

Broxbourne Borough Council

Parking services annual report 2011/12



Introduction by Councillor Ray Hannam

Cabinet Member for Public and Environmental Protection



Welcome to the Broxbourne Council Parking Report for the period April 2011 to March 2012. This is the first annual report since the Council took over parking enforcement from the police on 9 May 2005. Whilst it is not a legal requirement for us to produce an annual report it is an initiative that the Council is keen to undertake.

The aim of the report is to present financial and statistical data in a clear and succinct way as well as our objectives, achievements and plans for the future.

The principal aim of the parking service is to discourage indiscriminate and obstructive parking throughout the Borough. We have implemented schemes to maximise “kerb space” in town centres, small shopping parades and near schools to ensure there is a safe environment for all to use.

The parking enforcement service is delivered by a team of trained and qualified Civil Enforcement Officers (CEOs), supported by a small team

of qualified processing officers. The CEOs are not incentivised to issue penalty charge notices and in fact the provision of this service to the public makes a loss that is funded from the Council’s general fund.

Our aim is to enforce the regulations fairly and consistently bearing in mind the conflicting needs of drivers, residents, businesses, visitors, commuters and blue badge holders.

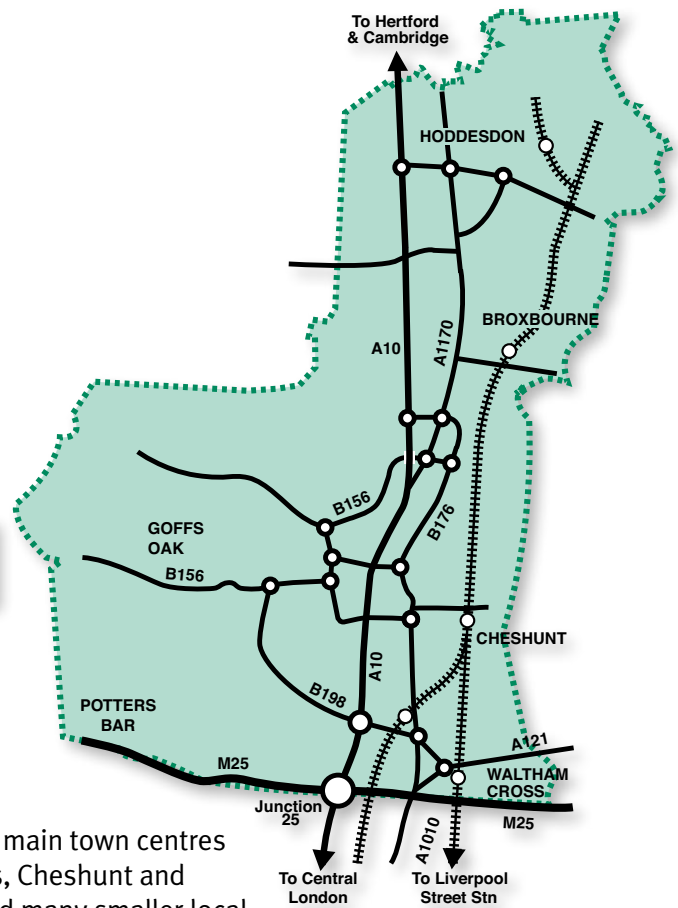
There is a programme of regular maintenance of the Council’s car parks to provide safe and reliable facilities which involves a significant amount of investment and in part is met by the charges made to use these car parks.

We are always looking to improve the quality and efficiency of the services we provide. The purpose of this annual report is to give you a better understanding of the way the service operates and is delivered in Broxbourne.

I hope you find it helpful and informative, and I would welcome any constructive comments to improve the service.

Ray Hannam

Background



The Borough of Broxbourne lies in south east Hertfordshire, adjoining London and the M25 to the south. It has an area of approximately 20 square miles and a population of around 93,600.

The Borough is bisected by the A10 and the London-to-Cambridge railway line. The towns of Waltham Cross, Cheshunt and Hoddesdon lie along this north-south corridor in a near continuous urban area. To the west are Hammondstreet and Goff's Oak. The rest of the Borough is mostly rural with large areas of wooded green belt countryside. There are good road and rail links into London, as well as to Stansted airport, and many residents commute to work on a daily basis.

