

# Annual Parking Report 2012



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## ANNUAL PARKING REPORT 2012

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## INTRODUCTION

Thurrock Council has operated Decriminalised Parking Enforcement since 1<sup>st</sup> April 2005, and enforces waiting and loading restrictions within the Borough, both on-street and within the car parks under its management.

The legislative framework which governs the civil parking enforcement service provided by Thurrock Council is contained in Part 6 of the Traffic Management Act 2004.

This requires the Council to publish an Annual Parking Report explaining how any surplus income received from parking enforcement, parking permits and pay-and-display tickets is spent on transportation related schemes.

The adequate provision of on and off-street parking facilities and the effective enforcement of parking controls in Thurrock are integral to providing greater access to key services for residents, businesses and visitors and to the delivery of the objectives of the Thurrock Transport Strategy 2008-2021.

These objectives are:

- *Delivering Accessibility*
- *Tackling Congestion*
- *Better Air Quality*
- *Safer Roads*
- *Facilitating Regeneration*

The Council aims to apply fairness, consistency and transparency in the provision of its civil parking enforcement service.

## PARKING POLICIES

The Thurrock Parking Strategy 2007 contains parking policies relating to:

- *Parking provision*
- *New restrictions*
- *Permits*
- *Loading bays*
- *HGV parking*
- *Pedal cycles*
- *Motorcycles*
- *Disabled parking provision*
- *Verges*
- *Hours and days of operation*
- *Observation times*
- *Enforcement*
- *Parking charges*
- *Workplace charging levy*
- *Funerals*

## POLICY OBJECTIVES

The main objectives of the parking policies are to:

- *Maintain the safety of users of the public highway and Council managed car parks*
- *Provide for the efficient movement of traffic*
- *Increase compliance of restrictions*
- *Cater of parking demand for residents, business users and visitors*
- *Maintain access to services and amenities*
- *Maintain access for essential services, including emergency services, refuse collections and deliveries*
- *Encourage modal shift away from the private car*

## **PARKING SERVICES**

In 2011/12, Thurrock Council employed 7 Civil Enforcement Officers (CEOs) to undertake civil parking enforcement duties via walking and mobile patrols throughout the Borough.

CEOs patrol fixed beats to ensure that enforcement is undertaken in certain streets and car parks on a regular basis, usually in town centres and in controlled parking zones.

CEOs are also deployed in a vehicle to locations that are not on existing CEO beats, or not safe for the foot CEOs. This includes morning and afternoon visits to enforce restrictions in the locality of 57 primary schools in the Borough on a rota basis, and evening visits to enforce commercial vehicle restrictions.

The CEOs use hand-held computers to make detailed notes of all Penalty Charge Notices (PCNs) issued, and use digital cameras to obtain evidence of parking contraventions.

The evidence gathered by CEOs is used to assess challenges against the issue of PCNs objectively and consistently, taking into account any extenuating circumstances.

A statutory independent review process for PCNs is available through the Traffic Penalty Tribunal. Details of the grounds for appeal can be found at:

[www.patrol-uk.info](http://www.patrol-uk.info)

The Parking Services team deals with the administration of all parking permits, including residents, business and visitor permits.

It is also responsible for maintenance of parking signs, markings and pay-and-display machines, for temporarily suspending parking places for building or road works, or for removals and public safety, and for granting dispensations to permit vehicles to contravene restrictions to enable works etc. to be undertaken.

The team also deals with changes to parking policy, responding to enquiries and complaints, and provide parking information on the Council's website.

Back office functions, such as the identification of owners of vehicles that have received a PCN for which a payment is outstanding, sending notices to owners, processing appeals and applying to the County Court for a charge certificate, are procured through the Council's Strategic Services Partnership arrangement with Vertex.

## FACTS AND FIGURES

Thurrock Council's civil parking enforcement service covers 2 controlled parking zones, with over 1,100 spaces for resident permit holders, and 10 off-street car parks, with over 840 spaces. The Council also enforces the Morrisons supermarket car park in Grays by agreement.

The following table provides comparative statistical information on the numbers of penalty charge notices issued for contraventions on Thurrock Council's road network, and within the car parks under its management in 2010/11 and 2011/12. It also provides details of the numbers of the numbers of residents, business and visitor permits issued for its controlled parking zones, and the numbers of blue badges on issue for these two years.

