



PARKING

the annual report
2015-16

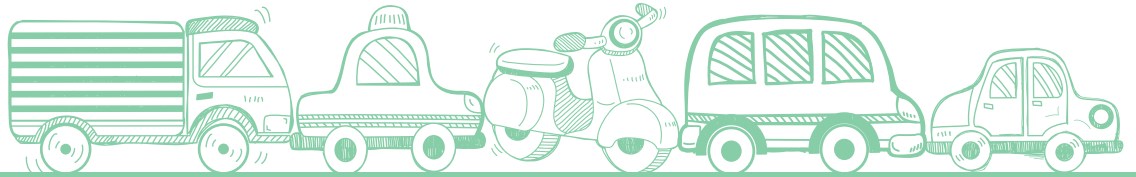


ASHFORD
BOROUGH COUNCIL



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Introduction

Welcome to the Ashford Borough Council Annual Parking Report. A summary of all the parking and traffic enforcement activity conducted by the council in the financial year 2015-16.



*Cllr Brad Bradford,
Portfolio Holder, Highways, Wellbeing and Safety*

As a borough Ashford is really moving forward with energy. Following the results of a survey conducted by Locate in Kent it showed developers, investors, property agents and architects believe Ashford is the best business location in the county and that the borough council has a proactive attitude towards business.

Ashford is certainly attracting large-scale inward investment. The construction of the new Ashford College is well under way and the plans for the Chapel Down brewery and Commercial Quarter (a business hub situated next to the International Station) are advancing with pace. Conningbrook Lakes Country Park has opened, meaning the public can walk freely around the 34-hectares park

and participate in water-based activities available through clubs. In addition the following Big 8 projects are well under way

- Funding is in place for the creation of the new Junction 10a of the M20, which central government has stated is a nationally significant infrastructure project
- Large-scale expansion plans for the Designer Outlet have been approved, as have £75m plans for Elwick Place cinema complex

So, at a time when we are encouraging more people than ever to visit, work and live in the borough of Ashford, we are striving to keep our car parking charges low and continue to attract new visitors and business through the development of our Commercial Quarter.

In 2015 the Engineering Services Team became a part of Parking Services to offer a more cohesive approach to traffic management in our borough and explore a closer working relationship with Kent County Council. This partnership working is already paying dividends in terms of the expediency with which requests for new traffic management proposals are considered.

This will be developed in the coming year as we welcome a new panel of members to our Joint Transportation Board, on which Ashford and Kent County Councillors discuss transportation issues that affect the borough.

Cllr Brad Bradford

CHAPTER 1

About Ashford

The borough has the largest rural area in Kent, and is part of the Kent Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. The borough has two towns: Ashford and the beautiful rural town of Tenterden, the jewel in the weald.

Size: 224.5 sq. miles

Population: latest estimate 124,300 (predicted to increase to 149,300 by 2030)

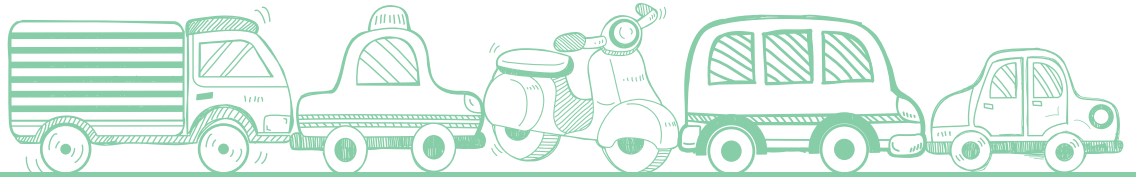
Go to www.visitashfordandtenterden.co.uk for more places to visit and for details of local events.

Transport: Ashford has been a communications hub and has stood at the centre of five railway lines since the 19th century. Ashford's connectivity

is unrivalled and both the Channel Tunnel and High Speed 1 have benefitted both Ashford residents and businesses enormously.

Economy: Ashford's economy is dominated by Ashford and Tenterden. Ashford has been a marked town since the 13th century and continues to attract farmers to the local livestock auctions to this day. There is an eclectic mix of industrial and office business and Ashford's location, connectivity and accessibility make it an ideal business location.





CHAPTER 2

Parking strategy

Our parking strategy is not just about providing more parking for the vehicles that frequent our borough. It is about consistently meeting demand and improving our parking to allow towns and villages in our borough to develop new business, encourage tourism and provide a safe and attractive place to live.

The key to a cohesive local transportation network lies in partnership working. See **Chapter 5 Partnerships** for more discussion about this.

Our on-going review and development of our parking provision is fluid and dynamic during what is a period of great growth for Ashford. It is an exciting time to be involved in the parking and accessibility provision for the borough.

The transport strategy for the borough is currently under review and parking provisions for the future will play a key part in this review.

Parking enforcement policy

Through powers provided in the Traffic Management Act 2004 the parking enforcement service in the borough covers parking controls in the towns of Ashford and Tenterden as well as the surrounding areas.

The prime aim of enforcement is to achieve the following policy objectives:

- Ensure the free flow of traffic

- Ensure both vehicles and pedestrians can safely use/cross the highway
- Integrate traffic management policies with effective on-street enforcement
- Provide dedicated on-street and off-street enforcement
- Be responsive to changing priorities, local factors and demand
- Provide parking exemptions or dispensations, as appropriate

The guidance set out in our policy document has been designed to assist in this objective and establishes the ethos of the scheme, minimising the potential for misunderstanding and dispute over specific parking issues.

In general, enforcement activity will comply with the following principles:

- Fairness in applying the legislation and securing compliance
- Targeting of enforcement action where necessary
- Consistency of approach
- Transparency about what enforcement action is taken and why

Our full enforcement policy can be found at: www.ashford.gov.uk/ashford-borough-council--parking-enforcement-policy-january-2015

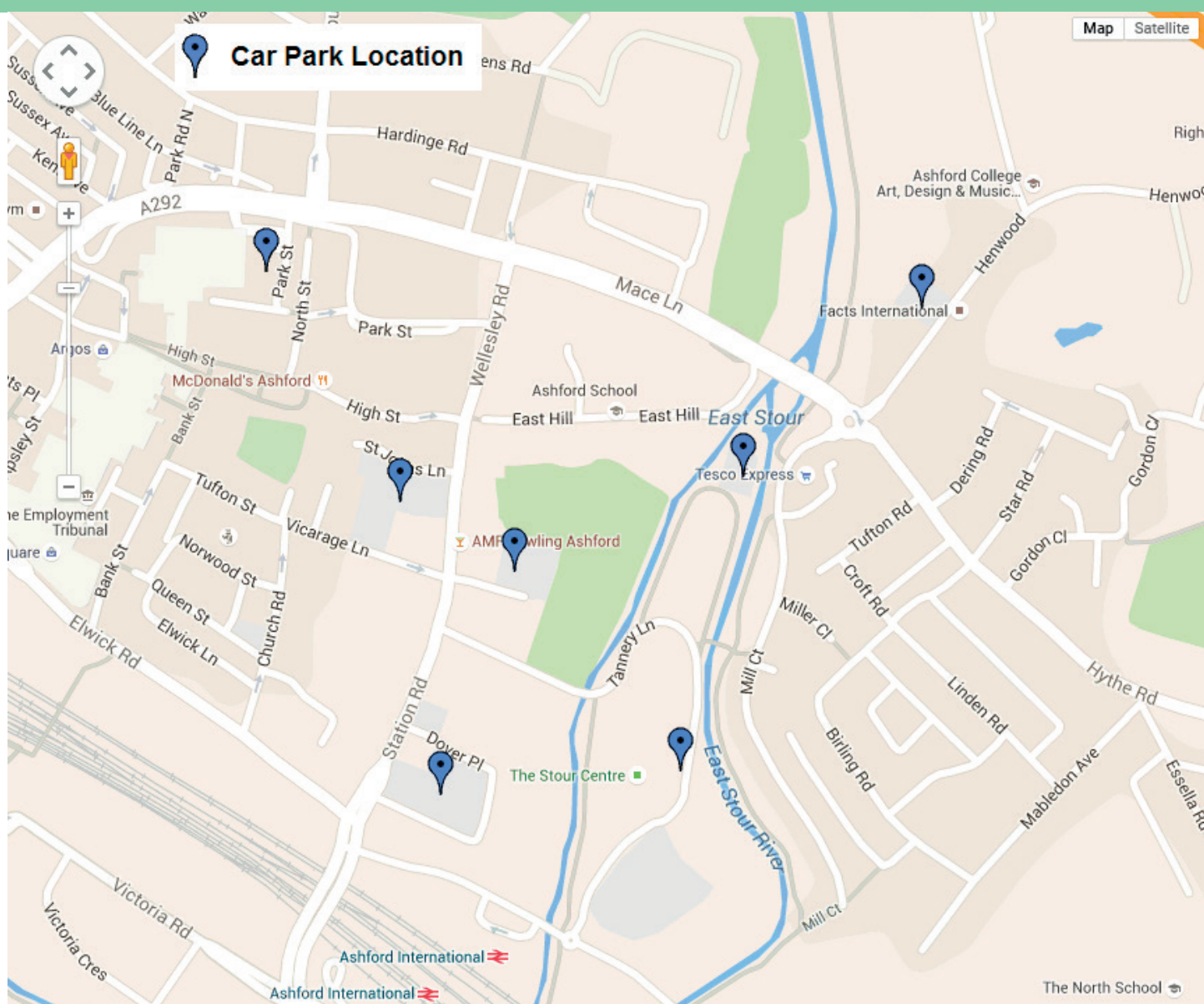


CHAPTER 3

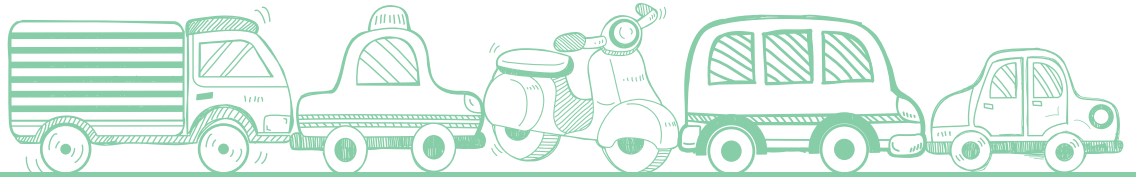
Parking provision

Parking provision is found both 'on street' (in a range of parking bays) and 'off street' (in a number of car parks) throughout the borough.