The geography and demographics of the Borough present many challenges when it comes to setting a transport and parking policy, and attempting to balance the often competing requirements of different groups of stakeholders, for example, residents, businesses, commuters, schools, blue badge holders.

There are three main town centres (Waltham Cross, Cheshunt and Hoddesdon) and many smaller local shopping parades throughout the Borough. The Council endeavours to support local businesses by providing sufficient free or low-priced parking in the vicinity in combination with measures designed to encourage a good level of turnover of these spaces.

There are some big differences in the demographics across the Borough. It has four of the most deprived areas in the county, and three of the most prosperous. Overall, car ownership is above average, with 84% of households having one or more cars but in many cases no off-road parking.

In common with the rest of the country, the proportion of older residents is projected to continue to increase over the coming years, as is the number of blue badge holders.

Objectives and Achievements

Civil parking enforcement within the Borough of Broxbourne aims to:

- 1 Maintain and, where possible, improve the flow of traffic.
- 2 Take into account the need to improve safety and environmental conditions.
- 3 Manage demand for parking and meet strategic transport objectives.
- 4 Ensure that any surplus income from enforcement and on-street parking charges is invested in parking, public transport, highway maintenance or environmental improvements.
- 5 Ensure a consistent approach to challenges, representations and appeals.
- 6 Meet the demands of Blue Badge holders, including access and available parking in areas of high demand.
- 7 Meet the demands of on and off-street parking, taking into account areas of high demand, and assisting in sustaining shops and businesses.
- 8 Discourage indiscriminate parking causing obstruction and hindering the free flow of traffic, thereby ensuring a safe environment for highway users and maximum turnover of parking spaces.

- 9 Consider each case on its merits, taking into account matters of proportionality, fairness, reasonableness and objectivity.
- 10 Consider and introduce Traffic Regulation Orders where residents' concerns have identified a need for parking controls.

Over the past year a number of initiatives and enhancements have been implemented in the parking service as part of the continuing drive for improvement. These include:

- 1 The revision of the parking enforcement policy document to set out more clearly the Council's policy in this area. This can be found at www.broxbourne.gov.uk/pdf/DES_Parkingpolicy_22.3.11.pdf
- 2 The development and implementation of a procedure for the physical removal of vehicles for which a number of PCNs are outstanding (so-called persistent evaders).
- 3 The introduction of focused measures to deal with specific instances of pavement parking where they cause significant problems, particularly for pedestrians.

- 4 The application of technology and the introduction of new procedures to enhance CEO safety, such as the acquisition of body cameras and the capability to issue PCNs by post where the vehicle drives off or where the driver is aggressive.
- 5 A greater focus on school patrols, resulting in an enforcement presence at one or more schools on three days out of every four and the implementation of broader initiatives to address issues at the most problematic schools.
- 6 The resolution or diminution of problems at a number of identified 'hot spots' through the introduction of new regulations, increased patrols or other pragmatic measures.
- 7 An extensive market testing exercise, involving a tendering process with a group of local Councils, the conclusion of which was that the service should not be contracted out as the in-house service delivers better value for money.

These improvements have been achieved with limited resources and, indeed, for a large part of the year with less than the full complement of CEOs and support staff.

Parking provision



The Council provides a considerable amount of free on-street parking in and around the town centres (ranging from 30 minutes to two hours depending on the location), as well as bays for blue badge holders and 1,151 pay-and-display spaces and 55 disabled bays in 12 car parks across the Borough.

The majority of our car parks have achieved the safer parking 'Park Mark' accreditation and steps are being taken to extend this to all our car parks as soon as possible.

In addition to general maintenance and repair work in all our car parks, the Windmill Lane car park was resurfaced this year.

Details of the car park spaces are given in the table (right). Although the extension to the Waltham Cross Playing Fields car park was not completed until after the end of 2011/12 these figures are for the expanded car park.

