.
- Most Residents (86%) were satisfied with the manner in which they obtained a parking permit. However, many residents believed that there is an additional permit fee required if they are purchasing a new car.
- Residents raised a concern that although they pay for a parking permit, they are not guaranteed a car space.
- The shoppers section highlights that although consumers find it easier to manoeuvre and park in the town, Pay Parking does not encourage one to shop in Bandon, and 52% have said that Pay Parking is a deterrent to shopping in Bandon.

Recommendations

- Signage is required on all entrances to the town. We should not just highlight that Pay Parking is in operation, but also that one will get thirty minutes free parking, and that there are free car parks available.
- Free car parks should be signposted throughout the town.
- Harte's Car Park should be free. It is currently an overflow car park and rarely used by shoppers and employees.
- Each Saturday in December and Christmas Week should be free.
- Every Saturday should be free. The full timetable cannot be supervised by one traffic warden. Many towns where pay parking is in operation have Saturday as a Pay Parking free day.
- Thirty minutes free should be increased to sixty minutes free.
- Negotiations should begin between the Bandon Business Association and Cork County Council/Bandon Town Council to activate a consumer system, whereby a customer can redeem the cost of parking off the price of goods and services. This system is in place in many private car parks.
- Reduce the Pay Parking Zone to the Central Business District.
- Pay Parking Machines should give change.

Conclusion

It clear from the results of this survey that Pay Parking has attained a level of support and satisfaction among the people of Bandon. However, this does not mean that we can sit on our laurels. Our town faces the massive challenge of the current recession. We must be prepared to be innovative and forward-thinking in how we operate this system, so that it works efficiently and effectively for the Business Owners, Shoppers and Residents of our town.