

DOVER DISTRICT COUNCIL



PARKING SERVICES

ANNUAL REPORT 2016 – 2017

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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 2016 and 31st March 2017.

Whilst parking in contravention of the parking regulations is no longer a criminal act, it nonetheless remains 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 2017.

A copy of the KCC On-Street Order and the DDC Off-Street order is available to view at our Whitfield offices or the Gateway office in Castle Street, Dover.

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 £71,433.71 was made on-street during 2016 – 2017.

On 31st March 2008, new parking enforcement related legislation was introduced, known as the Traffic Management Act 2004. More information on this legislation is available from previous annual reports or our website at:-

www.dover.gov.uk/parking/documents or the Government Services website at www.gov.uk/browse/driving.

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. Ethelburga's, 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

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 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. In the past, this minimum charge period was typically 30 minutes.

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

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 staff.

The Parking Support 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 the 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.

Parking Support can be contacted on parking@dover.gov.uk

ITEMS OF NOTE

- In October 2016 we undertook the replacement of all our on and off street pay and display machines throughout the District. Many of the new machines now offer the facility of chip and pin or payment by debit/card.
- Parking Admin has implemented a new back-office software, enabling appellants a seamless on-line appeal and payment system.

PENALTY CHARGE NOTICES (PCN's)

In the financial year 2016-2017, 16,031 PCN's were issued; 11,262 on-street and 4,769 in car parks. This was 3,899 more than in 2015-2016.

The table below gives a breakdown of reasons for issuing PCN's, and whether they were on or off-street for 2016-2017: -

	On-Street	Off-Street	Total
All contraventions	11,262	4,769	16,031
On Street			
Lower level	4,643	0	4,643
05 Parked after expiry of paid time	235	0	235
06 Parked without displaying valid pay and display ticket	1,241	0	1,241
07 Parked beyond expired time	0	0	0
22 Reparked in parking place before return time expired	15	0	15
24 Not parked within the markings of a bay or space	0	0	0
30 Parked longer than permitted in free parking place	3,152	0	3,152
Higher level	6,619	0	6,619
01 Parked in a restricted street during prescribed hours	4,066	0	4,066
02 No waiting/loading	698	0	698
16 Parked in a permit bay without a valid permit	13	0	13
18 Prohibition of Trading	1	0	1
21 Parked in a suspended bay/space	11	0	11
23 Parked in an area not designated for that vehicle	181	0	181
25 Parked in loading space during prescribed hours	284	0	284
26 Double parked	17	0	17
27 Dropped footway	58	0	58
40 Parked in a disabled bay without displaying badge	223	0	223
42 Parked in a Police bay	8	0	8
45 Parked in a taxi rank	401	0	401
47 Parked in a restricted bus stop/stand	133	0	133
48 Stopped in a restricted area outside a school	56	0	56
61 Commercial vehicle	443	0	443
99 Pedestrian crossing	26	0	26
Off-Street			
Lower level	0	3,567	3,567
80 Parked for longer than maximum period permitted	0	98	98
82 Pay and Display ticket expired	0	951	951
83 No ticket displayed	0	2,272	2,272
86 Parked beyond the bay markings	0	226	226
93 Parked in a car park when closed	0	20	20
95 Designated Purpose	0	2	2
Higher level	0	454	454
70 Parked in a loading area without reasonable excuse	0	29	29
81 Parked in a restricted area in a car park	0	28	28
85 Parked in permit bay without valid permit	0	60	60
87 Parked in a disabled bay without displaying badge	0	223	223
91 Parked in an area not designated for that vehicle	0	114	114

When all attempts by Parking Services to recover outstanding charges have failed, Dover District Council utilises the services of three Enforcement Agencies (previously referred to as bailiffs) to recover this money. This is at no cost to the Council and so is not a demand upon public money. 1,695 cases were passed to the Enforcement Agencies in 2016 – 2017, 1008 more than the previous financial year. Prior to passing any cases to Enforcement Agencies, where possible we will endeavour to reach a compromise on payment, including accepting 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.

The Enforcement Agencies utilised by Parking Services do not operate under contract, but under a Service Level Agreement, which is renewed annually.