Council operated car parks

Location	Ordinary	Motor cycle	Leased/ reserved	Taxi	Disabled	Total
Taverners Way North	41				3	44
Taverners Way South	35	2			2	39
Burford St.	45				3	48
Newham Parade	70		17		3	90
Windmill Lane/ Grundy Park	220	3			13	236
Cheshunt Community Hospital	39	1	1		4	45
Eleanor Cross Rd.	88	3	2	2	4	99
High St. (Waltham Cross)	150	2	11		10	173
Wycliffe Clo.	54		2		2	58
Goffs Oak	27	1	17		3	48
Broxbourne Lido	240	2			4	246
Waltham Cross Playing Fields	76		16		4	96
Total	1085	14	66	2	55	1222

Parking Enforcement



SCHOOL — KEEP — CLEAR



Civil Enforcement Officers

In August 2011, following the culmination of a tendering process for the outsourcing of the parking enforcement service, the Cabinet decided to keep the service in-house for reasons of cost and quality of service. This direct control enables the Council to manage all aspects of its parking enforcement operations and to maintain the flexibility to respond to local concerns and issues. Although this tendering exercise demonstrated that the Council's in-house service provides value for money, a programme of further improvements was approved by Cabinet in January 2012 for implementation during 2012/13.

The Council employs a small number of CEOs who patrol every day of the week to provide coverage of all parking restrictions throughout the Borough, although priority has to be given to those areas where the most parking problems are experienced. In addition, early morning and

late evening patrols are carried out to enforce commercial vehicle restrictions and double yellow lines. CEOs use hand-held computers to record the details of all PCNs issued and use digital cameras to provide supporting evidence of parking contraventions. This enables us to take an objective and consistent approach to the assessment of challenges against the issue of PCNs. A statutory independent appeal process is available through the Traffic Penalty Tribunal.

Although the Council monitors the performance of its CEOs, it does not set any targets for the number of PCNs that they should issue. They are salaried employees of the Council, who receive no incentive payments or bonuses based on PCN issues.

