

Parking

Annual Report

April 2016 – March 2017



Stockton-on-Tees
BOROUGH COUNCIL



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Foreword

This Annual Car Parking report summarises the parking and traffic enforcement conducted by the Council during the financial year 2016/2017. The Council continues to operate parking enforcement under the Traffic Management Act 2004, ensuring parking services operates to support businesses, shoppers, residents and visitors to the Borough in an efficient and cost effective manner and financial information is detailed in chapter 6.

Parking facilities are vital for people coming to Stockton to work, study, visit and support economic growth. Parking controls assist to minimise congestion, and ensure free-flowing traffic conditions, encouraging people to visit Stockton more regularly whilst balancing the needs of businesses, residents, visitors and those with disabilities.

The visible presence of Civil Enforcement Officers (CEO's) is the primary means of achieving compliance with parking regulations. This report provides an overview of what, why and how parking services are undertaken in Stockton.

If you have any questions or comments about the Annual Report or the Car Parking service in general please let us know by contacting the helpline on 01642 528203 or email us at carparking@stockton.gov.uk or visit the website at www.stockton.gov.uk/economic-regeneration-and-transport/car-parking



Councillor Mike Smith
Cabinet Member for Environment and Transport

Introduction

Stockton-On-Tees is a Unitary Authority with a population of approximately 192,000. Within the Borough of Stockton there are 4 town centres; Stockton, Billingham, Thornaby and Yarm.

Stockton town centre is located on the north bank of the river Tees. At the heart of the High Street (which is one of the widest in the UK) is the Town Hall, which dates from 1735. The High Street also incorporates an outdoor market which has been in existence since the 1300s and is held every Wednesday and Saturday.



Billingham town centre, located in the north of the Borough provides the town with national retail chains, including the oldest continuously trading Asda supermarket in the UK. The town centre public realm has recently been transformed with a multi-million pound facelift

Thornaby town centre was transformed with the pavilion shopping centre, providing extensive range of national and local retailers, restaurants, leisure centres and hotel.

Yarm town centre is located in the south of the Borough. The High Street is bordered by two rivers with many Georgian style buildings fronting onto the cobbled parking area providing a mix of shops and restaurants.

Stockton continues to deliver an action packed calendar of events across the Borough throughout the year. This includes one of Europe's largest free open air festivals, the Stockton International Riverside Festival (SIRF). In 2016 Stockton hosted the National Cycle Championships for the first time.

Chapter 1

Parking Provision within the Borough of Stockton-on-Tees

Car parking locations and spaces available can be found at:

<https://www.stockton.gov.uk/economic-regeneration-and-transport/car-parking/find-a-car-park-in-stockton>

Stockton operates at all pay and display car parks the option of paying by the RingGo. This is a cashless method of paying for parking via a mobile phone; it does incur a minimal additional charge. Visit RingGo website for details.

www.myringgo.com

Stockton Council has a legal obligation to prevent the use of its car parks for sleeping, camping or cooking. Facilities for this are available at White Water Caravan Club and Drovers Way Holiday Caravan Park.

Stockton Town Centre

There are currently 19 off-street car parks and 14 on-street car parking places in Stockton Town Centre which are all pay and display. Overall there are 1215 parking spaces to be managed (1017 Off-street and 198 on-street).



The current tariffs are aimed to encourage short-stay parking within the town centre. Maximum length of stay restrictions are generally structured to promote short-stay parking, and frequent turnover of spaces within the town centre. Long stay car parking is located on the periphery of the town centre utilised predominantly by commuters.