The main car parks for Ashford and Tenterden appear on the following pages, with the links to further information:

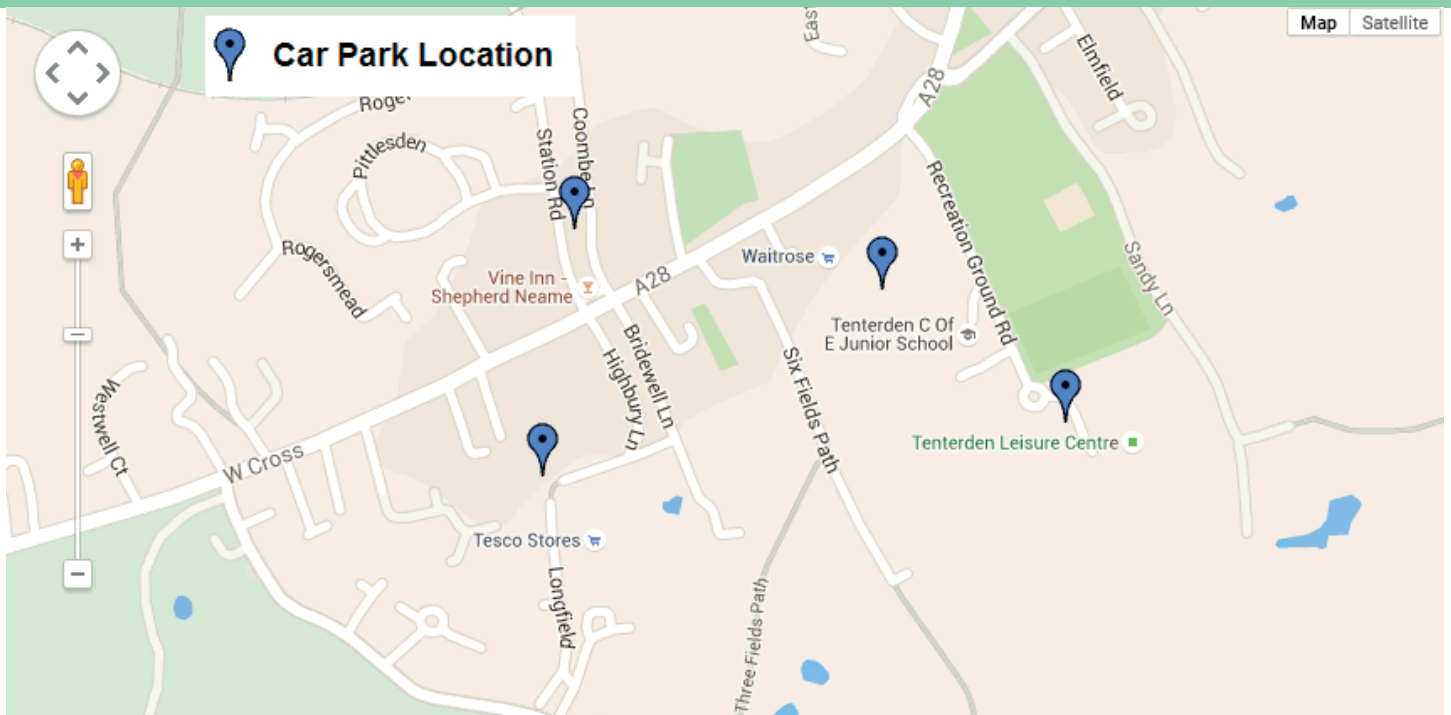


ASHFORD CAR PARKS



www.ashford.gov.uk/ashford-town-parking

www.ashford.gov.uk/tenterden-parking



TENTERDEN CAR PARKS

Ways to pay

There is a flexible range of ways to pay for parking in our car parks and details can be found:

www.ashford.gov.uk/season-tickets

Parking for the disabled

Visitors to our borough with additional needs such as access arrangements are catered for in our car parks and on street. Further details are available:

www.ashford.gov.uk/disabled-parking

Free parking

There are opportunities to access both towns at times and on occasions where visitors do not need to pay for parking. For details see Chapter 6 Parking Promotions and Review for more information.

Further information is available from:

www.ashford.gov.uk/free-parking

CHAPTER 4

The team

We retain an *in-house* team including our wardens, known as Civil Enforcement Officers (CEOs). The team is not set any enforcement targets, nor do they receive any form of bonus for the work they do.

The Parking, Highways and Transportation Services team is a small group of dedicated and knowledgeable people who work diligently both on-street and behind the scenes to provide a range of services that support transport across the borough. Our officers come from a wide variety of backgrounds and have a wide range of work and life experiences.

We measure our team's success by how well we respond to parking problems and how well we provide a wider service to the community.

Our team provides a wide range of advice and support to the public, not just about parking, but

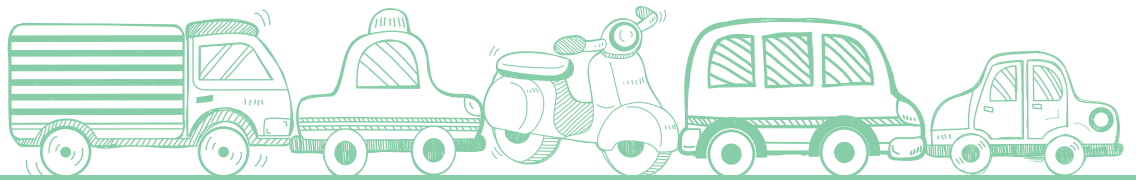
other council services during the course of their working day. We are always happy to help with your parking queries and will try to direct you to the right person or team if your question relates to something else.

We believe we have an innovative and imaginative team, which is both proactive and reactive in its work and contributes to the work of the council as a whole.

The team includes:

- **On-street:** CEOs
- **In the office:** Parking and Engineering Services Officers





A DAY IN THE LIFE OF A CIVIL ENFORCEMENT OFFICER

My day can start as early as 4am but generally, my shift will start a bit later. I work between seven and nine hours a day.

A typical day will start when I enter 'the bunker', the place where our equipment and uniforms are stored. I prepare myself for the day by uploading current information onto my handheld computer. I need to make sure I'm up to date.

I gather my uniform and equipment together. We wear high-visibility jackets when on patrol. I have quite a bit of equipment to carry: a computer, printer, camera, mobile phone and a body-worn video camera. These are needed to provide additional evidence of what we're reporting and, sadly, the aggressive behaviour we are sometimes subjected to.

Before I go out on patrol I visit the office team to let them know I am in. At the same time I'll ask if any ticket machines need paper or if any problems have been reported. If a defect has been reported there could be a flat battery. We're trained to fix some of the ticket machine problems. I will also check if there have been any specific requests for enforcement and if there are any areas that might need an immediate visit.

We keep in contact with the monitoring centre during the day so before I go out I tell them I'm on duty.

Each shift I'm given a beat to cover. Beats vary and could be in Ashford, Tenterden or a mobile shift visiting areas and villages away from our base. If my patrol is in Ashford town centre or Tenterden I am most likely to be on foot. Beats include streets and council car parks.

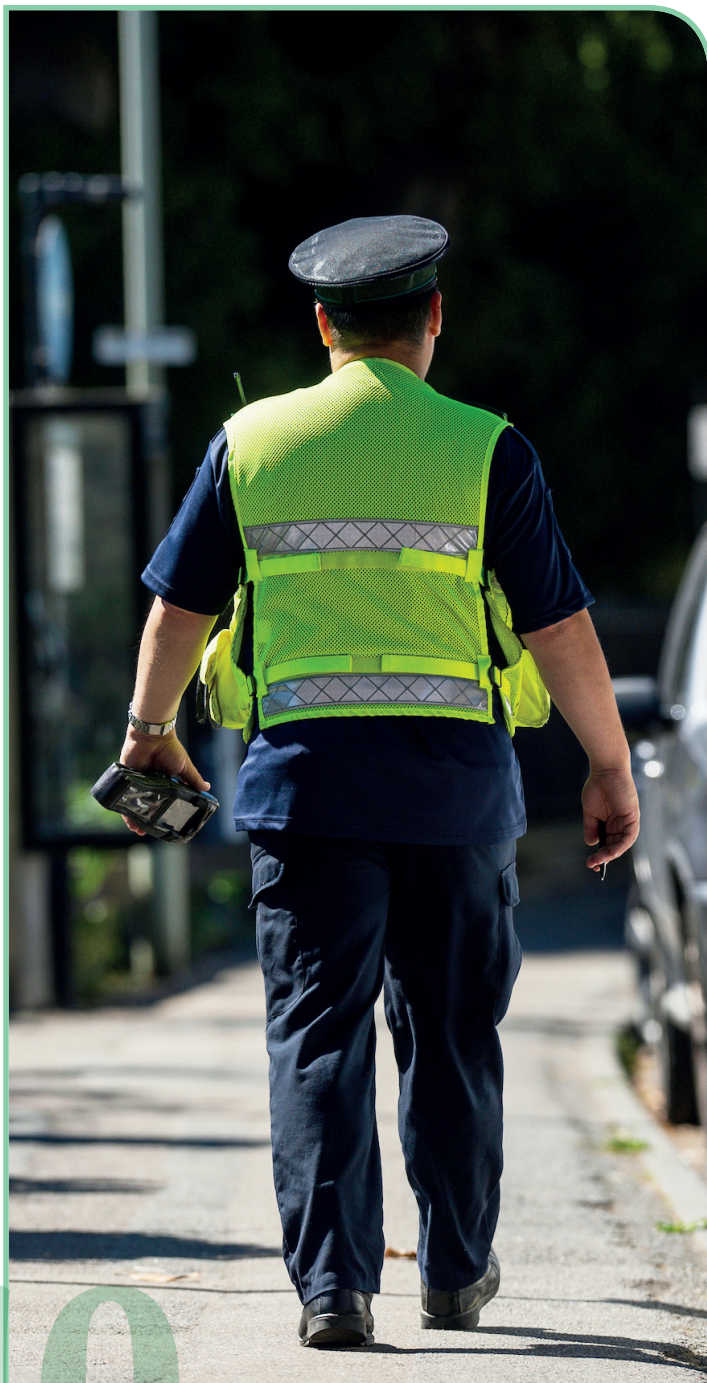
I might be asked to visit a school at 'drop-off time' to encourage parents to stop in a safe place when dropping off their children or I might visit in the afternoon when parents arrive to pick their children up.