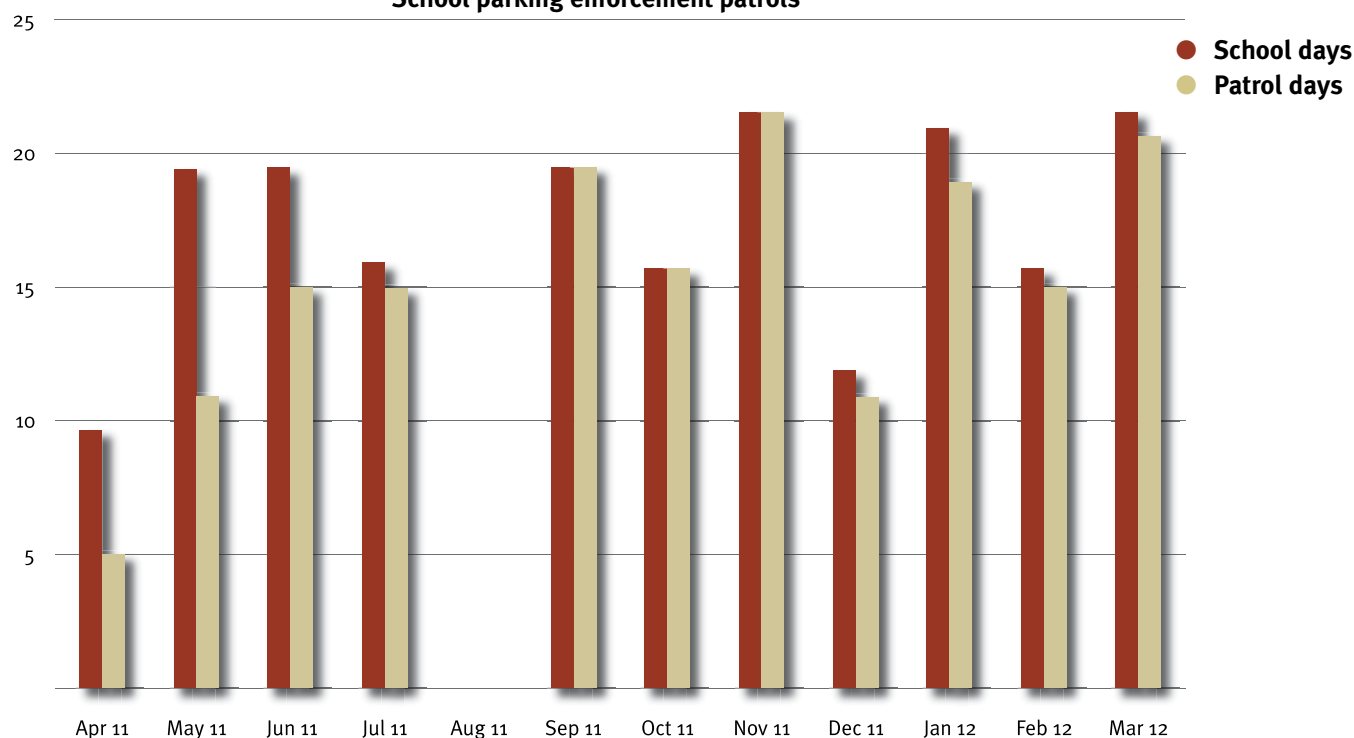
Schools

The regular deployment of CEOs at schools has been a key objective of the parking service for some time. The chart overleaf gives details

of patrols on a month-by-month basis for the year. Over the year it was possible to patrol on 87% of school days and CEOs were on many days deployed at more than one school. The lower levels of performance in the early part of the year were generally the result of staff shortages. However, an increased focus on school patrols was implemented in September 2011 resulting in the deployment of CEOs on almost 100% of school days. This has been further enhanced by the Council's decision in January 2012 to employ two additional CEOs on a part-time basis, with effect from April 2012.

Following its identification by the Broxbourne Community Safety Partnership as a local priority, the parking service has contributed to an initiative to tackle dangerous parking outside schools implemented by the Council's Community Safety Team in conjunction with the police, Hertfordshire County Council and other agencies. This multi-agency approach has incorporated: visits

School parking enforcement patrols



to schools and talks to pupils; the development of a communications campaign, involving banners, leaflets and presentations to neighbourhood forums; the implementation of new parking restrictions; joint patrols with PCSOs to address issues such as obstruction that cannot be dealt with by our CEOs; and the introduction of schemes such as Park-and-Stride and Walking Buses, particularly at schools where the risks to pupils' safety are considered to be significant.

New schemes

Every year we receive many requests for new restrictions or parking schemes from residents, councillors, or officers of the Council. In November 2011 Cabinet agreed to the implementation of a procedure for the consideration and prioritisation of such requests and an annual budget of £30,000. This has already enabled a number of key schemes to be actioned in 2011/12 and others to be progressed in subsequent years.

Priorities for next year

The preparations for the Olympics in July/August 2012 involved the implementation and administration of a permit scheme for residents and businesses in the Restricted Parking Zone (RPZ) around the White Water Centre. Arrangements were also made for vehicles parked on the Olympic Route Network (ORN) and the Alternative ORN to be removed and for the CEOs to be on duty around the venue from 7:00 in the morning to 7:30 at night.

The redevelopment of the Tower Centre in Hoddesdon will lead to the loss of a large number of parking spaces, both Council and private, in the town centre which will have an impact on visitors, shoppers and market traders. The parking team will be closely involved in the implementation and efficient management of the mitigation measures that will need to be put in place.

The service intends to develop closer working relations with

the Police and discussions have started about increased cooperation with PCSOs whose powers have recently been extended to include the ability to issue penalty notices for a number of traffic offences, such as obstruction, that our CEOs are not empowered to deal with.

The regular deployment of CEOs at schools has been a key objective of the parking service for some time. It is apparent that many drivers comply with the restrictions only when officers are present and so additional resource is crucial in enabling an expanded presence at schools without adversely affecting the patrolling of streets, car parks, town centres, and other known problem locations across the borough. The recruitment of two part-time CEOs will enable an increased enforcement presence at more schools on a daily basis. Outside of term time these CEOs will be redeployed to patrol at specified locations in support of the drive to target problem areas identified by residents.