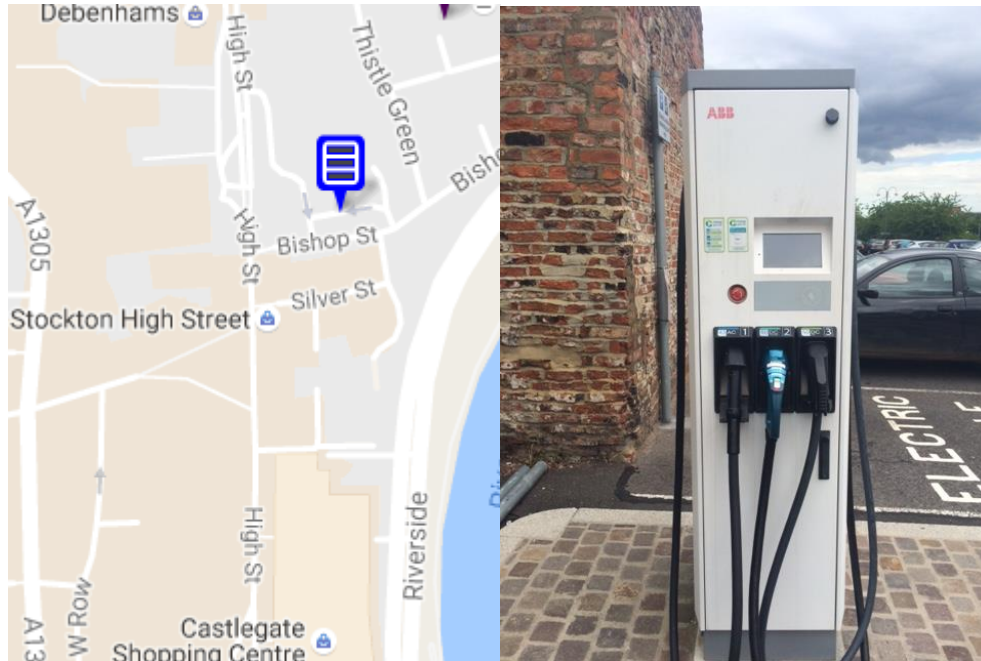
As part of the current regeneration for the town centre and change in demand for more conveniently located parking on-street parking on the High Street has been re-introduced. There are also limited waiting bays located around the town centre that provide 2 hours free parking they can be found in Dovecot Street and Skinner Street areas, Lawson Street, Farrer Street and Riverside.

Within Stockton Town Centre there are also 2 public multi-storey car parks and a further 3 car parks available to commuters and visitors to Stockton that are managed by other organisations.

[Electric Vehicle Charging Points](#)

The Council is committed to support the provision of charging posts at suitable parking locations via the Plugged-in-Places initiative.

In Bishop Street short stay car park the Council have a rapid charger which enables a battery to charge from 0% to 80% in only 30 minutes.



In 2016 the Council introduced a maximum 1 hour stay at the following electric charging points to improve usage.

- Bishop Street
- Parliament Street
- Thompson Street

Billingham Town Centre

There are six off-street car parks in Billingham town centre all of which are free to park with unlimited duration of stay. Four of the six off-street car parks are managed by another operator. The two off-street car parks managed by the Council are The Forum and Community Centre car parks.

In 2016 the completion of the recent scheme on the Causeway, included the improvements for disabled parking.



Thornaby Town Centre

Parking in Thornaby town centre is privately managed all of which is free to park with 3 hours at the Pavilion Car Park and 2 hours at Asda supermarket. Some limited on street parking is also available in the vicinity of the Health Centre.

Yarm Town Centre

Yarm is an historic market town, the High Street is a Principal road, the A67, and is of high importance for traffic movement. The cobbles of Yarm High Street are public highway providing 306 on street short stay spaces. The parking charges cover the entire cobbled area of the High Street, with the first 60 minutes free.

In addition, there are 3 Council owned, off street car parks at Castle Dyke Wynd (23 spaces) Yarm Wharf (38 spaces) and The Old Market (16 spaces) that are all predominantly used for long stay parking.

In 2016 additional on street short stay parking bays were introduced on the east side of the Yarm High Street.



