

DOVER DISTRICT COUNCIL



PARKING SERVICES

ANNUAL REPORT 2012 – 2013

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INTRODUCTION

Dover District Council took on responsibility for the enforcement of on-street parking regulations from Kent Police on 23rd January 2001. This document reports on the performance of Dover District Council's Parking Services between 1st April 2012 and 31st March 2013.

Whilst parking in contravention of the parking regulations is no longer a criminal act, it remains nonetheless an illegal act. The legislation under which Dover District Council operates its parking services are:-

- Kent County Council (various roads, Dover District) (waiting restrictions and street parking places) Order March 2005 (with amendments); and
- Dover District Council (Off-Street Parking Places) Order 2010.

A copy of the KCC Order is available via: -

www.kent.gov.uk/roads_and_transport/highway_maintenance/traffic_regulation_orders/made_tros/dover_made.aspx

A copy of the DDC off-street order is available on our website via:-

www.dover.gov.uk/parking/documents_policies/off-street_parking.aspx

Dover District Council acts as an agent on behalf of Kent County Council for enforcement of parking restrictions on the roads throughout the district. Any surplus made from this part of our service is ring-fenced and must be used for transport or environmental projects. A surplus of £66,028 was made on-street during 2012 – 2013.

On 31st March 2008, new parking enforcement related legislation was introduced, known as the Traffic Management Act 2004. Under this legislation, parking wardens became known as Civil Enforcement Officers (CEO), higher and lower bands of penalty charges were introduced and it became possible to post a Penalty Charge Notice (PCN) to the registered owner or keeper of a vehicle if a CEO had been prevented from issuing it at the time, e.g. if the motorist had driven away before the CEO was able to serve the PCN, or the CEO had been threatened with violence, or the contravention had been recorded on an approved device. More information on this legislation is available from our website at:-

www.dover.gov.uk/parking/documents_policies/traffic_management_act.aspx, or

The Department for Transport at www.dft.gov.uk

CAR PARKS

Dover District Council operates the majority of public car parks throughout the district. However, the following car parks, whilst available to the public, are managed by Dover District Council on behalf of the landowner:-

- Park Street and St. Ethelburgas, Deal – The Co-operative Group Limited;
- West Street, Deal – Sainsbury's Supermarkets Limited; and
- Samphire Hoe – Euro Tunnel.

A full list of all the car parks operated by Dover District Council can be found at: -

www.dover.gov.uk/parking.aspx

Most car parks and roads in Dover district are free of charge to users on Sundays, apart from the following areas, which are "Pay and Display" seven days per week: -

- Camden Crescent car park, Dover;
- The Seafront, Dover;
- Beach Street car park, Deal;
- Beach Street on-street, Deal; and
- The Quay car park, Sandwich.

Linear charging is available in most Dover district public car parks and on-street. Linear charging is recognised as a fairer system for paying for parking as after a minimum charge (typically 30 minutes) customers are able to pay by the minute for the time they require. This eliminates the need for the correct change and the need to purchase parking by the hour when less time is required.

We continue to offer payment for parking by mobile telephone, using a system operated by RingGo. Details of this service are available on our website at: -

www.dover.gov.uk/parking/pay_by_phone.aspx

CURRENT OPERATION

Parking Services operates from bases in Dover and Deal, with enforcement carried out seven days a week including the evenings. The district is split into seven beats, four in Dover, two in Deal and one covering Sandwich and the rural areas. Two Civil Enforcement Officers are on duty most evenings and three are on duty on Sundays throughout the district subject to the availability of sufficient staff.

The Parking Administration section is operational from 9am until 5pm Monday to Friday. This section does not deal with personal callers although enquiries can be made in person at any of the Council's public offices. Addresses and opening hours of these offices are available on our web site at www.dover.gov.uk

Drivers who have been issued with a Penalty Charge Notice (PCN) are able to pay a charge or appeal on-line. A person appealing on-line is able to access any evidence obtained at the time, including photographs, to help them make an informed decision as to whether or not to continue with the appeal. Details on how to do this are shown on the PCN.

PENALTY CHARGE NOTICES (PCN's)

In the financial year 2012-2013, 13,843 PCN's were issued; 8,277 on-street and 5,566 in car parks. This was 2,649 fewer than in 2011-2012.