Financial Data



The income and expenditure of the Council in connection with its on-street charging and all of its enforcement activity, both on-street and off-street, is governed by Section 55 of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 as amended. This requires that any surplus is used for specified purposes, namely the provision or maintenance of car parking facilities, public transport, road improvement projects, or environmental improvements.

In the year 2011/12 the Council made a loss of £91,253 on its enforcement activities and on-street parking. Generally it is only those authorities with a significant amount of on-street parking income who generate a surplus under Section 55. In Broxbourne the vast majority of on-street parking is free. In accordance with the provisions of the legislation, this deficit was funded from the Council's General Fund.

2011/12 Parking Account under S55 RTA 1984 as amended

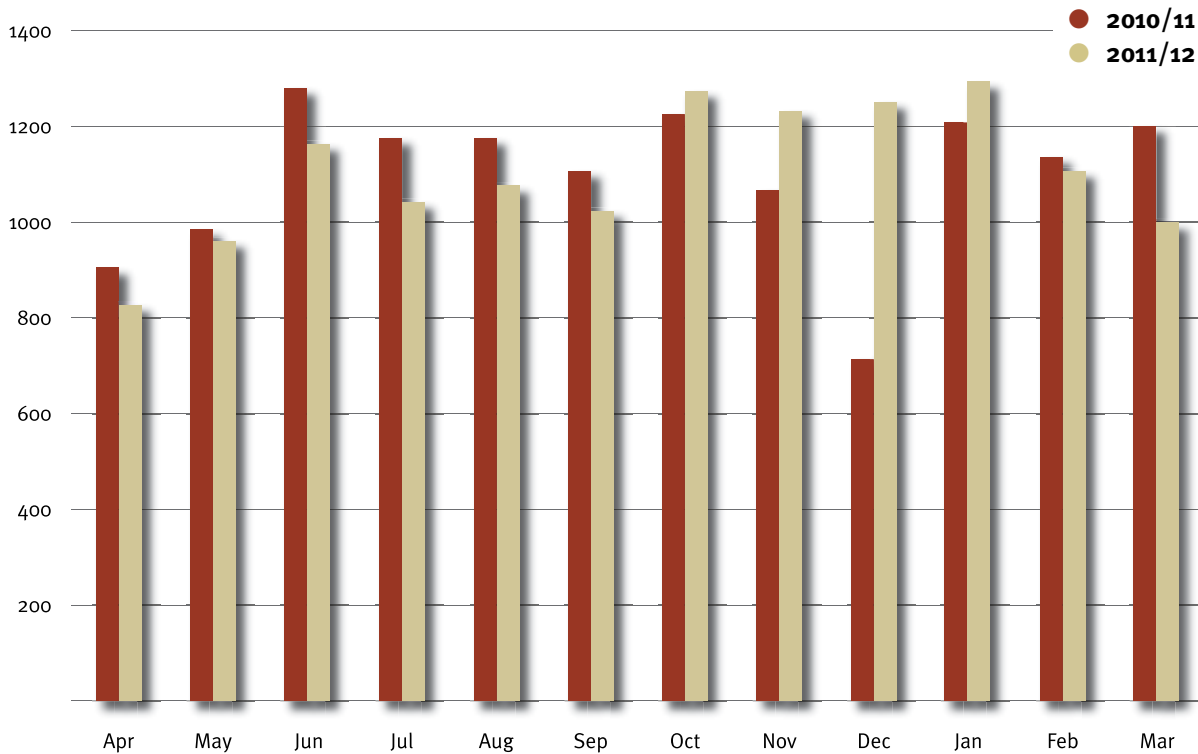
	£
Employee Related Costs	261,121
Direct Operating Costs	46,754
Internal Support Charges	136,969
Total Expenditure	444,844
Parking Income	15,343
PCN Income	338,248
Total Income	353,591
Net Deficit	91,253