Our main job is to help maintain a constant flow of traffic. Any vehicle parked in a dangerous or obstructive way is a priority for us. We can give advice, ask for a vehicle to be moved or issue a PCN, as a way of using enforcement to discourage irresponsible parking in the future. If I see a vehicle parked in contravention of the parking regulations I am expected to deal with the matter.

Although, people might think that I spend my day issuing PCNs this is only a small part of my job. We work closely with parking and engineering officers, putting up and taking down signs, or delivering and putting out "no waiting" cones. We regularly help T-CAT, licensing and environmental protection teams. Sometimes I'm given jobs to help out other teams in the council. For example, I helped at the general election count.

At the end of my shift, I return to the bunker, with just a few jobs to do. I download my handheld computer so that the office will be able to see the PCNs I've issued. I write feedback so that my supervisor knows what has happened during the shift. I report any information gathered for other teams. I make sure the office know I'm safe and I tell the monitoring centre that my shift has finished.

Then I go home. Phew!



Civil Enforcement Officers

CEOs are a vital part of the team who help to ensure that traffic flows freely around the borough and contribute to road safety.

Our CEOs are directly managed by us and by their CEO team leader. We employ 9.5 full-time equivalent CEOs including: one part time, one supervisor and the team leader.

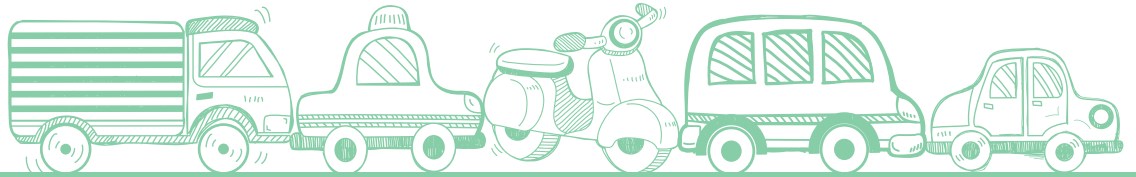
Our CEOs can be working from as early as 4am to as late as midnight. We can, and do, change their working patterns at very short notice (into unscheduled hours) to cover any problems as they arise.

CEOs patrol an area (known as a beat) allocated to them at the start of their shift. Patrols are managed by analysing recent data, the restrictions that are in place and observations made by members of the public, by other CEOs and other information provided to the team.

CEOs maintain contact with the office throughout their shift. Parking issues are regularly reported to office staff. Where possible, and if appropriate, a CEO will be asked to attend and observe, providing a visible presence to encourage drivers to park correctly.

Our CEOs are out on the streets every day. Issuing fines (known as Penalty Charge Notices [PCNs]) is only a small part of their job. They have become the eyes and ears of the council and carry out many other functions including:

- Helping the public by proving directions and giving information about other council services



- Monitoring ticket machines – replacing paper and batteries
- Reporting abandoned vehicles – see Chapter 11 Abandoned Vehicles
- Reporting parking signs and road marking defects
- Erecting new signs, including those indicating the suspension of parking bays
- Monitoring for the environmental protection team – see Chapter 5 Partnerships
- Working on operation ‘Cleansweep’ with other agencies – see Chapter 5 Partnerships
- School parking ‘Park Safe’ – see Chapter 5 Partnerships

Monitoring

The monitoring of CEOs and their performance is undertaken via a number of methods which includes:

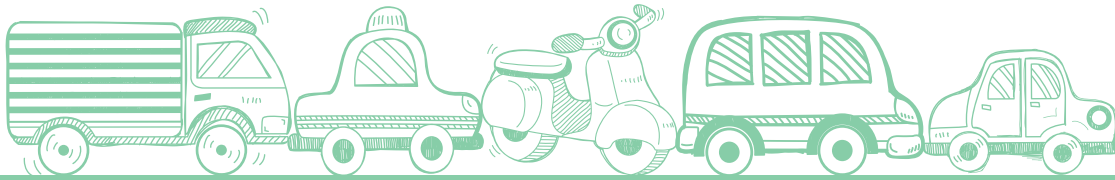
- On street monitoring by a supervisor
- Customer contact
- Reporting mechanisms are in place via IT and manual reports

Sir Litternot

Our CEO Team Leader has a creative edge and designed our anti-litter campaign champion named Sir Litternot. The team have been instrumental in the formation of the campaign. Our CEOs have engaged with the public at promotional awareness-raising events and we are keen to advise and educate members of the public.

As you may be aware from articles in the local media, we have educated using Sir Litternot for a long period and are now enforcing against those wilfully dropping litter.





Parking Highways and Transportation Services Team

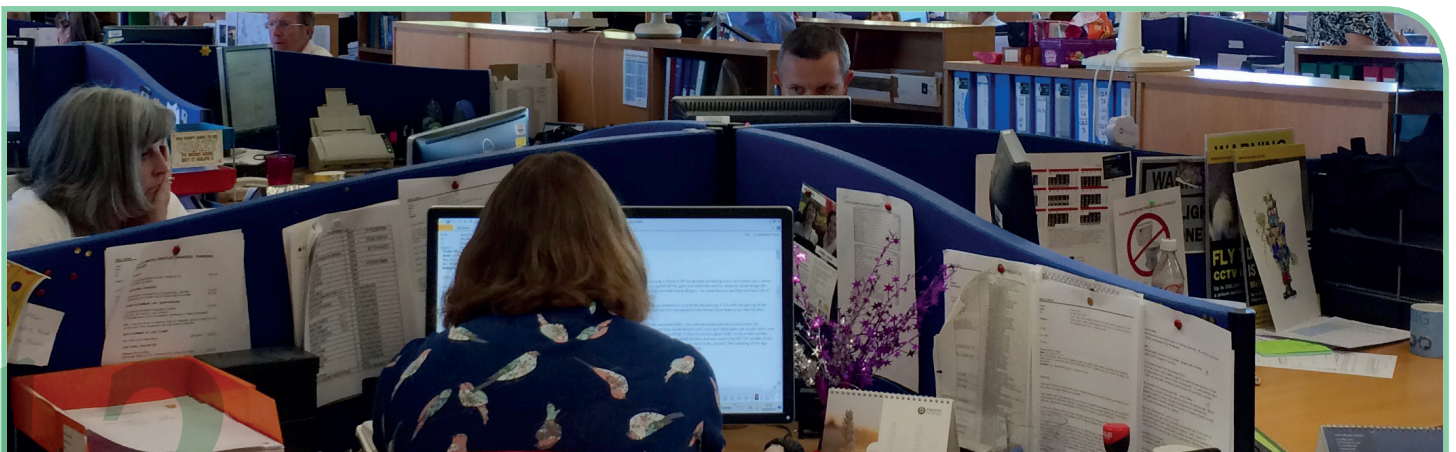
Parking Highways and Transportation Services officers work, mainly in the office to deliver a comprehensive and diverse range of services relating to parking and transport.

We have a team of seven officers including: a team leader who manages both the Parking and Engineering Services operations, an Engineering Technical Officer, a Parking Operations Officer, a Parking and Highways Technical Officer and two Administration Officers who work within the council's Health Parking and Community Safety admin hub. Our office staff are normally available between 8am and 5pm and outside of these hours if needed. On the following page are a few of the services we offer:

- Season tickets and permits – see Chapter 9 Permits
- Penalty Charge Notice process and appeals – see Chapter 8 Parking appeals

- Maintenance of the council's street lights, parking signs, lines, our car parks, parking equipment: ticket machines, CEO handheld computers, radios etc.
- Traffic Regulation Orders – see Chapter 10 Traffic Regulation Orders (TROs)
- Bus stop shelters
- Abandoned vehicles
- Disabled parking bays
- Collection of data for reports
- New parking schemes

Our officers provide support on a range of issues as diverse as the Safety Advisory Group (on parking and traffic management for events) to negotiations on new systems and renewal of contracts to support parking provisions. Ashford Borough Council carries out its parking function under an agency agreement with the highway authority, which is Kent County Council (KCC). Officers from council work very closely with KCC.