The table below gives a breakdown of reasons for issuing PCN's, and whether they were on or off-street for 2012-2013: -

	On-Street	Off-Street	Total
All contraventions	8277	5566	13843
On Street			
Lower level	4104	0	4104
05 Parked after expiry of paid time	379	0	379
06 Parked without displaying valid pay and display ticket	1365	0	1365
07 Parked beyond expired time	2	0	2
22 Reparked in parking place before return time expired	75	0	75
24 Not parked within the markings of a bay or space	31	0	31
30 Parked longer than permitted in free parking place	2252	0	2252
Higher level	4173	0	4173
01 Parked in a restricted street during prescribed hours	2396	0	2396
02 No waiting/loading	578	0	578
16 Parked in a permit bay without a valid permit	18	0	18
21 Parked in a suspended bay/space	43	0	43
23 Parked in an area not designated for that vehicle	103	0	103
25 Parked in loading space during prescribed hours	231	0	231
40 Parked in a disabled bay without displaying badge	211	0	211
45 Parked in a taxi rank	381	0	381
47 Parked in a restricted bus stop/stand	63	0	63
48 Stopped in a restricted area outside a school	16	0	16
61 Commercial vehicle	107	0	107
99 Pedestrian crossing	4	0	4
Off-Street			
Lower level	0	5166	5166
80 Parked for longer than the maximum period permitted	0	39	39
82 Pay and Display ticket expired	0	1833	1833
83 No ticket displayed	0	3038	3038
86 Parked beyond the bay markings	0	203	203
93 Parked in a car park when closed	0	53	53
Higher level	0	400	400
70 Parked in a loading area without reasonable excuse	0	12	12
81 Parked in a restricted area in a car park	0	3	3
85 Parked in permit bay without valid permit	0	48	48
87 Parked in a disabled bay without displaying badge	0	206	206
91 Parked in an area not designated for that vehicle	0	131	131

When all attempts to recover outstanding charges have failed, Dover District Council utilises the services of three bailiff companies to recover this money. This is at no cost to the Council and so is not a demand upon public money. 782 cases were passed to three bailiff companies in 2012 – 2013, 48 fewer than the 830 cases passed on in 2011 – 2012. Prior to passing any cases to bailiffs, where possible we will accept payment by instalments. However, where all reasonable attempts to seek repayment have failed, we will have no hesitation in passing cases on in order that we can properly recover money owing to the public purse.

Penalty Charge Notices are issued to foreign registered vehicles parked in contravention of the regulations within Dover district. Many of these are paid. However, in cases where payment is not made, Dover District Council utilises the services of a company specialising in the recovery of debts from abroad. In 2012 – 2013, 1,199 cases were passed to this collection agency, resulting in 180 payments being recovered.

STATISTICS

3,633 items of mail (excluding e-mails) were received by the Parking Services team during the year. Whilst this is a decrease on mail received during 2011 – 2012, e-mail traffic has increased correspondingly, indicating that more people are using e-mail as a preferred method of communication.

Civil Enforcement Officers experienced 1 case of violence that was serious enough to record using the Council's violence at work procedures for the period 2012 – 2013. This was a decrease of 8 on the previous year.

Of the 13,843 Penalty Charge Notices issued during 2012 – 2013, 1,597 were subsequently cancelled or written off for a variety of reasons. It is important to stress that every case is treated individually and on its own merits and mitigating circumstances will always be considered. Along with other local authorities in Kent, Dover District Council has agreed and published its cancellation policy. This is in line with our aim to be open and transparent in parking matters. This policy and other parking related documents could be found at: -

www.dover.gov.uk/parking/documents_policies.aspx

Civil Enforcement Officers report to the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Authority (DVLA) all untaxed vehicles that are seen during the course of their patrols. During 2012 – 2013, 83 vehicles were reported in Dover, 72 in Deal and 7 in Sandwich and the rural areas of the district. The DVLA will then take enforcement action in all cases reported to them.

The table below shows a breakdown of where PCNs were issued during 2012 – 2013:

	On-Street	Off-Street	Total
Dover	5201	2123	7324
Deal	2337	2951	5288
Sandwich	605	492	1097
Rural	134	0	134
Total	8277	5566	13843

APPEALS AND CHALLENGES

Following the issue of a PCN, the vehicle owner may dispute its issue at three stages:

- An “informal challenge/representation” to the Local Authority prior to the issue of a Notice to Owner;
- Once a Notice to Owner has been issued, a formal representation to the Local Authority may be made; and
- If a formal representation is rejected the owner may appeal to an independent adjudicator at the Traffic Penalty Tribunal.

The process of considering challenges, representations and the defence of appeals is a legal process that requires officers dealing with these aspects to be trained in the relevant legislation and how to apply it. There must be a clear separation between the staff that decide on the issuing of PCN's and the staff that decide on representations. Within DDC, the issuing of PCN's is carried out by our own Civil Enforcement Officers, managed by a Parking Operations Manager and representations are considered by the Parking Administration staff managed by their own Manager to ensure that the required separation is in place.