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 2016 – 2017, 1164 cases were passed to this collection agency, an increase of 199 on the previous reporting year. Of these, 142 payments were recovered, an increase of 74 on the previous year.

STATISTICS

There were no cases of violence reported by Civil Enforcement Officers this reporting year. This is the second year in a row without any such incidents and is indicative of the benefit of introducing Body Worn Video Cameras for all staff.

Of the 16,031 Penalty Charge Notices issued during 2016 – 2017, 2,234 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

The table below shows a breakdown of where PCNs were issued during 2015 – 2016:

	On-Street	Off-Street	Total
Dover	7,282	1,858	9,140
Deal	2864	2422	5286
Sandwich	851	475	1326
Rural	265	14	279
Total	11,262	4,769	16,031

APPEALS AND CHALLENGES

Following the issue of a PCN, the vehicle owner may dispute it's 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.

The following link shows a short video, advising what to do if you receive a PCN <https://www.dover.gov.uk/Transport,-Streets--Parking/Parking/Parking.aspx>

9 formal representations were made to an independent adjudicator at the Traffic Penalty Tribunal during 2016 – 2017. Of these, 1 was found in favour of DDC, 5 were found in favour of the appellant and 3 were not contested.

As referred to above, not all appeals go to an Adjudicator. During the year, 2,786 appeals and challenges were received by Parking Services. Of these, 1,576 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

	2016 – 2017
	£
Parking services administration	198,388.90
Grounds Maintenance	8,923.97
Utilities	3,298.74
Rents payable	37,829.05
Business rates	143,273.22
Insurance	857.80
Equipment	16,798.44
Printing from External Printer	14,020.32
Computer software maintenance	14,508.61
Computer link telephones	4,678.57
Land Registry Fees	36.00
Subscriptions	2,721.66
Compensation Payments	597.00
Bank charges	5,881.84
Agency payments	1,983.77
Reimburse third party car parks	54,347.75
Reimburse RingGo fees collected	11,412.07
Central support costs	40,067.70
Capital Costs	434,202.49
Miscellaneous licence income	-12,243.54
Car park fee income	-1,400,700.38
Car park season tickets	-60,213.92
Penalty Charge Notices	-76,248.52
Builders permits	-8,149.54
Residents permits	-57,972.93
Rent income	-2,750.00
Wayleave rent income	-56,724.59
	<hr/>
	-681,176.52
	<hr/>
Income	-1,675,003.42
Expenditure	321,167.81
Capital	434,202.49
Parking Services Administration	198,388.90
Central Service Administration	40,067.70
	<hr/>
	-681,176.52
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Expenditure in free car parks

	2016 - 2017
	£
Parking Services Admin	29,959.28
Repair and Maintenance	5,299.33
Rents Payable	1.00
Business Rates	6,376.70
Subscriptions	2,721.66
Central Support Costs	8,872.69
Wayleave Rent Income	<u>-4.17</u>
	<u>53,226.49</u>

Expenditure in multi-storey car park

	2016 - 2017
	£
Business rates	<u>319.85</u>
	<u><u>319.85</u></u>

Additional financial information, particularly in relation to on-street, can be found at

<http://www.dover.gov.uk/Transport,-Streets--Parking/Parking/Documents--Policies/Home.aspx>

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 2016 – 2017 DDC had an establishment of 2 CEO supervisors and 11 Civil Enforcement Officer's. We also employ two part-time Parking Assistants, whose role is to collect cash and undertake minor maintenance issues, freeing up the CEOs to undertake their enforcement role.

During this reporting year, we recruited to our full strength and for the majority of the year had few absences other than annual leave.

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.

TRANSPARENCY

Councils are required to publish annually the number of controlled parking spaces within their area. The table provides that information:

CONTROLLED OFF-STREET SPACES			
TOWN	P&D SPACES	DIS. SPACES	TOTAL
Dover	691	26	717
Deal	960	46	1006
Sandwich	427	12	439
Total	2078	84	2162

ESTIMATED CONTROLLED OFF-STREET SPACES	
TOWN	ESTIMATED SPACES
Dover	352
Deal	1073
Sandwich	191
Total	1616

If you have any questions relating to any part of this report, please do not hesitate to contact parking@dover.gov.uk