<https://www.stockton.gov.uk/economic-regeneration-and-transport/car-parking/yarm-residents-permit-parking-schemes>

Chapter 2

Parking Permits

Residents Permit Parking Zones (RPZs)

Currently within the Borough there are six operational RPZ's, which are located within Stockton West area, Hardwick Estate area, Trinity Gardens area, Eaglescliffe Station area, Yarm High Street and West Street area.

The Council introduces RPZs where there is evidence of residents having difficulty parking in close proximity to their homes due to the use of areas for prolonged non-resident parking particularly where there are alternative parking provision.

Residents within each zone are entitled to apply for a residents permit in line with the guidance. In addition residents can also request to purchase a visitor permit if necessary.

The permits allow residents or visitors to park within the specified zone during the hours of operation. Currently there is an annual charge of £10 per resident or visitor permit this contributes towards the cost of administering and enforcing the scheme.

In **2016/17** a total of **1326** permits were issued across the zones.

Further information about the council's residents parking schemes can be found at:

<https://www.stockton.gov.uk/economic-regeneration-and-transport/car-parking/resident-parking-schemes-and-permits/>

Season Tickets

Season Tickets are available for purchase which allows parking in the Council's long stay car parks both on and off-street Monday to Saturday in Stockton town centre and Yarm. These permits are of particular benefit to those who regularly use the town's car parks, such as commuters, and can be purchased in advance at a cheaper rate than paying on a daily basis. In 2016/17 a total of **60** were purchased.

<https://www.stockton.gov.uk/economic-regeneration-and-transport/car-parking/apply-for-a-season-ticket/>

Market Permits

Stockton Town Centre is home to the region's largest outdoor Market. In addition, throughout various times of the year there are specialist markets, as well as the 'Stockton Sparkles' Christmas market.

Over the years there has been demand for easy access for market traders to unload their goods and the facility to be able to park close to their stalls has increased. Market Trader permits are available for traders registered with Stockton Borough Council to park in specially designated areas on market days which allows for easy transport of their goods.

Staff Parking Permits

Staff parking permits for employees of Stockton Council is available to be purchased via a salary sacrifice scheme. In 2016/17 1271 were issued.

Blue Badge

The Blue Badge Scheme is a national scheme that operates for those registered as disabled to access goods and services, by allowing them to park in close proximity to their destination.

The blue badge permit is available to eligible disabled people irrespective of whether they are travelling as a driver or a passenger.

In 2016/17 ??? were issued. A total of ??? blue badges were on issue at 31st March 2017. The majority of badges are valid for 3 years.

How the Blue Badge scheme is enforced

The Disabled Persons Parking Badges Act 2013 gave powers to Civil Enforcement Officers employed by the council to inspect and retain a disabled badge if they have reasonable grounds to believe that the badge is:-

- Is counterfeit.
- Has already been cancelled or reported lost or stolen.
- Should have been returned to the issuing authority because it had expired
- Was being misused (including by someone other than the holder when the genuine holder is not involved in the journey).

Civil Enforcement Officers carryout these inspections and in 2016/17 28 badges have been retained 13 of these were expired and 15 were being misused.

Chapter 3

Enforcement

Civil Enforcement Officers (CEO's) are actively encouraged to act in an ambassadorial role assisting motorists to find alternative parking opportunities where an opportunity to speak with and seek the cooperation of motorists exist. Officers are encouraged to provide help and assistance including directions to encourage visitors and support local residents and business. However, in certain circumstances the controls in place make inappropriate parking an instant contravention such as school entrances and disabled parking areas to ensure that public safety is maintained.

CEO's have powers to issue Penalty Charge Notices (PCN's) for contravention of yellow line parking, loading restrictions, on and off street parking offences, and certain instances of parking across dropped crossings.

Enforcement is evidence led to ensure that it assists the delivery of the Council's wider transport objectives. Streets receiving the highest number of visits are those where contraventions have the greatest impact on road safety, and severely affect free-flowing traffic conditions and motorists are most likely to require assistance to find parking opportunities and avoid potential penalties. Another key role is maximising road safety, and reducing congestion outside schools.