CHAPTER 5

Partnerships

Ashford Borough Council carries out its parking function under an agency agreement with the highway authority, which is Kent County Council (KCC). Officers from council work very closely with KCC.

Through the South East Managers Parking Group and the South East Officer Parking Group we liaise with our neighbouring councils and all other councils in Kent and East Sussex. This regular contact provides us with the opportunity to exchange views and feedback on current 'best practice' and ensures the consistency of the approach taken to parking across Kent.

Work undertaken by the council's traffic management team feeds into the Ashford Joint Transportation Board (JTB) (further details and the terms of reference for the JTB can be found at www.ashford.gov.uk/council-committees---terms-of-reference-and-delegations).

Ashford Borough Council is a member of the British Parking Association (BPA). Council officers regularly attend BPA meetings to raise Ashford's profile and share good ideas and practice. We work with the BPA with their guidance (and that of central government) to apply the law consistently, reasonably and fairly.

Quality Bus Partnership

Officers and members from Ashford Borough Council, attend the KCC-led Quality Bus Partnership, working in partnership with local transport providers to strive for the best public and private transport provisions for the borough.

Additional support

Here are some examples of the support provided to our external partners and charities in the last year:

Kent Fire and Rescue Service have free use of Henwood Car Park, to support their essential staff training days and help with their overflow parking.

Community First Responders (such as the St John's Ambulance) have free permits allowing them to park nearby when attending an emergency for the South East Coast Ambulance Service.

Kent Police work regularly with us as part of the Community Safety Unit (CSU) and we are mutually supportive of each other not only in dealing with traffic-related problems but also reporting any incident or activity that might require police intervention or assistance.

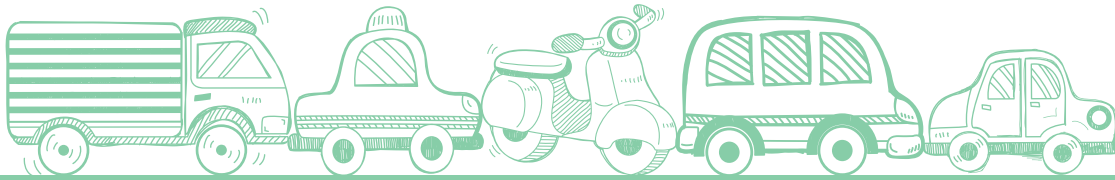
NHS Breast screening unit is provided with free parking.

NHS Blood Transfusion Service is provided with free parking for its 'Give Blood' donation service.

Citizens Advice Bureau in Ashford and Tenterden receives a number of free parking permits to support their volunteers who help provide their service.

Battle Area Community Travel has free parking for its minibus/coach to park in Tenterden Leisure Centre Car Park, to allow those less able to make use of the leisure centre facilities easier access.

RSPCA Cattery Open Day is provided with free parking in one of our car parks.



Pilgrims Hospice is provided free parking and a reserved area in Bridewell Lane Car Park to enable the collection of Christmas trees to be recycled.

Royal British Legion, RSPB, Action for the Blind and Cats Protection League has free access and dispensation to park its display/information vehicles.

Our team provides diverse support and works in partnership with other council departments. Here are some examples:

Operation 'Cleansweep' is a multi-agency operation, including the police. An area of the borough is chosen and various public service providers will go and actions from clearing litter to gathering information will take place.



The Environmental Protection Team

(Environmental Health) monitors noise complaints (such as dog barking and noise at licensed premises) and odour complaints. Prompt reporting by our officers back to the team helps to progress cases more quickly and efficiently.

The Environmental Protection (Food, Health and Safety, Licensing) teams collect information about new businesses for the purposes of registration, or permitting licensing.

Ashford Monitoring Centre (AMC) works with staff to identify vulnerable members of the public and helps search for people reported missing.

We work with our **Emergency Planning team** in the event of an emergency situation in the borough, such as distributing sandbags in times of flooding.

Let it snow – When snow covers our town centre streets and car parks our civil enforcement officers (CEOs) pick up the shovel, snow scraper and rock salt to assist in clearing footpaths along with the ramp into our multi-storey car park to help the people of Ashford who have braved the elements to go about their business.

ParkSafe – our CEOs actively participate in the Kent Fire and Rescue Service's 'Park Safe' community initiative, to encourage safe parking, particularly near schools and improve road safety awareness.

On the subject of schools parking and road safety...

**Meet Moreline...
he is a Wizhog!**

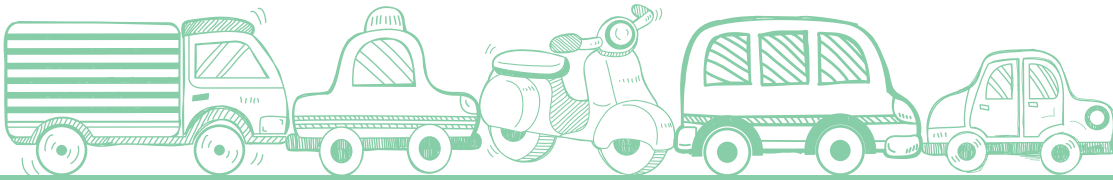
The concept of Moreline was conceived through the creative genius of our CEO Team Leader.

Moreline visits schools and local events and has proved a big hit with his audiences, promoting safe parking and road safety awareness to youngsters in an imaginative and fun way, which will help them remember the rules of the road and stay safe.



ROAD SAFETY AWARENESS BROUGHT TO YOU IN PARTNERSHIP WITH





CHAPTER 6

Parking promotions and review



Ashford Borough Council has introduced a range of changes to parking fees in some of its own car parks to help attract more visitors into the town centres and support our town centre retailers.

The changes include:

Free parking

In Ashford:

- Free parking on Sundays and Bank Holidays at the Edinburgh Road multi-story car park in Ashford
- Free parking on Sunday and Bank Holidays at the Flour Mills car park in Ashford
- Free after 3pm in Edinburgh Road car park every day of the week Monday to Saturday
- Free after 3pm in Station Road, Ashford on Sundays and Bank Holidays

FREE PARKING IN ASHFORD

Ashford Borough Council has introduced free parking at certain times in the following car parks across the borough:

Edinburgh Road M25 8LJ
Free after 3pm
Monday-Saturday,
free on Sundays and
Bank Holidays

FREE PARKING IN TENTERDEN

Ashford Borough Council has introduced a free parking scheme in Tenterden:

Bridewell Lane M25 8LJ
Free on Sundays and Bank Holidays

In Tenterden:

- Free parking on Sunday and Bank Holidays at the Bridewell Lane car park in Tenterden

The council hopes the initiative will increase the footfall in Tenterden and Ashford, which will help boost trade for local businesses and make our high streets an attractive option for new business ventures.

On the high street

We have now introduced free parking in select town centre high streets in Ashford.

Visitors can park for free in pay and display parking bays in the High Street, North Street and Bank Street after 6pm from Monday to Saturday. In addition, parking is free all day on Sundays.

The free high street parking scheme will be piloted for six months. If the trial proves successful it may be introduced into Ashford on a permanent basis.

Business permits trial

This initiative follows a borough-wide review of parking and aims to support the business community in our town centres by encouraging more visitors, boosting trade and making the high street an attractive option for new business ventures.

We are currently trialling a business parking permit on a small scale in our Henwood Car Park in Ashford. This scheme is still running with its success being monitored.

Ashford's previous success as a Portas Pilot town was a catalyst to the reinvigoration of the town centre and these changes are part of a range of initiatives breathing new life into our High Street, along with the Farmers' Market, the acquisition of Park Mall, the town centre action team (T-CAT), LoveAshford.com and Revelation St Mary's.

Parking charge review

All parking charges for the financial year 2015-16 remain the same.

In April 2017, charges will increase for the first time in five years. They will rise across the board of 10%. For example one hour from £1 to £1.10 and two hours from £2 to £2.20.

Over four hours will rise from £10 to £11.

Charges have been removed between 6pm and 10pm in various town centre locations as part of a trial to assist economic growth and boost the 'night-time economy' within the town centre.

CHAPTER 7

Events

It is common practice for Ashford Borough Council to support local events. Parking and engineering services recognises the link between parking and events, many of which have benefitted from our help over the past year.

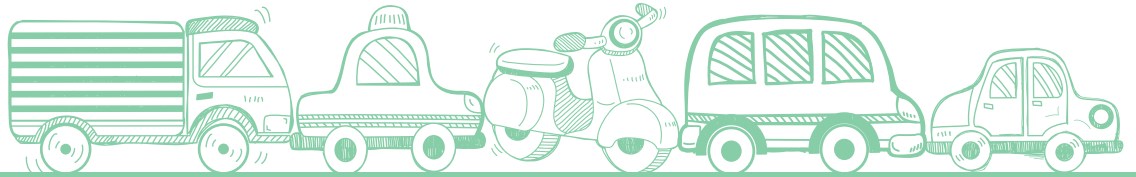
All of our team, office staff and CEOs help with events. For example, the office will consider a request and will, wherever possible, help with the provision of authority for road closures, parking permits, and the reservation or suspension of parking spaces. Our CEOs can help with placing the appropriate notices, delivering cones and, when possible, marshalling.

Here are a few examples:

- Ashford Farmers' Market (held on the first Sunday each month)
- Tenterden Jazz Festival
- Good Friday Walk of Witness, Tenterden

- Donald Sinden Memorial
- Wye Christmas Party
- Remembrance Parades - Ashford, Charing, Kennington and Tenterden
- Tenterden Folk Festival
- Tenterden Civic Parade
- St Michael's Christmas Lights switch on
- Smarden Spectacular
- Ashford and District 10k
- Aldington Soapbox Derby
- Great Kent Bike Ride
- Festival in the Park
- Tenterden Christmas Market

The council's Safety Advisory Group can provide help and advice for your event. For more information visit www.ashford.gov.uk/events



CHAPTER 8

Parking appeals

If you receive a penalty charge notice (PCN) and dispute it you may appeal. We have a full appeals process, from an informal challenge to the collecting of unpaid PCNs. We aim to respond to queries and challenges within 14 days of receipt.

