

PARKING ANNUAL REPORT Dec 2010/Mar 2012 -



Introduction

1. - Civil Parking Enforcement (CPE) places the responsibility for enforcing on-street parking restrictions, in addition to off-street car parks with the Council rather than the police. The Council operates its parking enforcement service under the provisions of the Traffic Management Act 2004 (TMA).

The regulations made under Part 6 of the Traffic Management Act 2004 enable a Local Authority in England, provided it has been given the relevant power by the Secretary of State, to enforce parking contraventions within a particular geographical area and to enforce other contraventions such as double parking and parking across a dropped footway within a Special Enforcement Area. Darlington Borough Council is operating CPE for both on street and off street contraventions in both areas covering the entire Borough area with the exception of the trunk roads (A1(M) and A66) these remain the responsibility of the Highways Agency.

This report will provide an account of parking enforcement activity in Darlington between 31/12/10 – 31/03/2012. Future reports will be annual - April to March.

Civil Parking Enforcement in Darlington

- 2 From the 31/12/2010 the Council has been operating decriminalised parking enforcement (CPE). Our objectives for CPE are compatible with our Local Transport Plan as follows:-
 - To reduce congestion and ensure expeditious movement of all road traffic
 - To improve air quality and the local environment
 - To maximise safety and reduce accidents
 - To support economic regeneration
 - To comply with the council's Parking Management Strategy
3. - CPE is a key component of effective traffic management and improving traffic flow. The integration of enforcement and parking policy should provide better monitoring of the effectiveness and value of parking controls, so that parking provision becomes more responsive to the public's needs. Poor, dangerous, and obstructive parking can pose a danger to pedestrians by blocking pavements and forcing them onto the roads. It also reduces visibility for other motorists and impedes traffic flow. Through CPE all residents, visitors, schools and businesses will benefit from better enforcement of parking regulations and the reduction of incorrectly parked vehicles.
4. - CPE transfers the responsibility for enforcing on street parking restrictions (such as double yellow lines, no loading restrictions etc), to the Council rather than the Police. This is in addition to on and off street parking enforcement (car parks, residents parking areas etc) which was carried out by the Council and was ultimately dealt with through the magistrates courts as a criminal matter prior to CPE.

5. - Enforcement is carried out by an in-house team of Civil Enforcement Officers (CEOs). Civil Enforcement Officers do not have discretion and work within a stringent set of guidelines governed by the Traffic Management Act. CEOs will at the time of issuing a Penalty Charge Notice (PCN) make notes and take photographic evidence to substantiate the reason for the issue. This will be used by the back office processing staff if a challenge is received.
6. - The Council does not set PCN issue targets for our CEOs and they do not receive any financial gain based on the number of PCNs issued.
7. - Income from PCNs is used to finance the enforcement and adjudication systems. Any on-street surpluses must be used only for the purposes set out in Section 55 (as amended) of the Road Traffic Regulations Act 1984. The council is required to keep separate accounts of PCN income from on-street and off street enforcement. Any surplus can be used for further investment in the Council's transport and environmental policies and to promote Local Transport Plan objectives.

Civil Parking Enforcement Initiatives, projects and Improvements

8. - The following initiatives, projects and improvements have been implemented during CPE:
 - Stanhope Road residents' zone extended
 - Experimental traffic order in Salisbury terrace
 - Significant re-lining of the town centre
 - Parking charges introduced on a Sunday on and off street
 - East Street multi storey car park changed from pay on exit to pay at machine
 - Park Map safer parking award maintained for all main car parks
 - Electric vehicle point identified
 - Extra waiting restrictions introduced in John Dobbin Road and Faverdale areas
 - Amendment made to residents parking zone in Borough Rd
 - Loading bays introduced in John Dobbin Rd and Weavers Way
 - Limited waiting in John Dobbin Rd area extended from 1 hour to 2 hours.