Enforcement also has additional powers to issue removal notices. There are two principal types of removal notice, these being the 'immediate removal' and the '24-hour removal' which are specifically dependant on the seriousness of the danger or obstruction. There are less commonly used 7 day removal notices for vehicles constituting more of a nuisance opposed to danger or obstruction and a 15 day notice used to serve on landlords in cases of abandonment linked to non public land.

April 2016 – March 2017	No. FPN Issued
Instant Removal Notices	619
24-hour Removal Notices	394
7 Day Removal Notice	86
15 Day Removal Notice	11
Reported as Untaxed	217

Note – 325 vehicles were removed, 202 of the vehicles were removed due to being untaxed.

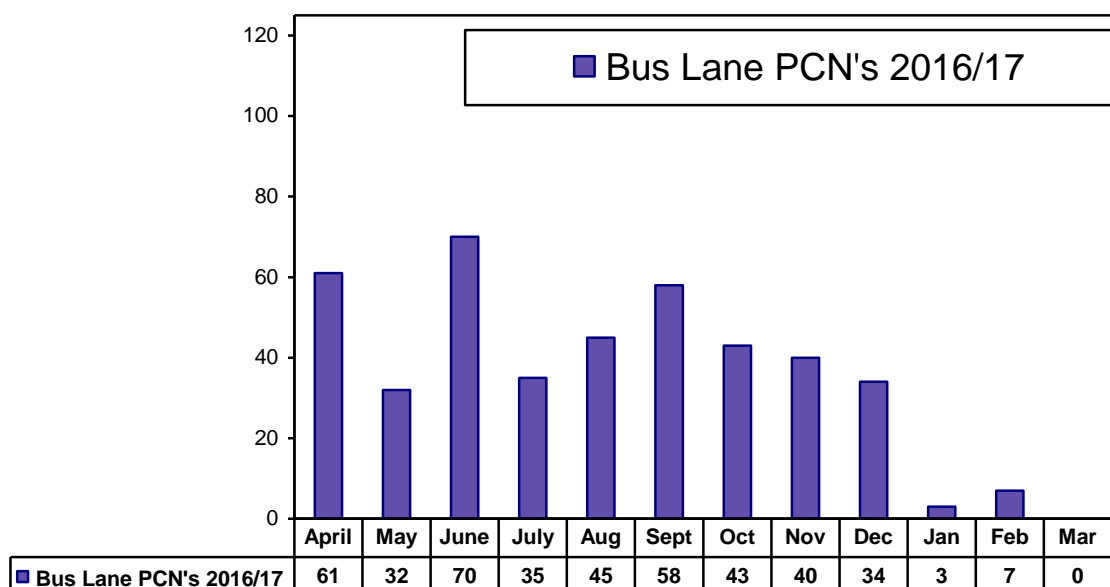
BUS LANE ENFORCEMENT

The aim of Bus lanes is to give priority to buses and in most cases pedal cycles during the prescribed hours of operation. Bus lane enforcement is part of a wide range of measures to improve the reliability and punctuality of public transport, in addition to reducing congestion and harmful emissions. Keeping bus lanes free from other traffic reduces delays and ensures buses move swiftly throughout the Borough.

There are four bus lanes controlled by Camera enforcement, these are at the following locations

- Stockton High Street
- Norton Road
- Westbury Street
- Mandale Road

The table below shows the number of notices that have been issued in 2016/17. The number of PCN's issued has fallen significantly at the end of the financial year and is mainly due to a temporary resourcing issue.