Online challenges and appeals have increased in popularity with a large proportion of representations being sent via this route. A PCN can be challenged or paid online at both informal and formal stages at: pgc.ashford.gov.uk/pgcuserservices/

Our enforcement policy and the South East Parking Manager's provide guidelines for the consideration of challenges against PCNs.

The council does not have the final word when it comes to making these decisions. A motorist can ask the Traffic Penalty Tribunal to consider the case. We now offer an online facility to make appeals to an adjudicator at the Traffic Penalty Tribunal.

The team can be contacted by email at: parkingcustomercare@ashford.gov.uk



CHAPTER 9

Permits and dispensations

Permits

The council offers a variety of permits, season tickets and dispensations to park in the borough of Ashford. Permits and dispensations are issued for a range of different reasons, based on availability, eligibility and need.

Permits, including payment records, are maintained on a dedicated permit system which, for some types of permit, will produce a renewal reminder that we can email to the permit holder.

The permit system allows season ticket holders and residential parking permit holders to apply and renew a permit online. The online system can also be used to tell us about any changes.

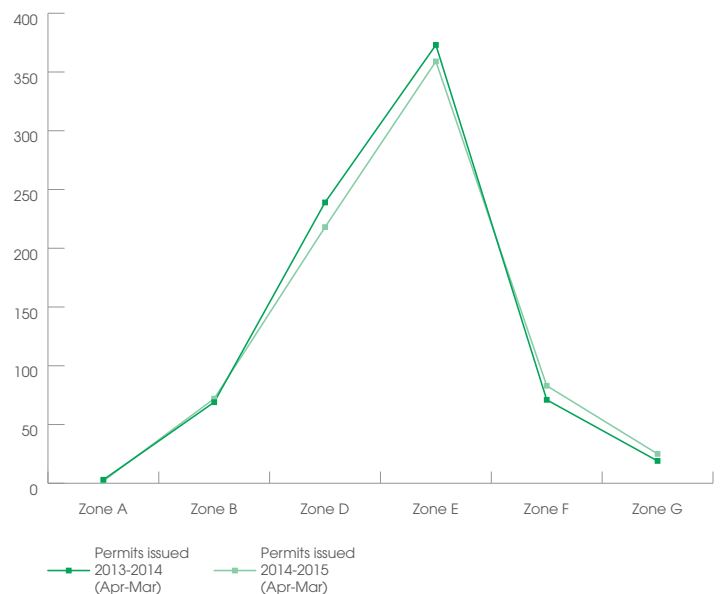
More details are available at pgc.ashford.gov.uk/pecuserservices/default.asp

Residents' permits

Where parking is relatively short in supply, for example near to the town centre, parking zones have been created. The aim is to regulate parking where demand is high to ensure there is a safe and free flow of traffic while affording each household the same opportunity to park their vehicle or vehicles.

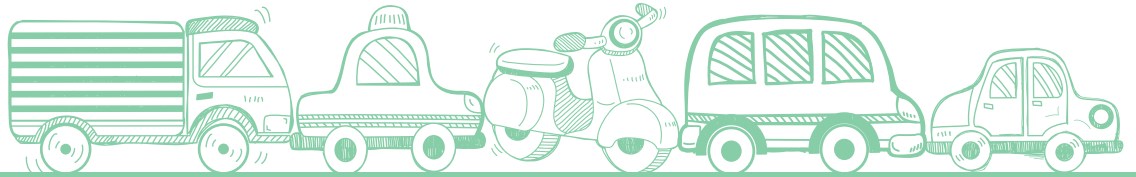
Within a parking zone the amount of time a motorist may park in a parking bay is limited. Residents who live in one of these zones, who meet specific criteria, are able to buy a 'residents' parking permit'. A permit allows a vehicle to be parked without time restriction.

Permits issued



Permits for zones A and B (the town centre) are very much in demand. Parking in the town centre is limited and has to be shared with pay and display ticket customers visiting local businesses. To help, the council has introduced a new off-street residents' permit. Eligible applicants are able to buy a permit to park their car in Dover Place car park.

More details (including how to apply) are available at www.ashford.gov.uk/residential-parking-permits



Season tickets

Season tickets are available for most of the council's car parks. Season tickets offer convenience and a considerable saving against the daily cost of parking.

More details (including how to apply) are available at www.ashford.gov.uk/season-tickets

Parking dispensation notices

Sometimes it can be necessary for a vehicle to be parked in contravention of parking regulations to enable the driver to perform a task or activity. For example, if a plumber is fitting a boiler where tools and parts are in the vehicle and the tools and parts are needed throughout the job, or if a builder is working on a roof where ladders are needed. A parking bay or bays can be reserved for a specific purpose and for a designated period of time. Where a need is identified, the council will consider an application for a parking dispensation.

More details (including how to apply) are available at www.ashford.gov.uk/dispensations-and-waivers

Temporary permits

In addition to our standard permits the administration team regularly issues one-off permits and dispensations to assist our partners, charities and other local events – for example, the events listed in Chapter 7.

CHEAPER COMMUTER PARKING

Did you know you could save more than £260 a year with an Ashford Borough Council parking season ticket?

The Council has frozen its parking charges, and has competitive season tickets available for Dover Place Car Park (opposite Ashford International station), Station Road Car Park (near the bowling alley) and Edinburgh Road multi-storey car park (town centre)*.

Season tickets are much more cost effective than paying on a daily basis, and could save you more than £260 a year. You can use your season ticket seven days a week, 365 days a year.

Season tickets covering all three car parks cost:

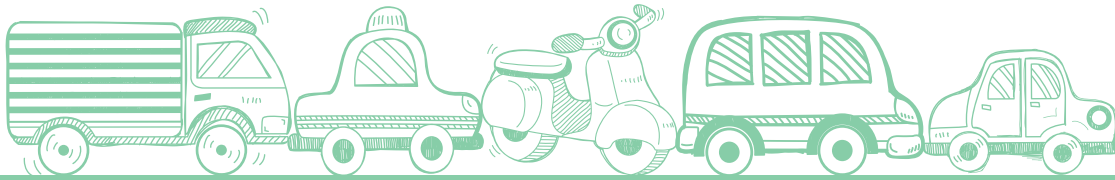
12 months	£760
6 months	£405
3 months	£215
1 month	£76

Apply and pay for your season ticket on the council's website www.ashford.gov.uk.

*Please note that Edinburgh Road multi-storey car park is open from 7.30am to 8.30pm Monday to Friday, and from 7.30am to 7.30pm on Saturdays. Dover Place and Station Road car parks are open 24 hours.



ASHFORD
BOROUGH COUNCIL



CHAPTER 10

Traffic Regulation Orders (TROs)

A Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) is a legal document made by the local authority. It follows a statutory procedure to support any enforceable traffic or highways measures. The council does so as the highway authority under the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 and all other enabling powers.

In short, a TRO enables the local authority to introduce parking and waiting restrictions and special events.

Failure to comply with the requirements of a TRO, as indicated by road signs or road markings, is an offence that may result in one of our CEOs issuing you with a PCN. It could even lead to prosecution by the police.

TROs are mostly permanent legal documents, but there are some exceptions such as experimental orders, or temporary road closure orders made under the Town Police Clauses Act 1847.

Most TROs come about as a result of input from the local communities and the emergency services. They address specific traffic congestion, health and safety, or quality-of-life issues.

Experimental TROs are used to assess the need for parking schemes in a street or area. A notice is published in the local paper before the start of the experimental TRO. A public consultation is not required before it is implemented but there is a six-month consultation period from the date of making the order. This allows representations to be submitted based on the experience of the traffic scheme in operation.

During the initial six-month period the scheme is monitored and following review the TRO can be:

- Modified or varied (in which case there will be a further six-month consultation period)
- Revoked if it fails to achieve its stated objective
- Made permanent, in which case a further 'Notice of Making' will be published

Experimental TROs can last for up to 18 months before a decision must be made.

TROs made under the 'Town Police Clauses Act 1847' do not require any consultation or advertising to take place, as these are only introduced for very short periods of time (usually less than 24 hours) to allow events to take place on the highway on occasions where it is likely that it may be busy or obstructed due to a public celebration, for example.

A permanent TRO. Once a scheme has been designed consultation must be undertaken to seek the views of the following:

- County, borough or parish councillors
- The emergency services
- Freight Transportation Association and Road Haulage Association
- Local interest groups, residents, traders and community groups
- Local public transport operators

Consultees' views are considered by officers and if needed the scheme design can be varied.

The proposed TRO is advertised in the local press and notices detailing the TRO are displayed on any affected street on a number of lamp posts.

From the date of the advertisement, the public may view copies of the proposal and plans at the Civic Centre and at Sessions House, County Hall in Maidstone. These documents remain available to view until the scheme is completed or abandoned.

Objections to, or support for the proposed TRO can be made in writing to the local authority. Substantial objections or contentious issues are then reported to the Joint Transportation Board for their information. When considering the objections, it must be decided to:

- (a) Proceed as advertised
- (b) Modify the scheme
- (c) Abandon the proposed TRO

There can be occasions where the nature of the modifications require further advertising before the start of all or part of the original proposal.

What happens next?