The Council's car parks generated a surplus of £314,041, as follows:

	£
Employee Related Costs	13,744
Direct Operating Costs	304,201
Internal Support Charges	54,479
Total Expenditure	372,424
Parking Income	686,466
Net surplus	314,041

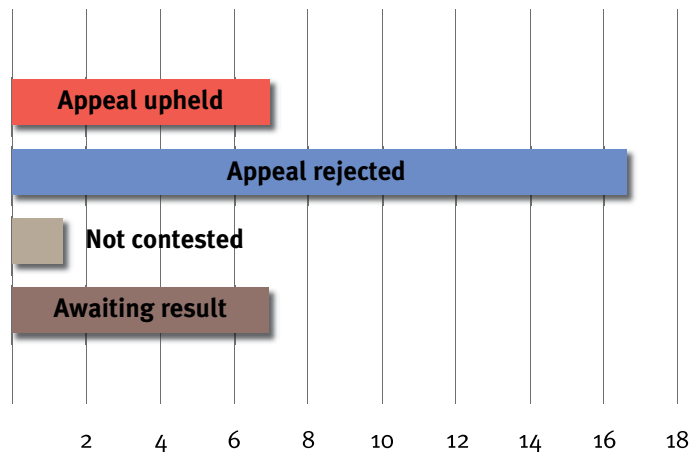
Penalty Charge Notices

Valid PCNs issued



There is a single nationwide standard list of the parking contraventions for which CEOs may issue PCNs. The Secretary of State for Transport decides on the appropriate charge for each contravention. A higher level charge applies to cases where parking is prohibited (such as on yellow lines) and a lower level charge applies in respect of contraventions where parking is permitted (e.g. failing to display a ticket, or staying beyond the permitted time).

Traffic penalty tribunal appeals



In 2011/12 a total of 13,505 PCNs were issued, of which 2,444 were cancelled following the challenge and appeal process. The cancellation rate is less than the national average and is considerably lower than we have achieved in previous years, which reflects the improved quality of PCNs issued and a consistent approach to appeals.

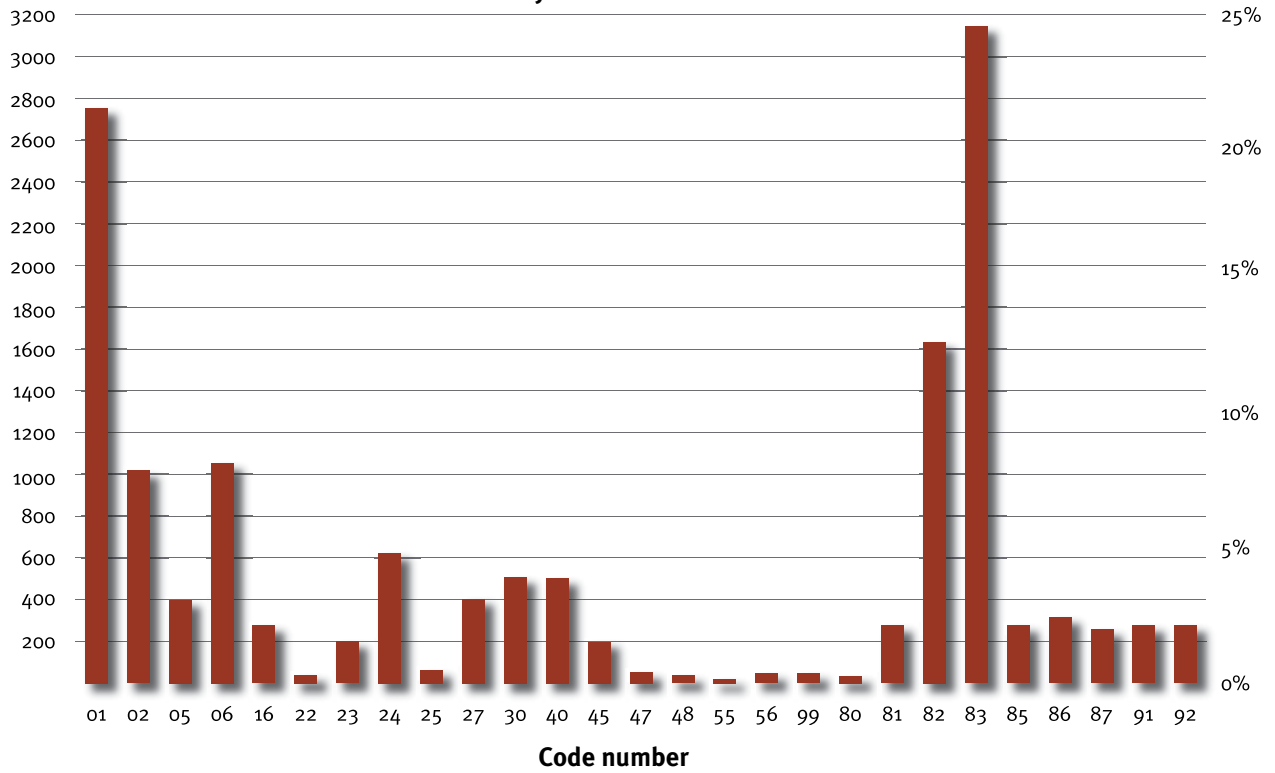
Clear information about the PCN challenge procedure is given on the PCN itself, on the Council's website and in leaflets available at the Council Offices and One Stop Shops. In dealing with informal challenges and any subsequent formal representations, the Parking Services office team endeavours to act with fairness and consistency.

