

Motor minders' nice little earner

A MONEY-MAKING scheme is coining it for many locals in the Markets area of Belfast who are charging up to £10 a week for car parking and minding facilities outside their homes.

Signs are even being displayed in business premises in the area telling of the Arthur Daley type deal, stating 'Car Parking spaces available at £10 per week'.

Scores of frustrated motorists are using the Markets motor car minder facility.

One car owner from Lisburn told Sunday Life: "It's cheaper than most car parks and the people in the house will keep an eye on the car so it doesn't get

BY SUNDAY LIFE REPORTER

broken into or any damage done to it. "It's a godsend, really and there are lots of people taking advantage of the offer."

However the parking profiteers have caused a split in the usually tight-knit community.

Stacked

One man, who asked not to be named, SAID: "All these cars are blocking the streets. It's terrible."

"Just say an ambulance or a fire brigade tried to get through it would have no chance."

"There's one guy who

has seven cars stacked up outside his house with traffic cones and everything.

"He might be making £70 a week but what about the rest of us who don't want these cars parked in our streets — what are we supposed to do?"

A spokesperson for the DoE said: "The Department are aware of the problems caused by commuters parking in city centre residential areas.

"These streets are adopted and therefore can be used by all road users. Concern regarding access will be dealt with by the Department and the RUC."



Some commuters are finding that the Markets area is the cheapest car park in town. PICTURE: FRED HOARE

Leisure centres security call

BELFAST City Council has been urged to review security at its leisure centres following a failed loyalist murder bid on Friday night.

An armed and masked gunman stormed into the staff canteen at the Whiterock leisure centre in West Belfast around tea-time.

Police said the gunman asked for a person by name but couldn't find his intended victim and fled.

Sinn Fein councillor Pat McGown called on Belfast City Council to launch a full-scale investigation into security at its leisure centres.

He also alleged that at least three loyalists were involved in the attempted murder bid.

The terrorists car, a blue Vauxhall Astra, which had been fitted with false number plates, was stolen from Eglantine Avenue in South Belfast the previous night.

It was later found abandoned on the Springfield Road in West Belfast.

JAIL THREAT AS KAISER ESCAPES

A bolt from the blue say owners

BY NEIL MULHOLLAND

THE ELDERLY owners of Kaiser the condemned Alsatian could be jailed for contempt of court — thanks to the German shepherd's dramatic bolt for freedom last week.

Court and council officials were incensed by Kaiser's dawn disappearing act on Thursday... just a few hours before Judge Frank Russell signed his death warrant.

Joan and Gordon Gibson woke up three days ago to discover that Kaiser was missing from his kennel in the garage of their Ballygowan home.

"We went out looking for him in the car but he must have got away bounding across the fields," Mrs Gibson said.

"He either escaped or he was kidnapped by some animal lover, we just don't know."

Hope

"It was a real shock to us and another worry on top of everything else. I just hope he is with a kind family."

She added: "I realise the court could prosecute us now but that's out of our hands."

"Surely to goodness they would not lock up two old folks like me and Gordon over this would they?"

According to the court service, the Gibsons could be brought back to court to face County Court judge Frank Russell at any time after the February 28 deadline to explain why Kaiser has not been put down.

If he finds them guilty of



Downtown Radio's Lynda Jayne was about to feature Kaiser on her radio show on Thursday, but owners Gordon and Joan Gibson turned up to say he had disappeared.

contempt of court, they could be liable to up to two months in prison, a £2,000 fine, and further fines of £50 for every day their pet is at large after that date.

Order

Kaiser apparently escaped three days ago, just a few hours before Judge Russell sanctioned the destruction order in Downpatrick Courthouse.

The destruction order must be carried out within 28 days of February 1.

A spokesman for the

courts service said if the order was deliberately NOT complied with, it could be construed as contempt of court.

"If it is obvious that the owners of the dog are ignoring the order or trying to avoid it, they could face prosecution if it is proved. Contempt of court is a serious offence."

Ards Council borough inspector Richard Britain said his staff would visit the Gibson home "in due course" to ensure that Kaiser has been put down.

"The council's main concern is ensuring that the Order is complied with to protect members of the public from future attack," he said.

"We will expect to be provided with a letter from a vet confirming that the destruction order has been carried out."

He added: "If it is clear that the dog has NOT been put down and it is clear that it is no longer with its owners, then we will notify the court to take the appropriate action."

Meanwhile, the Gibsons have received a letter from the Queen in response to their plea for a Royal pardon for Kaiser.

Her Majesty's private secretary informed the couple that their letter had been passed on to the Northern Ireland Office for further action.

An NIO spokesman said the Secretary of State would definitely not intervene.

"This is a matter for the courts," said a spokesman.

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