Structure

9. Responsibility for Parking in Darlington is split between 4 teams within 2 departments:

A)	Team	Officers	Department
	Parking Strategy & Commissioning	1x Principal Strategy Officer 1x Strategy Officer	Place

Responsible for:
Car Parking Strategy

B)	Team	Officers	Department
	Highway Network Management	1x Traffic Manager 1x Traffic Management Engineer 1x Traffic Management Technician	Place
	Legal Services	1x Principal Legal Assistant	Resources

Responsible for:
Statutory Highway Network Management Duty
Consideration and prioritisation of requests for new or amended restrictions
Preparation of processing of Traffic Regulation Orders (TROs)
Exemptions, waivers and permissions
Maintenance of signing and lining associated with restrictions
Maintenance of car parks

C)	Team	Officers	Department
	Parking Processing & Parking Enforcement	1x Licensing, Parking & Trading Standards Manger 1x Processing Appeals Co-Ordinator 1x Parking Enforcement Co-Ordinator 1x Parking Processing Officer 1x Parking Processing Assistant 2x Civil Enforcement Supervisors 10x Full Time equivalent CEOs	Place

Responsible for:
Civil Parking Operational Enforcement
Management of day to day operation of all pay and display machines
Penalty Charge Notice Appeals
Bailiff Enforcement – Unpaid PCNs
Management of Cash Collections from pay and display machines
Preparation of cases for consideration by independent adjudicator (Traffic Penalty Tribunal)
Freedom of information requests
Management of Resident, Staff and Contract Parking Permits

10. - The management and back office appeals and processing staff deal with all correspondence from the first informal challenge to a PCN being registered with bailiff. All back office staff have received full training and have obtained City & Guilds qualifications in accordance with the Traffic Management Act

2004. Staff who deal with penalty notice representations refer to a published framework which provides guidance so that each representation is considered on its own merits. These procedures are published on the Council website and can be viewed at

<http://www.darlington.gov.uk/Transport/carparking/carparking.htm>

11. - The Council currently employ 10 full time equivalent CEOs who patrol both on and off street parking areas. All CEOs shadow a more experienced staff member as part of their training to familiarise themselves with the responsibilities of the role. This will continue until management are satisfied that they are competent to patrol alone. All CEOs have or are working towards a City and Guilds Level 2 qualification in Parking Enforcement.
12. - CEOs are equipped with mobile radios to keep in constant contact with the back office and each other. They also wear video cameras on their person to record live footage, to assist with health and safety reasons and challenges against PCNs
13. - The CEO's follow enforcement procedures which are included in the published framework on the Council website and can be viewed at:

<http://www.darlington.gov.uk/Transport/carparking/carparking.htm>

Parking Locations and Spaces

14. - Darlington Council owns, operates and enforces 21 pay and display car parks which consist of 2,333 spaces. There are also a number of privately operated car parks in the Town Centre. Between 31/12/10 – 31/03/2012 just over 1.6 million pay and display tickets were purchased within the Council owned car parks. There are 97 designated disabled spaces, however vehicles displaying a valid disabled badge can park in any marked space. **See Appendix 1**
15. - There are 305 On Street pay and display spaces which are restricted to a maximum stay of 2 hours with no return within an hour. This is to keep a constant turnover so there are available spaces for visitors to local businesses. **See Appendix 2**
16. - The Council has two permit holder contract parking areas to serve the operational parking needs of the town centre business's (Four Riggs, located on Bondgate and Beaumont Street West located on Beaumont Street).
17. - A map listing of all the Council car parks can be found at:

<http://www.darlington.gov.uk/Transport/carparking/carparking.htm>
18. - **Appendix 3** shows the recorded levels of car crime within Darlington car parks between 2000 – 2011.

Disabled Parking

19. - The Council provides designated disabled spaces within most of our car parks. Disabled badge holders can park for 3 hours free within a Short Stay car park and they can park all day for free within a Long Stay Car Park.
20. - Disabled badge holders may currently park without charge and without limit in all On Street pay and display areas.
21. - Darlington Shopmobility is located in the Market Square in the centre of the town (opposite the Town Hall). Shopmobility provides a hiring service to the public for scooters and wheelchairs. Shopmobility also has a small dedicated parking area at the Town Hall.