Vehicle owners are kept informed of the next stage of the procedure and of their options, including their right to appeal to the Traffic Penalty Tribunal. In total, 32 cases were submitted for adjudication at the TPT in 2011/12, the outcomes of which are shown in the chart above.

Below is a detailed breakdown of the numbers of PCNs which the Council's CEOs issued in respect of each type of contravention during 2011/12, noting whether each is subject to the higher or lower rate of penalty charge.

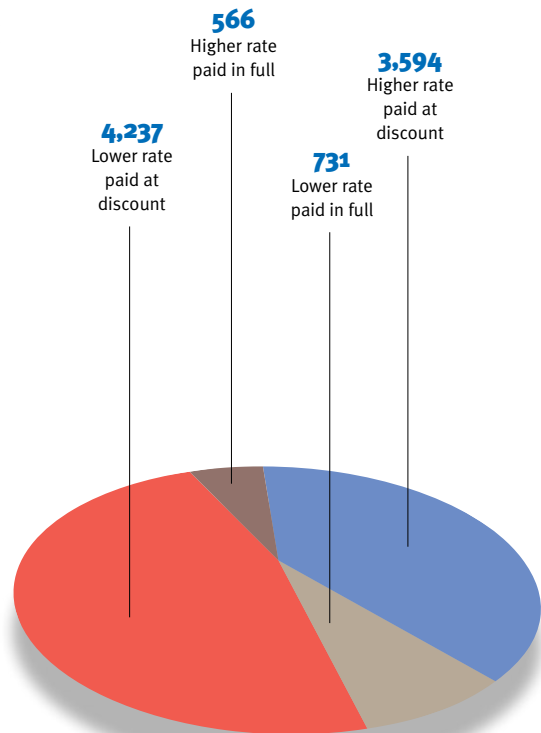
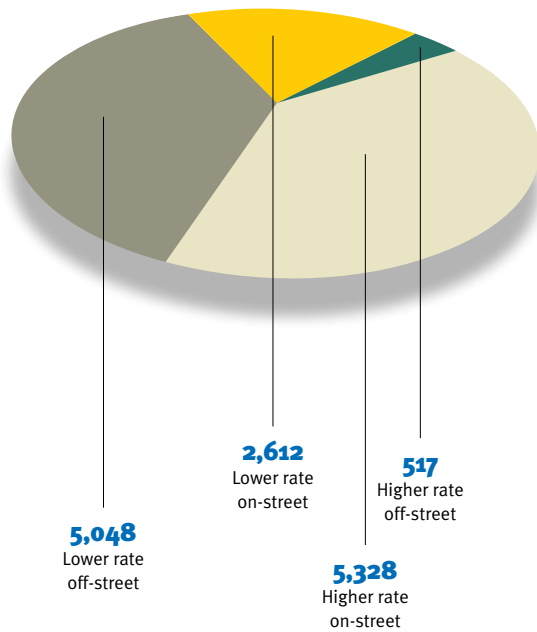
On-street parking contraventions			
Code	Contravention description	PCNs Issued	% of all PCNs
01 (Higher)	Parked in a restricted street during prescribed hours	2,775	20.5%
02 (Higher)	Parked or loading/unloading in a restricted street where waiting and loading unloading restrictions are in force	1,034	7.7%
05 (Lower)	Parked after the expiry of paid for time	412	3.1%
06 (Lower)	Parked without clearly displaying a valid pay & display ticket or voucher	1,096	8.1%
16 (Higher)	Parked in a permit space without displaying a valid permit	2	0.0%
22 (Lower)	Re-parked in the same parking place or zone within 1 hour (or other specified time) of leaving	17	0.1%
23 (Higher)	Parked in a parking place or area not designated for that class of vehicle	200	1.5%
24 (Lower)	Not parked correctly within the markings of the bay or space	626	4.6%
25 (Higher)	Parked in a loading place during restricted hours without loading	53	0.4%
27 (Higher)	Parked adjacent to a dropped footway	407	3.0%
30 (Lower)	Parked for longer than permitted	461	3.4%
40 (Higher)	Parked in a designated disabled person's parking place without clearly displaying a valid disabled person's badge	518	3.8%
45 (Higher)	Parked on a taxi rank	196	1.5%
47 (Higher)	Stopped on a restricted bus stop or stand	52	0.4%
48 (Higher)	Stopped in a restricted area outside a school	27	0.2%
55 (Higher)	A commercial vehicle parked in a restricted street in contravention of an overnight waiting ban	1	0.0%