Once any objections have been reviewed, and a decision reached, the TRO can go to KCC to be legally 'sealed', and any works (such as street signs and line painting) ordered.

When all necessary works are complete and the TRO has been sealed it becomes legally enforceable. The TRO is made available for inspection while it remains operational.

The overriding factors of safety, free flow of traffic and parking provision are balanced throughout and our priority is to work with the community to get it right first time.

More information about current proposals for our TRO can be found at www.ashford.gov.uk/parkingconsultation



CHAPTER 11

Abandoned vehicles

The parking and engineering services team is responsible for inspecting and dealing with potentially abandoned vehicles in accordance with the Refuse Disposal (Amenity) Act 1978.

Abandoned vehicles look unsightly and can attract vandalism and rubbish, or be the result of crime or even the means to commit a crime.

How we get involved

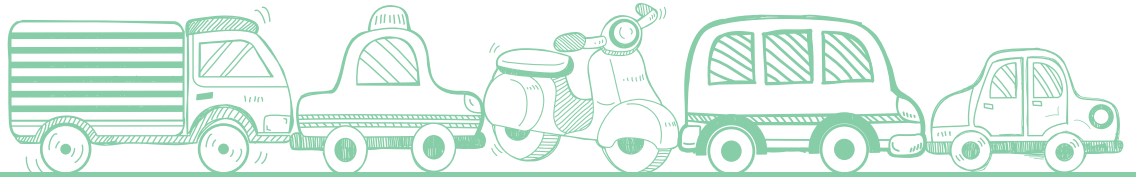
When we receive a report of a potentially abandoned vehicle an initial inspection is required to assess the condition of the vehicle so our CEOs are asked investigate. A CEO visits the location and collects evidence for us. They record the vehicle details, its condition and location. This evidence helps the officer dealing with the complaint to take further action.

Vehicles reported to the council as 'abandoned' often turn out not to be abandoned, just parked in a place considered a 'nuisance'.

Parking services is limited as to what action it can take if a vehicle is merely causing a 'nuisance' but the situation is often resolved by notifying the registered keeper about the concerns raised and what action should be taken to rectify the matter.

If a vehicle is left parked on the pavement or is obstructing the highway, the person submitting the report may be advised to contact the police, which has the powers to ask the registered keeper to remove their vehicle.





Reasons for abandoned vehicles

Over the past few years there have been a number of common causes as to why people abandon vehicles, such as

- Vehicles no longer having the same scrap value as in the past so owners must pay to have them taken away and scrapped
- The fine for unlicensed and untaxed vehicles is often greater than their value, so drivers simply abandon them

If our authorised officer is satisfied that a vehicle has been abandoned and the notice period given on the removal notice has expired, arrangements will be made for contractors to remove the vehicle. Once a vehicle is removed KCC assumes responsibility for the vehicle.

The cost of removal, storage and disposal is passed on to the keeper of the vehicle, the charges for which are as prescribed in The Removal, Storage and Disposal of Vehicles (Prescribed Sums and Charges) Act 2008.

The council is working on ways to make reporting abandoned vehicles easier. More details (including how to report an abandoned vehicle) are available at www.ashford.gov.uk/abandoned-vehicles

CHAPTER 12

Customer Service plans now and for the future

(Infrastructure and technology)

The council understands the importance of customer service when parking affects so many people in our borough. To that end, parking services continues to develop.

Here are some of our current projects:

Electric vehicle charging points

Electric vehicle charging point bays have been installed in some of our car parks. KCC led the installation programme and motorists who have joined 'Charge your Car' can use one of the electric vehicle charging points in:

- Civic Centre Car Park, Ashford
- Julie Rose Stadium, Ashford
- Vicarage Lane Car Park, Ashford
- Station Road Car Park, Tenterden
- Tenterden Leisure Centre Car Park

More details are available at www.ashford.gov.uk/electric-charging-within-the-borough

Lorry parking

Over eight years ago a specific lorry parking problem was identified in Ashford. Overnight parking by Heavy Goods Vehicles (HGVs) in Orbital Park and the Ashford Industrial Park at Sevington was causing inconvenience and disruption to the businesses on the two industrial estates and to surrounding residential areas.

Parked HGVs obstruct the estate roads and the amount of litter and detritus left behind by the HGV drivers is a cause for concern as it affects public

health and costs a lot of money to clear up. So the council introduced an overnight weighting ban. Which had some, though limited, success.

To improve on this and help lorry drivers understand the parking contraventions and tell them about the local Truck Stop, multi-lingual leaflets were (and continue to be) issued, along with PCNs.

In 2009 Ashford Borough Council employed a European debt collection agency to collect unpaid PCNs in Europe.

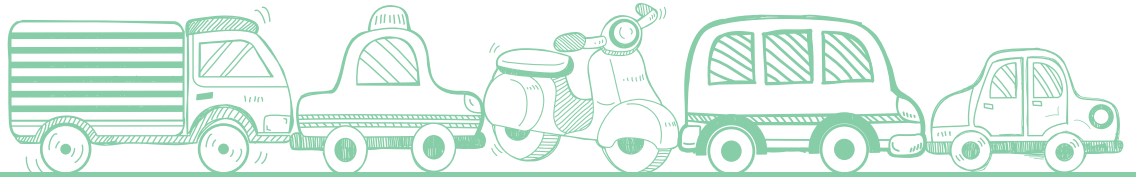
There continues to be a significant problem, so in April 2015 Ashford Borough Council obtained permission from KCC to clamp persistent evaders (HGVs that have received but not paid at least three PCNs).

Since April 2015 several clamping operations have been run with the assistance of our CEOs, the police and our European enforcement agents (formerly known as bailiffs). To date, three HGVs have been clamped enabling payment of the outstanding PCNs to be collected.

More details are available at www.ashford.gov.uk/heavy-goods-vehicles

Lorry parking on pavements

Recently Ashford Borough Council introduced enforcement of another parking restriction. HGVs may no longer park on any part of the road other than the carriageway. This should help pedestrians and limit damage caused by heavy vehicles to footpaths across the borough.

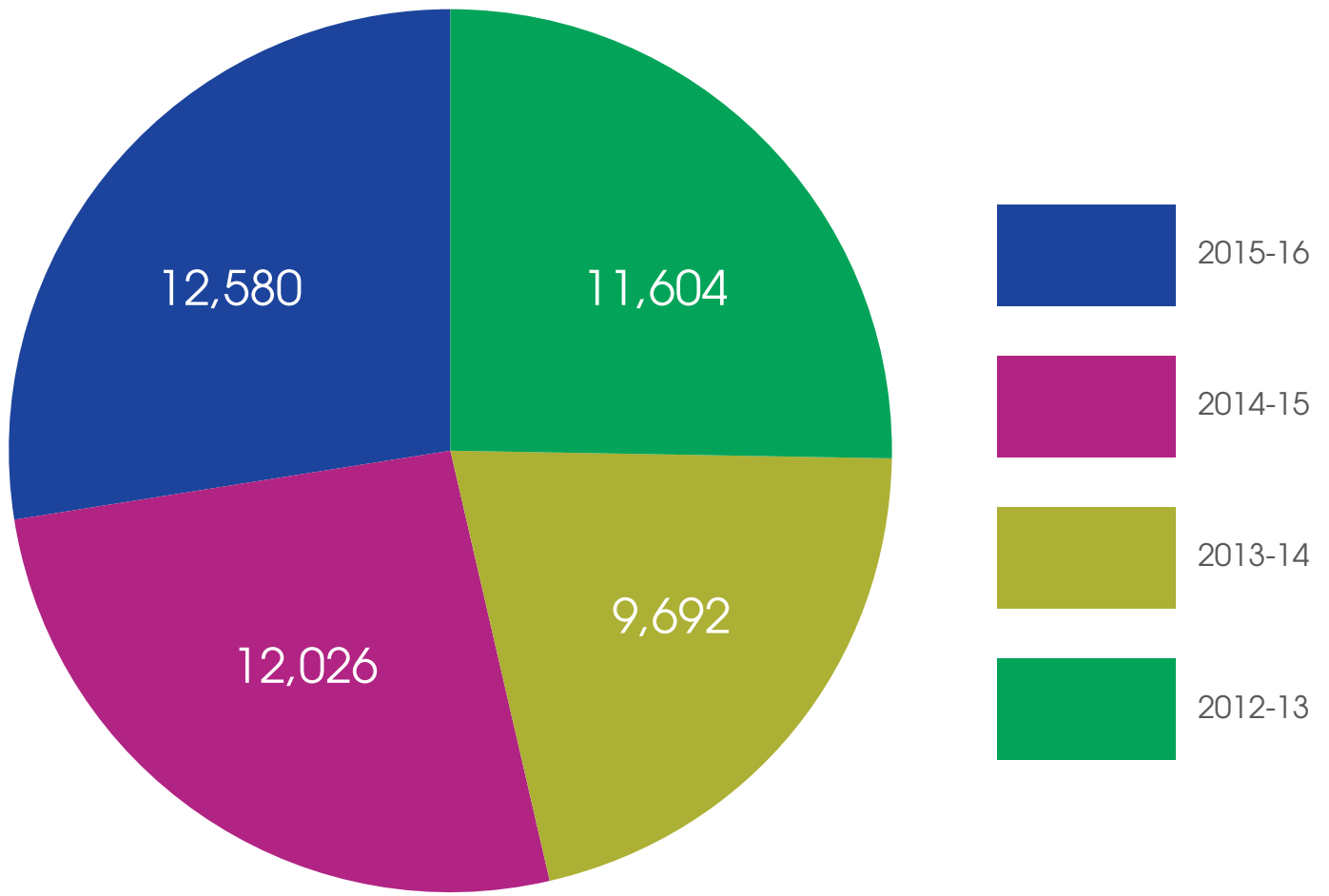


Using new legislation

The Parking Highways and Transportation team has taken steps to utilise changes in legislation by creating new restricted parking zones on two of our industrial estates. This will enable our officers to enforce overnight parking by HGV's, which will also have a positive impact on the associated anti social behaviour. This is something the businesses and public have asked for and, through working together, this project has now been realised and its success will be monitored.