Performance

22. - Civil Parking Enforcement commenced on the 31/12/10 within the borough of Darlington. Differential penalty charge levels which are set nationally were introduced. A higher level of £70.00 (reduced to £35.00 if paid within 14 days) is levied for more serious parking contraventions i.e. no waiting/loading areas, bus stop clearways etc. A lower level of £50.00 (reduced to £25.00 if paid within 14 days) is levied for lesser contraventions i.e. parked after ticket expired, not displaying a valid ticket etc.
23. Between 31/12/10 – 31/03/12 Civil Enforcement Officers issued 21,004 Penalty Charge notices. This figure is higher compared to the issue levels of previous years because until the 31/12/10 the Council could only issue Excess Charge Notices within Car Parks, On Street pay and display and Resident permit areas. The issue of penalty notices has dropped in the 1st year due to higher compliance by the public and we expect this trend to continue.

	Date	No. Issued
Excess Charge Notices	01/04/08 – 31/03/2009	13,062
Excess Charge Notices	01/04/09 – 31/03/2010	14,759
Penalty Charge Notices	31/12/10 – 31/03/2012	21,004

24. - **Appendix 4** shows the income received for penalty charge notices issued between 31/12/10 – 31/03/12
25. - **Appendix 5** shows the number of penalty charge notice appeals received between 31/12/10 – 31/03/12. This has been broken down into appeals which were allowed (cancelled, no payment) rejected (payment required) cases at TPT (Traffic Penalty Tribunal (drivers have the option to have their appeal heard by an independent adjudicator) and penalty notices referred to bailiff.
26. - **Appendix 6** shows the breakdown of the Council's expenditure on Civil Parking Enforcement

Lessons Learned

27. - The introduction of Civil Parking Enforcement has been an important learning curve for the council. In the first 15 months the views of the public and local businesses have been sought This has resulted in the amendment of

several of the Council's policies and working procedures in respect of car parking provision as follows:

- Loading Bays - To assist local businesses the observation time given to vehicles parked in loading bays has been increased from 10 minutes to 20 minutes.
- East Row Taxi Rank – Due to the high number of taxis parked in the market area some disabled bays have been obstructed . Changes to the current rank and the introduction of a feeder rank are underway to address this issue.
- The Council is currently reviewing lines and spaces in more than 90 areas of the town.
- Following requests from the public the Civil Enforcement Officers are developing a more focussed approach in respect of areas such as parking around schools.

In addition, in respect of Sunday Charging the Council has listened to concerns about the introduction of a £1 hourly charge and has reversed this decision.

The Way Forward

28. - Darlington Council is committed to civil parking enforcement and as a result reducing problem parking in the town centre Enforcement will continue to be responsive with resources concentrated on parking “hot spots” where the Council receive a high number of complaints e.g. school keep clear areas.
29. - The Council will also consider the use of mobile van units where instant penalty notices can be issued by means of evidence captured by on board cameras . In due course the Council may seek authority from the Department of Transport to enforce Moving Traffic Offences (which are currently enforced by the police.)

Appendix 1 – Council Car Park Spaces

Car Park	Spaces	Type	Designated Disabled Spaces
Abbotts Yard *	72	Short Stay	22
Archer St	79	Mixed Tariff	
Beaumont St East *	150	Short Stay	
Beaumont St North *	118	Short Stay	3
Central House *	47	Long Stay	2
Chestnut St (Car & Lorry Park)	109	Long Stay	
Commercial St East *	139	Short Stay	13
Commercial St West *	171	Short Stay	10
East Street *	336	Short Stay	2
Garden St *	70	Mixed Tariff	2
Hird St	13	Long Stay	
Kendrew St East *	91	Mixed Tariff	
Kendrew St West *	97	Mixed Tariff	
Park Lane	111	Long Stay	
Park Place West	89	Long Stay	2
Park Place East *	91	Long Stay	4
St Hildas *	15	Long Stay	
Town Hall *	435	Short Stay	31
Winston St South	48	Short Stay	6
Winston St North *	27	Short Stay	
Winston St West	25	Short Stay	
Total	2333		97

