

DOVER DISTRICT COUNCIL



PARKING SERVICES

ANNUAL REPORT 2011 – 2012

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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 2011 and 31st March 2012.

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 £61,312 was made on-street during 2011 . 2012, following the two previous financial years' deficits of £59,416 (2010 . 2011) and £24,027 (2009 . 2010). A major service restructure within DDC has contributed to this surplus, which has been used to offset the previous years' deficits. This is a legitimate use of that surplus.

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. 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~~ 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.

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 2011-2012, 16,492 PCNs were issued; 9,654 on-street and 6,826 in car parks. This was 1,124 more than in 2010-2011.

The table below gives a breakdown of reasons for issuing PCN's, and whether they were on or off-street for 2011-2012: -

	On-Street	Off-Street	Total
All contraventions	9654	6826	16492
On Street	9654	0	9654
Lower level	4882	0	4882
05 Expired time	608	0	608
06 No valid ticket	1864	0	1864
07 Beyond expired time	3	0	3
09 Extend time paid	0	0	0
22 Reparked within 2 hours	80	0	80
24 Not parked correctly	1	0	1
30 Free parking place	2326	0	2326
Higher level	4772	0	4772
01 In a restricted street	3212	0	3212
02 No waiting/loading	482	0	482
16 Permit bay	17	0	17
21 Suspended bay/space	26	0	26
23 Area not designated	117	0	117
25 Loading bay	179	0	179
40 Disabled	213	0	213
45 Taxi rank	349	0	349
47 Bus stop/stand	44	0	44
48 Outside a school	20	0	20
61 Commercial vehicle	113	0	113
Off-Street	0	6826	6826
Lower level	0	6356	6356
80 Period exceeded	0	65	65
82 expired ticket	0	2400	2400
83 No ticket displayed	0	3626	3626
86 Incorrectly parked	0	251	251
90 No return within 1 hour	0	0	0
93 Car park closed	0	14	14
Higher level	0	470	470
70 Loading/unloading area	0	20	20
81 In restricted area	0	32	32
85 In permit bay	0	64	64
87 In disabled bay	0	219	219
91 Class prohibited	0	135	135

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. 727 cases were passed to three bailiff companies in 2011 . 2012, 128 fewer than the 855 cases passed on in 2010 . 2011. Prior to passing any cases to bailiffs, where possible we will agree repayment terms with those who owe money. 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 2011 . 2012, 647 cases were passed to this collection agency, resulting in 167 payments being recovered.

STATISTICS

7297 items of mail (not including e-mail) were received by the Parking Services team during the year.

Civil Enforcement Officers experienced 9 cases of violence against them that were serious enough to record using the Council's violence at work procedures for the period 2011 . 2012. This was an increase of 5 on the previous year.

Of the 16,492 Penalty Charge Notices issued during 2011 . 2012, 4,643 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 2011 . 2012, 111 vehicles were reported in Dover, 69 in Deal and 18 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 2011 . 2012:

	On-Street	Off-Street	Total
Dover	6161	2553	8723
Deal	2529	3613	6144
Sandwich	831	660	1492
Rural	133	0	133
Total	9654	6826	16492

APPEALS AND CHALLENGES

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

- An ~~informal~~ formal 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 PCNs and the staff that decide on representations. Within DDC, the issuing of PCNs 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.

15 formal representations were made to an independent adjudicator at the Traffic Penalty Tribunal during 2011 . 2012. Of these, 8 were found in favour of DDC, 4 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, 4,747 appeals and challenges were received by Parking Services. Of these, 2,033 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

	2011 - 2012
	£
Parking services administration	37,961.83
Parking operations and enforcement	108,494.87
Corporate repair and maintenance	9,122.29
Vandalism of plant	1,408.01
Grounds maintenance-routine	9,569.93
Electricity	2,123.04
Sewerage and environmental services	294.80
Rents payable	16,441.91
Business rates	146,312.93
Equipment-maintenance	21,632.29
Equipment-purchase	2,478.00
Printing from external printer	14,962.10
Computer software maintenance	9,263.40
Computer link telephones	5,729.71
Subscriptions	2,425.00
Insurance-not vehicles or building	1,169.63
Memorials	37.47
Agency payments	296.10
Publicity advert(not recruit)	607.33
Write-offs	10.00
Reimburse 3rd party car parks	119,543.72
Reimburse RingGo fees collected	2,317.11
Central support-Dover District Council @ your service	15,324.57
Central support-accountancy	2,693.41
Central support-legal	2,486.59
Central support-property services	12,319.59
Central support-procurement and creditors	2,764.05
Central support-corporate income collection	2,342.08
Divisional overhead-parking services administration	25,504.19
Divisional overhead-parking operations and enforcement	32,407.43
Miscellaneous licence income	-13,650.70
Car park fee income	-1,318,778.25
Car park season tickets	-60,892.28
Penalty charge notices	-125,584.76
Builders permits	-87.50
Residents permits	-31,942.66
Wayleave rent income	-48,488.75
	-991,381.52
Income	-1,599,424.90
Expenditure	365,744.77
Parking Services Administration	204,368.32
Central Service Administration	37,930.29
	-991,381.52

Expenditure in free car parks

	2011 - 2012
	£
Parking operations and enforcement	16,299.61
Corporate repair and maintenance	3,371.89
Grounds maintenance-routine	1,812.69
Rents payable	1.00
Business rates	5,704.79
Subscriptions	2,425.00
Central support-accountancy	1,077.36
Central support-property services	1,359.70
Central support-procurement and creditors	262.69
Div overhead-parking operations and enforcement	4,868.70
	<u>37,183.43</u>
Expenditure	13,315.37
Parking Services Administration	21,168.31
Central Service Administration	2,699.75
	<u>37,183.43</u>

Expenditure in multi-storey car park

	2011 - 2012
	£
Corporate repair and maintenance	540.76
Water charges-metered	45.96
Sewerage and environmental services	40.21
Rents payable	16,875.00
Business rates	3,767.10
Premises insurance	7,677.42
Central support-accountancy	535.77
Central sup-procurement and creditors	15.88
	29,498.10
Expenditure	28,946.45
Parking Services Administration	0.00
Central Service Administration	551.65
	29,498.10

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 2011 . 2012 DDC had an establishment of 1 supervisor and 12 Civil Enforcement Officers. However, due to unexpected vacancies, we operated at a 75% 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