Description	No. Of PCN's issued	%
Total number of PCN's issued for all Bus Lanes	428	
Stockton High Street	112	26.2%
Mandale Road	12	2.8%
Westbury Street	63	14.7%
Norton Road	241	56.3%
Total Number of PCN's paid	353	82.5%
Total Number of PCN's paid at discounted rate	241	56.3%
Total Number of PCN's against which formal or informal representations were made	72	16.8%
Total Number of PCN's cancelled as a result of formal or informal representation	4	0.9%
Total Number of PCN's cancelled for other reasons (e.g. CEO error or driver untraceable)	12	2.8%

Chapter 4

Challenges, Representations & Appeals

The purpose of a PCN is to encourage compliance with parking restrictions. The issue of a PCN should act as a deterrent and hopefully through time re-educate drivers to ensure parking regulations are adhered to. CEO's will only issue a PCN where they are convinced from the evidence they have before them that a contravention has occurred.

Advice is provided on what can be done should a member of the public have been issued with a ticket. In most cases (except manual tickets), evidence can be viewed on-line, and for all cases an informal challenge can be made or the PCN can simply be paid if there is agreement that the notice has been given fairly. In brief there are three parts to the general appeal's process, which are the informal challenge, formal representation and appeal to the Independent Traffic Penalty Tribunal (TPT).

Firstly, in the appeals process an informal challenge can be made to the Car Parking Office within 14 days of the ticket being issued and at this point the PCN will be held at the discounted rate. If this challenge is unsuccessful the next stage of the process is to make Formal Representations to the Council on one of statutory grounds, which are:

- The alleged contravention did not occur.
- The penalty exceeded the amount applicable in the circumstances of the case.
- There has been a procedural impropriety by the council. The order which is alleged to have been contravened in relation to the vehicle concerned is invalid.
- The PCN was served by post because the council say the CEO was prevented by some person from fixing the PCN to the vehicle or handing it to the person in charge of the vehicle, but this did not happen.
- That the recipient was never the owner of the vehicle in question; or had ceased to be its owner before the date on which the alleged contravention occurred, or became the owner after the date on which the alleged contravention occurred.
- That the vehicle has been permitted to remain at rest in the place in question by a person who was in control of the vehicle without the consent of the owner. The recipient is a vehicle hire firm and the vehicle was on hire under a qualifying hiring agreement and the hirer had signed the statement acknowledging liability for any PCN issued during the hire period.
- That the Notice to Owner (NtO) should not have been served because the penalty charge had already been paid in full or by the amount reduced by any discount set within the period set.



Should a formal representation to the Council be unsuccessful then an Individual can appeal to the Traffic Penalty Tribunal who are independent from both the Local Authority and the appellant. An Adjudicator considers all aspects of a case and reviews relevant evidence and makes a decision that is both binding and final to all parties.

The Council is committed to give a fair, transparent and consistent approach to dealing with correspondence at all times throughout the appeals process. The aim of the Council is to respond to all informal challenges within 14 days, and formal representations within the required 56 days timeframe. For further information on parking policy and enforcement visit our website:

<https://www.stockton.gov.uk/economic-regeneration-and-transport/car-parking/how-to-pay-a-car-parking-fine>

<http://www.patrol-uk.info/>

Parking PCN's – Reasons for Cancellation

Cancellation Reason 2016/17	No. Cancelled
Challenge – General (eg additional evidence provided)	229
Challenge - Blue Badge Warning	170
Challenge - Loading	6
Challenge - Valid P&D	178
Challenge - Valid Permit	129
Representation – General (eg additional evidence provided)	19
Representation - Over 56 Days	13
Representation - Valid P&D	3
Representation - Valid Permit	8
Representations - Loading	2
Representations – Disabled Badge Warning	4
Total	761

The table shows the reasons for cancellation of a PCN following receipt of either an informal challenge or representation. Grounds for challenges and representations can be found at:

<https://www.stockton.gov.uk/media/2414/parking-enforcement-policy.pdf>

Chapter 5

STATISTICS

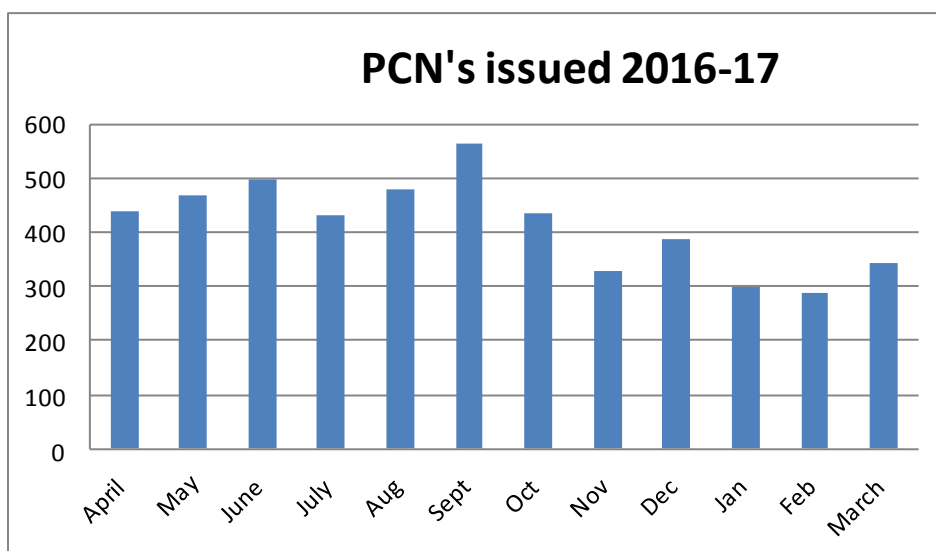
There are two levels of charge for parking contraventions, The more serious contraventions such as parking on waiting restrictions are now charged at the higher level of £70 (£35 if paid within 14 days of issue). Less serious contraventions such as overstaying in an off street car park are charged at the lower level of £50 (£25 if paid within 14 days of issue). The table below shows each of those contraventions and how many have been issued during April 2016 to March 2017. A list of contraventions is on p15 and 16.

The Council's current collection rate is 64%. 962 of PCN's were cancelled; therefore around 17% are still being processed at the time of this report.

PENALTY CHARGE NOTICES

Description	Total PCN's 2016 - 2017	On Street	Off Street	Total PCN's 2015 – 2016
Number of Higher Level PCN's issued	1974 40%	1856 94%	118 6%	2128 47%
Number of Lower Level PCN's issued	2984 60%	1806 60%	1178 40%	2398 53%
Total number of PCN's issued	4958	3662	1296	4526

Description	Total PCN's 2016 - 2017	Total PCN's 2015 - 2016
Number of PCN's paid	3191 64%	3040 67%
Number of PCN's paid at discounted rate	1957 61%	1606 53%
Number of PCN's against which formal or informal representations were made	1648 33%	1877 41%
Number of PCN's cancelled as a result of formal or informal representation	761 15%	792 17%
Number of PCN's cancelled for other reasons (e.g. CEO error or driver untraceable)	201 4%	176 4%