56 (Higher)	Parked in contravention of a commercial vehicle waiting restriction	16	0.1%
99 (Higher)	Stopped on a pedestrian crossing and/or crossing area marked by zigzags	47	0.3%
Number of higher rate on-street PCNs issued		5,328	39.5%
Number of lower rate on-street PCNs issued		2,612	19.3%
Total number of on-street PCNs issued		7,940	58.8%
Off-street parking contraventions			
80 (Lower)	Parked for longer than the maximum period permitted	7	0.1%
81 (Higher)	Parked in a restricted area in a car park	245	1.8%
82 (Lower)	Parked after the expiry of paid for time	1,637	12.1%
83 (Lower)	Parked in a car park without clearly displaying a valid pay & display ticket or voucher or parking clock	3,109	23.0%
85 (Higher)	Parked in a permit bay without clearly displaying a valid permit	3	0.0%
86 (Lower)	Parked beyond the bay markings	295	2.2%
87 (Higher)	Parked in a disabled person's parking space without clearly displaying a valid disabled person's badge	259	1.9%
91 (Higher)	Parked in a car park or area not designated for that class of vehicle	9	0.1%
92 (Higher)	Parked causing an obstruction	1	0.0%
Number of higher rate off-street PCNs issued		517	3.8%
Number of lower rate off-street PCNs issued		5,048	37.4%
Total number of off-street PCNs issued		5,565	41.2%
All parking contraventions			
Total number of higher rate PCNs issued		5,845	43.3%
Total number of lower rate PCNs issued		7,660	56.7%

PCNs by Contravention code



PCNs issued

PCNs paid



Conclusion

We hope that this, our first annual parking report, has provided some helpful information on the aims of the parking service, our operational constraints and philosophy, and the plans we have for the future. We would welcome any comments on both the report itself and the service we provide to help us continue to make improvements.

Please write to us at:

**Parking Services (ref: CMH)
Bishops' College
Churchgate
Cheshunt
Herts EN8 9XB**

Or email to:

parkingcontrol@broxbourne.gov.uk
and put 'Annual Report' in the subject line.