Appendix 1

Penalty Charge Notices (PCNs) – issued 2012-13 to 2015-16



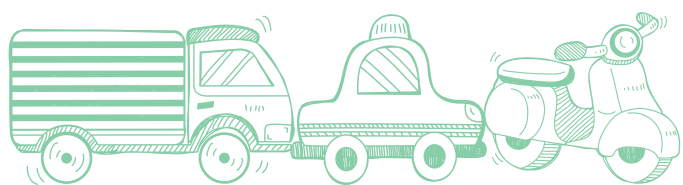
PCNs ISSUED

PCNs – issued by contravention 2015-16

Contravention Code	Contravention Description	Higher or Lower rate contravention	Total PCNs Issued	% of PCNs issued
01 No Waiting	Parked in a restricted street during prescribed hours	Higher £35/£70	3,864	30.72%
02 No Waiting/ Loading	Parked or loading/unloading in a restricted street where waiting and loading/unloading restrictions are in force	Higher £35/£70	289	2.30%
12 No permit/ticket	Parked in a residents or shared use parking place or zone without either displaying a valid permit or voucher or pay and display ticket issued for that place, or without payment of the parking charge	Higher £35/£70	918	7.30%
16 Permit Space	Parked in a permit space or zone without clearly displaying a valid permit	Higher £35/£70	11	0.09%
19 Invalid permit/ ticket	Parked in a residents or shared use parking place or zone either displaying an invalid permit or voucher or pay and display ticket, or after the expiry of paid for time	Lower £25/£50	280	2.23%
21 Suspended bay	Parking wholly or partly in a suspended bay or space	Higher £35/£70	114	0.91%
22 Re-parked within 1 hr	Re-parked in the same parking place or zone within 1 hour of leaving	Lower £25/£50	5	0.04%
22A Reparked within 4 hrs	Re-parked in the same parking place or zone within 4 hours of leaving	Lower £25/£50	37	0.29%
22B Reparked within 40min	Re-parked in the same parking place or zone within 40 minutes of leaving	Lower £25/£50	0	0.00%
23 Designated class	Parked in a parking place or area not designated for that class of vehicle	Higher £35/£70	38	0.30%
24 Outside Bay	Not parked correctly within the markings of a bay or space	Higher £35/£70	4	0.03%
25 Loading area restrict	parked in loading place or bay during restricted hours without loading	Higher £35/£70	40	0.32%

Contravention Code	Contravention Description	Higher or Lower rate contravention	Total PCNs Issued	% of PCNs issued
26 Double parked	Parked in a special enforcement area more than 50cm from the edge of the carriageway and not within a designated parking place	Higher £35/£70	49	0.39%
27 Dropped Kerb	Parked in a special enforcement area adjacent to a footway, cycle track or verge lowered to meet the level of the carriageway	Higher £35/£70	129	1.03%
30 Overstay	Parked for longer than permitted	Lower £25/£50	1,385	11.01%
40 Disabled bay	Parked in designated disabled person's parking place without displaying a valid disabled person's badge in the prescribed manner	Higher £35/£70	227	1.80%
42 Police bay	Parked in a parking place designated for police vehicles	Higher £35/£70	14	0.11%
45 Taxi rank	Stopped in a taxi rank	Higher £35/£70	22	0.17%
46 Clearway	Stopped where prohibited (on a red route or a clearway)	Higher £35/£70	2	0.02%
47 Bus Stop	Stopped in a restricted bus stop or stand	Higher £35/£70	183	1.45%
48 School	Stopped in a restricted area outside a school, a hospital or a fire, police or ambulance station when prohibited	Higher £35/£70	48	0.38%
55 Overnight Waiting Ban	A commercial vehicle parked in a restricted street in contravention of the Overnight Waiting Ban	Higher £35/£70	906	7.20%
61 Footway Parking (heavy commercial vehicle)	A Heavy Commercial Vehicle wholly or partly parked on a footway, verge or land between two carriageways	Higher £35/£70	174	1.38%
99 Zigzag parking	Stopped on a pedestrian crossing or crossing area marked by zigzags	Higher £35/£70	36	0.29%
70 Loading Area Restrict	Parked in a loading place or bay during restricted hours without loading	Higher £35/£70	117	0.93%
80 Exceeded Max Stay	Parked for longer than permitted	Lower £25/£50	7	0.06%

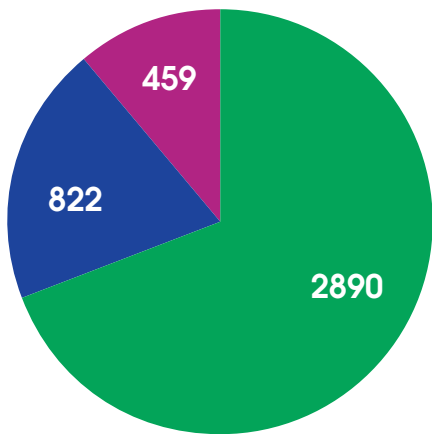
Contravention Code	Contravention Description	Higher or Lower rate contravention	Total PCNs Issued	% of PCNs issued
81 Reserved bay - area	Parked in a restricted area in a car park	Higher £35/£70	18	0.14%
82 Overstay	Parked after the expiry of paid for time	Lower £25/£50	570	4.53%
83 No ticket	Parked in a car park without clearly displaying a valid pay and display ticket or voucher or parking clock	Lower £25/£50	2492	19.81%
85 Permit bay	Parked without clearly displaying a valid permit where required	Higher £35/£70	15	0.12%
86 Outside bay	Not parked correctly within the markings of a bay or space	Lower £25/£50	310	2.46%
87 Disabled bay	Parked in designated disabled person's parking place without displaying a valid disabled person's badge in the prescribed manner	Higher £35/£70	236	1.88%
91 Reserved bay - class	Parked in a car park or area not designated for that class of vehicle	Higher £35/£70	34	0.27%
92 Obstruction	Parked causing an obstruction	Higher £35/£70	6	0.05%
Total			12,580	