PCN's Issued by Contravention

	No. Of PCN's Issued	%
Higher Level on Street		
Parked in a restricted street during prescribed hours (01)	732	39.3%
Parked or loading/unloading in a restricted street where waiting and loading/unloading restrictions are in force (02)	83	4.5%
Parked in a residents' or shared use parking place or zone without clearly displaying a permit or voucher or P&D ticket issued for that place (12)	275	14.8%
Parked in a permit space or zone without clearly displaying a valid permit (16)	142	7.6%
Parked in a suspended bay (21)	3	0.2%
Parked in a parking place or area not designated for that class of vehicle (23)	92	5%
Parked in a loading place during restricted hours without loading (25)	94	4.9%
Parked in a special enforcement area more than 50 cm from the edge of the carriageway and not within a designated parking place (26)	14	0.8%
Parked in a special enforcement area adjacent to a footway, cycle track or verge lowered to meet the level of the carriageway (27)	29	1.6%
Parked in a designated disabled person's parking place without displaying a valid disabled person's badge in the prescribed manner (40)	217	11.6%
Parked in a parking place designated for police vehicles (42)	4	0.2%
Parked on a taxi rank (45)	88	4.7%
Stopped on a restricted bus stop or stand (47)	15	0.8%
Stopped in a restricted area outside a school, a hospital, or a fire, police or ambulance station when prohibited (48)	45	2.4%
Parked wholly or partly on a mandatory cycle lane (49)	4	0.2%
Stopped on a pedestrian crossing or crossing area marked by zigzags (99)	26	1.4%
Total	1863	
Lower level on street		
Parked after the expiry of paid for time (05)	488	27.1%
Parked without clearly displaying a valid P & D ticket or voucher (06)	905	50.2%
Parked in a residents' or shared use parking place or zone either displaying an invalid permit or voucher or pay & display ticket, or after the expiry of paid for time (19)	2	0.1%
Re-parked in the same parking place or zone within the prescribed time period (22)	12	0.7%
Not parked correctly within the markings of the bay or space (24)	95	5.3%
Parked for longer than permitted (30)	298	16.6%
Total	1800	
Higher level off street		
Parked in a restricted area in a car park (81)	1	0.8%
Parked in a designated disabled persons parking place without displaying a valid disabled persons badge in the prescribed manner (87)	78	66.1%
Parked in a car park or area not designated for that class of vehicle (91)	39	33.1%
Total	118	
Lower Level off street		
Parked after the expiry of paid for time (82)	243	20.7%
Parked in a car park without clearly displaying a valid P & D ticket or voucher or parking clock (83)	817	69.4%
Parked beyond the bay markings (86)	117	9.9%
Total	1177	
Total no. of PCN's Issued in 2016/17	4958	

PCN's ISSUED PER WARD

	No. PCN's Issued	%
Stockton Town Centre	2831	57.1%
Yarm	1489	30%
Norton North	116	2.4%
Eaglescliffe	32	0.6%
Billingham Central	174	3.5%
Norton South	63	1.3%
Hardwick	64	1.3%
Parkfield And Oxbridge	56	1.1%
Mandale and Victoria	46	0.9%
Stainsby Hill	7	0.1%
Northern Parishes	9	0.2%
Ingleby Barwick West	22	0.4%
Fairfield	9	0.2%
Billingham South	1	0.02%
Roseworth	2	0.04%
Ingleby Barwick East	3	0.06%
Bishopsgarth and Elm Tree	7	0.1%
Newtown	5	0.1%
Village	5	0.1%
Billingham West	1	0.02%
Grangefield	3	0.06%
Hartburn	10	0.2%
Billingham East	1	0.02%
Billingham North	0	0%
Norton West	2	0.04%
Western Parishes	0	0%
Total	4,958	

Chapter 6

FINANCIAL INFORMATION

Income from on-street parking charges and on and off-street penalty charge notices must be used to meet the cost of the provision and maintenance by the local authority of on and off-street parking accommodation in their area under the Traffic Management Act 2004.

In line with best practice, the Council has operated the parking service including income from off-street charging car parks in Stockton Town Centre on a self financing basis with a slight operating surplus to contribute to the cost of parking improvements and support for non-commercial bus services. The figures below show the income and expenditure to the Parking account for 2016 -17.

INCOME

Description	
PCN Income	133,075.62
Off-Street Charges	302,209.78
On- Street Charges	269,066.40
Permits including Blue Badges	44,060.00
Staff Permit Scheme	106,424.06
Other Fees & Charges	9905.07
General Fund Recharges	336.60
Bus Lane Enforcement	15,665.00
Total Income	880742.53

EXPENDITURE

Description	
Employee Costs	257,221.30
Premises Costs	210,591.14
Transport	5645.18
Supplies, Services	174,008.00
Other Payments	80,415.04
Blue Badge	21,010.20
Bus Lane Enforcement	5,416.20
Total Expenditure	754307.06

NET SURPLUS	126,435.47
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USE OF SURPLUSES

The net surplus in the parking account in 2016/17 was **£126,435.47** and contributes towards

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