20 formal representations were made to an independent adjudicator at the Traffic Penalty Tribunal during 2012 – 2013. Of these, 7 were found in favour of DDC, 7 were found in favour of the appellant and 6 were not contested.

As referred to above, not all appeals go to an Adjudicator. During the year, 3,298 appeals and challenges were received by Parking Services. Of these, 1,677 resulted in the cancellation of the charge and the remainder were pursued for payment.

INCOME AND EXPENDITURE

Expenditure and Income in surface-paying car parks

	2012 - 2013
	£
Parking services administration	35,248.44
Parking operations and enforcement	103,281.22
Corporate repair and maintenance	11,867.57
Vandalism of plant	0
Grounds maintenance-routine	5,824.12
Grounds maintenance – non-corporate	5,845.81
Electricity	2,159.97
Sewerage and environmental services	310.75
Rents payable	31,672.77
Business rates	153,546.10
Equipment-maintenance	15,658.10
Equipment-purchase	530.00
Printing from print unit	74.80
Printing from external printer	13,682.58
Computer software maintenance	9,9879.09
Computer link telephones	5,394.50
Subscriptions	2,530.00
Insurance-not vehicles or building	854.72
Compensation payments	500.00
Agency payments	2,062.94
Publicity advert(not recruit)	0
Write-offs	650.93
Reimburse 3rd party car parks	35,649.38
Reimburse RingGo fees collected	4,230.24
Central support-design studio	3,038.81
Central support-Dover District Council @ your service	9,834.46
Central support-accountancy	3,894.50
Central support-legal	4,424.02
Central support-property services	13,174.07
Central support-procurement and creditors	3,740.29
Central support-corporate income collection	2,225.75
Divisional overhead-parking services administration	26,881.46
Divisional overhead-parking operations and enforcement	34,164.25
Loss on revaluation	137,056.00
Miscellaneous licence income	-11,102.04
Car park fee income	-1,259,200.90
Car park season tickets	-70,045.89
Penalty charge notices	-108,737.40
Builders permits	-323.92
Residents permits	-38,764.65
Wayleave rent income	-51,598.19
	-859,774.56
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Income	-1,539,772.99
Expenditure	303,035.16
Capital	137,056.00
Parking Services Administration	199,575.37
Central Service Administration	40,331.90
	-859,774.56
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Expenditure in free car parks

	2012 - 2013
	£
Parking operations and enforcement	15,592.28
Corporate repair and maintenance	6,241.20
Grounds maintenance-routine	1,181.84
Grounds maintenance – non-corporate	515.71
Rents payable	1.00
Business rates	5,928.75
Subscriptions	2,530.00
Compensation payments	500.00
Central support-accountancy	1,113.35
Central support-property services	1,104.59
Central support-procurement and creditors	263.03
Div overhead-parking operations and enforcement	5,157.75
	<u>40,129.50</u>
Expenditure	16,898.50
Parking Services Administration	20,750.03
Central Service Administration	2,480.97
	<u>40,129.50</u>

Expenditure in multi-storey car park

	2012 - 2013
	£
Corporate repair and maintenance	334.66
Vandalism	225.76
Water charges-metered	-13.56
Rents payable	22,500.00
Business rates	3,984.60
Premises insurance	7,609.27
Central support-accountancy	554.46
Central sup-procurement and creditors	132.45
	<u>35,327.64</u>
Expenditure	34,640.73
Parking Services Administration	0
Central Service Administration	686.91
	<u>35,327.64</u>

CIVIL ENFORCEMENT OFFICERS

Weekly briefings are held with all Civil Enforcement Officers during which they are updated with current legislation and regulations and informed of any particular issues. This ensures accurate, fair, transparent and consistent enforcement across the district.

In 2012 – 2013 DDC had an establishment of 2 CEO supervisors and 11 Civil Enforcement Officer's. However, for much of the year we carried three vacancies due to retirement and resignation, and consequently operated at a 72% attendance level.

SAFER PARKING

This is an award scheme known as Park Mark® run by the British Parking Association (BPA) with the support of the Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO). The award is given to those car parks that have a low crime rate and which demonstrate good management practices. Independent assessors from the police and the BPA inspect the car parks and decide whether or not each car park meets the necessary criteria for the award.

More information on the scheme is available on the BPA's website at www.britishparking.co.uk and a list of all car parks that have been accredited with the Park Mark® are listed on the Safer Parking website at www.saferparking.com

93% of the DDC car parks have the Park Mark® award.

If you have any questions relating to any part of this report, please do not hesitate to contact Christopher Allen, Community Safety, CCTV and Parking Manager, via e-mail at christopherallen@dover.gov.uk