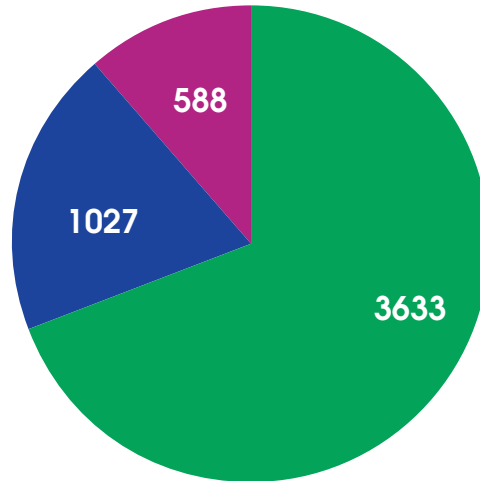
Appendix 2

PCNs – paid 2014-15 and 2015-16

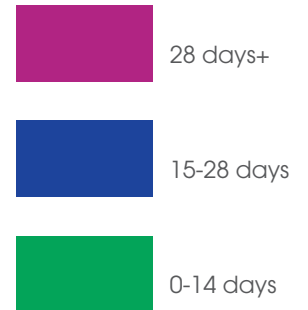
ON STREET



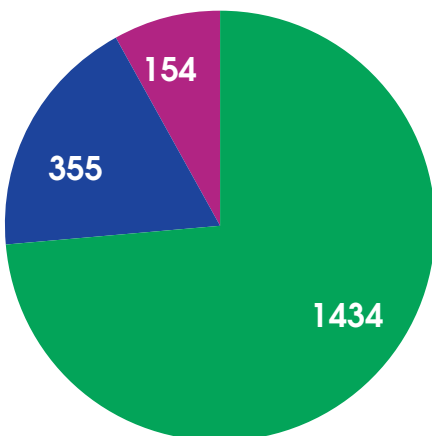
2014-15



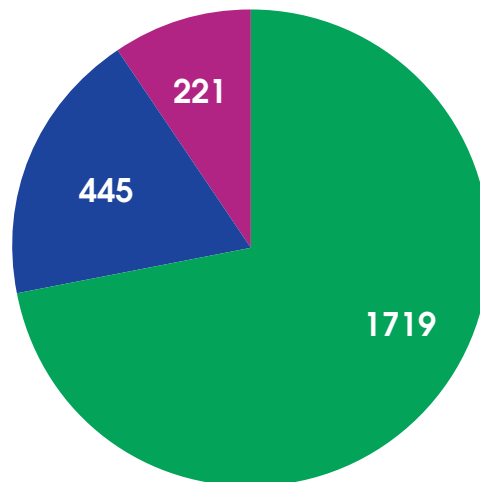
2015-16



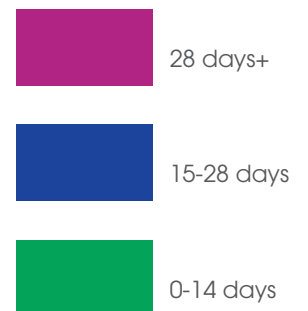
OFF STREET



2014-15

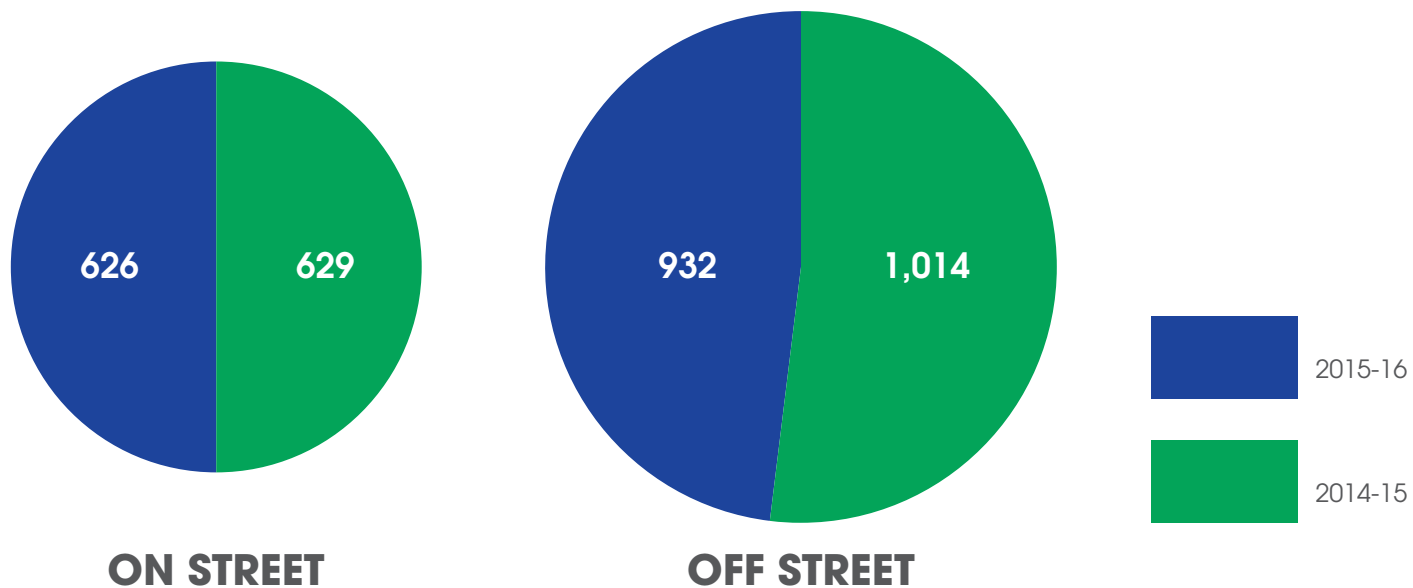


2015-16



Appendix 3

PCNs - waived or cancelled 2014-15 and 2015-16



Appendix 4

Penalty Charge Notices - referred to an adjudicator



Appendix 5

Parking accounts 2015-16

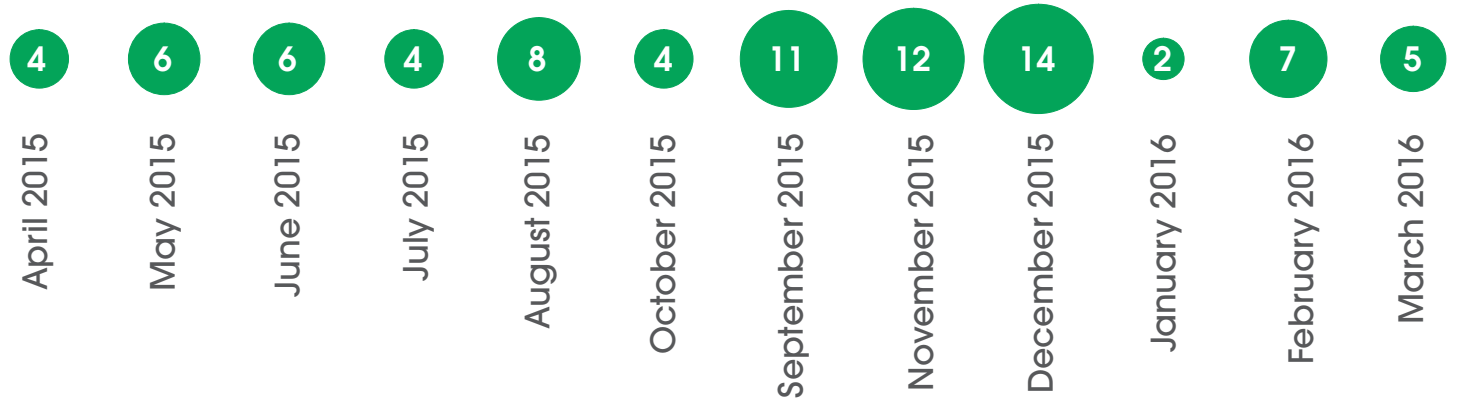
Income and Expenditure - Ashford Borough Council Parking 2014-2015	
INCOME	TOTAL
Resident Parking Permits	£21,325.57
On Street Parking Charges	£147,488.50
Penalty Charge Notices (On Street)	£269,971.57
Visitor Parking Permits	£14,790.00
Off Street Parking Charges (Car Parks)	£1,748,445
Penalty Charge Notices (Car Parks)	£56,747
Other Income	£2,433
TOTAL INCOME	£2,261,199
EXPENDITURE	
On-Street Parking	£424,282.37
Off-Street Parking	£896,256.33
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	£1,320,538.70
2015/2016 (Expenditure less income)	£953,781.74

Notes on Parking Account:

- 1) Income from off-street charges goes into the council's 'general fund' and is not ringfenced for transport-related schemes as other parking income is
- 2) Under Section 55 of the Road Traffic Regulations Act 1984 a local authority's surplus can be allocated to cover the costs as detailed below (but not limited to):
 - Transport, highway or road improvements
 - Environmental Improvements (includes a reduction of environmental pollution)
 - Provision of outdoor recreational facilities available to the general public without charge

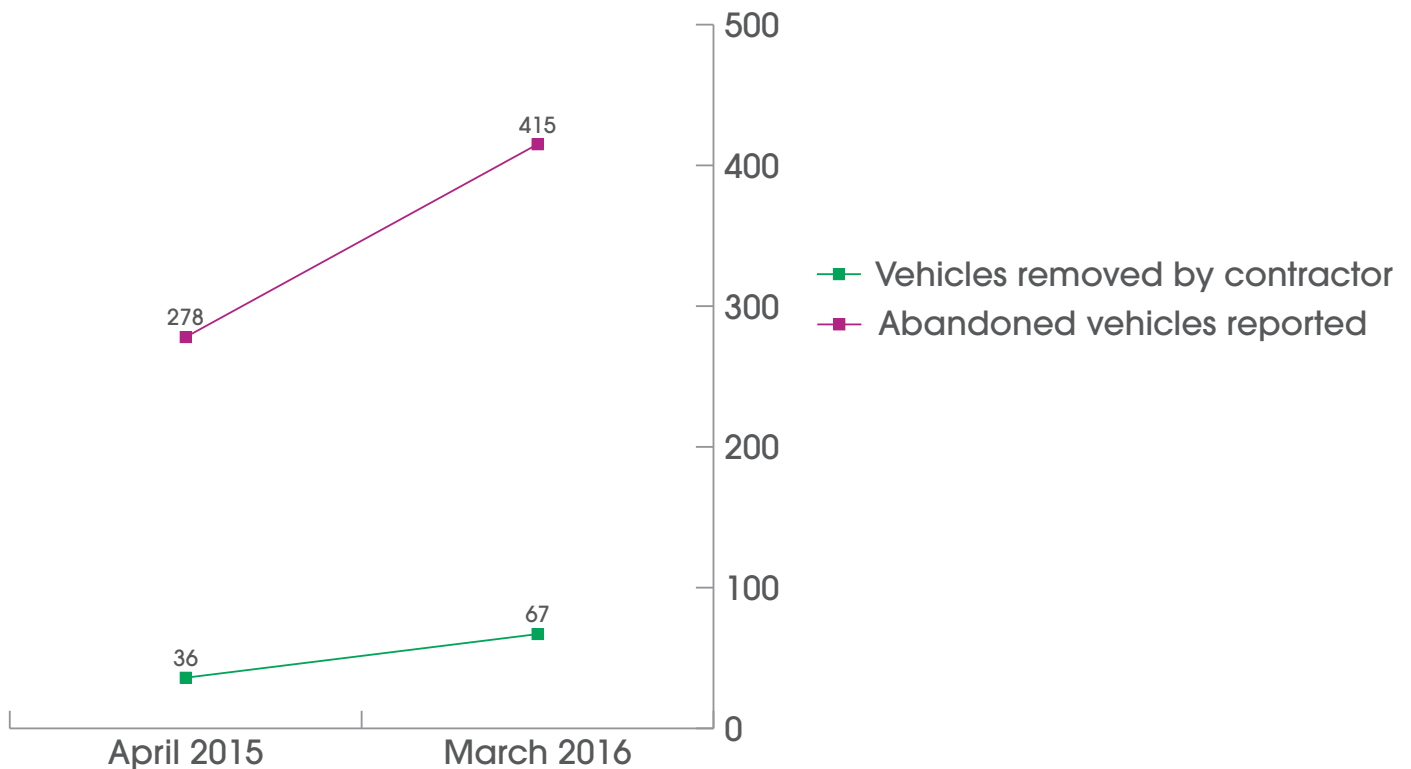
Appendix 6

Parking Dispensation Notices – issued by month 2015-16



Appendix 7

Vehicles reported as abandoned 2014/15 – 2015/16





PARKING

the annual report
2015-16



ASHFORD
BOROUGH COUNCIL

www.ashford.gov.uk/parking