*** Motorcycle Parking**

Appendix 2 – Council On Street Spaces

On Street	Spaces	On Street	Spaces
Beaumont Street	16	Raby Street	2
Grange Road	38	Primrose St	5
Northumberland St	14	Powlett St	12
South Arden St	4	Larchfield St	10
Winston Street	25	West Powlett St	2
Barnard Street	13	Gladstone St	37
Duke Street	34	North Lodge Tce	6
Napier Street	8	Kendrew St	7
Kendrew Street	7	Victoria Embank	9
Park Place	24	Victoria Road	7
Hargreave Terrace	13	Swan Street	5

Appendix 3 – Recorded Car Crime Levels

	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
Archer Street	2	5	5	6	1	1	0	1	1	2	0	0
Barnard Street	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0
Beaumont Street	7	2	4	5	4	1	1	2	2	0	0	1
Bells Place	0	0	3	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Commercial Street	10	3	2	5	2	2	4	0	0	1	0	2
Crown Street	1	2	2	1	0	0	4	3	0	0	0	0
East Street	2	0	2	1	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	1
Garden Street	2	0	0	2	0	0	4	8	0	0	0	1
Kendrew/Gladstone St	9	11	3	1	0	1	4	1	0	0	0	1
Market Place	3	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
Park Place	1	2	5	1	1	1	3	3	0	1	0	0
St Hilda's Church	0	0	0	2	0	0	4	2	0	0	0	0
Town Hall	1	0	4	9	3	2	1	3	1	0	5	0
Total	39	27	31	34	12	8	26	23	4	6	5	6

Appendix 4 – Income Levels

Month	Income	Month	Income
Jan 11	£65,821	Sep 11	£24,073
Feb 11	£46,255	Oct 11	£33,831
Mar 11	£49,900	Nov 11	£36,043
Apr 11	£46,250	Dec 11	£35,873
May 11	£37,718	Jan 12	£27,053
June 11	£32,442	Feb 12	£28,247
July 11	£33,473	Mar 12	£29,070
Aug 11	£32,378	Total	£558,427

Appendix 5 – Penalty Charge Notices Appeals, Tribunal and Bailiff

Month	Jan 11	Feb 11	Mar 11	Apr 11	May 11	Jun 11	Jul 11	Aug 11	Sep 11	Oct 11	Nov 11	Dec 11	Jan 12	Feb 12	Mar 12
PCN's Issued	2280	1564	1706	1652	1348	1247	1172	1339	919	1361	1460	1419	1175	1189	1235
Appeals Received	456	451	420	374	389	366	319	393	303	288	379	296	339	312	303
PCN Appeals Allowed	221	213	204	232	218	200	160	228	143	232	215	203	203	174	169
PCN Appeals Rejected	235	238	216	142	171	166	159	165	160	56	164	93	136	138	134
Successful TPT Cases for DBC		2	3	2	1	1	3		1		4				1
Unsuccessful TPT Cases for DBC	3	1	2								1	1			
Referrals to Bailiff						123	17	133	66		236	75	82	43	59

Appendix 6 - Expenditure

Description	Amount
Legal Fees – Publications (including Traffic Regulation Orders)	£33,755.62
Total Contractor Payments (Lines and Signage)	£284,777.93
Engineers Fees	£4,718.66
Project Management (Traffic Management)	£659.24
Project Management (Parking)	£47,339.80
Vehicle Leasing	£510.00
ICT Hardware, Software & Training (Parking Enforcement)	£66,225.01
ICT Hardware, Software & Training (Parking Processing)	£44,817.96
Project Management (Civil Parking Enforcement)	£28,788.29
Civil Parking Enforcement Legal Fees	£5737.50
Salaries (Parking Enforcement and Processing Teams)	£402,459
Total	£517,330.01