Thurrock Council's Civil Parking Enforcement Statistical Information	2010/11	2011/12
On-street penalty charge notices issued	10,878	10,960
Off-street penalty charge notices issued	1,599	1,557
Residents permits issued	1,128	1,153
Business permits issued	42	40
Visitor permits issued (valid for 20 visits up to 5 hours)	869	926
Blue badges on issue	2,927	2,819

The number of penalty charge notices issued on-street increased slightly from 10,878 in 2010/11 to 10,960 in 2011/12.

The number of penalty charge notices issued in off-street parking places reduced slightly from 1,599 in 2010/11 to 1,557 in 2011/12.

The tables on the next page provide details of the most common parking contraventions for which penalty charge notices were issued both on-street and off-street in 2010/11 and 2011/12.

The most common reasons for which PCNs were issued on-street were for contraventions on single/double yellow lines and in residents' parking and loading bays, for parking with an expired pay and display ticket, and for clearway and commercial vehicle restriction contraventions.

The most common reasons for which PCNs were issued off-street were for contraventions for parking with an expired pay and display ticket, and for parking without clearly displaying a valid pay and display ticket or voucher or parking clock.

<b>ON-STREET Most Common Contraventions Based on PCNs</b>	<b>2010/11</b>	<b>2011/12</b>
Parked in restricted street during prescribed hours	1,690	1,342
Parked or loading/unloading in restricted street where waiting and loading/unloading restrictions are in force	335	282
Parked after expiry of paid for time in pay and display bay	513	430
Parked without clearly displaying valid pay and display ticket	282	218
Parked in residents' or shared use parking place without displaying either a permit or voucher or pay and display ticket issue for that place	143	95
Parked in a permit space without displaying a valid permit	823	925
Parked in residents' or shared use parking place displaying an invalid permit, an invalid voucher or an invalid pay and display ticket	123	193
Parked in a loading place during restricted hours without loading	446	603
Parked adjacent to a dropped footway	94	70
Parked for longer than permitted	87	101
Parked in a designated disabled person' parking space without clearly displaying a valid disabled person's badge	85	78
Parked on a taxi rank	99	95
Stopped where prohibited (on a clearway)	15	1,001
Stopped in a restricted area outside a school	40	15
A commercial vehicle parked in a restricted street in contravention of the overnight waiting ban	39	41
Parked in contravention of a commercial vehicle waiting restriction	2,026	2,243
A heavy commercial vehicle wholly or partly parked on a footway, verge or land between two carriageways	3,943	3,150
Other on-street contraventions	95	78
<b>TOTAL ON-STREET PCNs</b>	<b>10,878</b>	<b>10,960</b>

<b>OFF-STREET Most Common Contraventions Based on PCNs</b>	<b>2010/11</b>	<b>2011/12</b>
Parked after the expiry of time paid for in pay and display car park	403	506
Parked in a pay and display car park without clearly displaying a valid pay and display ticket or voucher or parking clock	830	849
Parked with additional payment made to extend the stay beyond the first time purchased	45	21
Parked in a permit bay without clearly displaying a valid permit	41	4
Parked beyond the bay markings	127	61
Parked causing an obstruction	108	79
Other off-street contraventions	45	37
<b>TOTAL OFF-STREET PCNs</b>	<b>1,599</b>	<b>1,557</b>

## FINANCIAL INFORMATION

The Civil Parking Enforcement budget is mainly comprised of income from pay-and-display, permit fees and penalty charge notices, and an agreement to undertake civil enforcement in the Morrisons supermarket car park in Grays, less any expenditure on enforcement administration, parking infrastructure maintenance and debt recovery.

Section 55 of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984, as amended by Section 95 of the Traffic Management Act 2004, governs how any surplus income from Civil Parking Enforcement is used. This includes the provision or operation of public passenger transport services, highway or traffic improvement projects and certain types of environmental improvement.

The following tables provide comparative figures for the parking income by source and the direct costs of civil parking enforcement in 2009/10, 2010/11 and 2011/12.

On and off-street parking income by source	2009/10 £	2010/11 £	2011/12 £
On-street/Off-street parking charges	378,546.60	322,570.60	316,395.12
Permit income	42,095.00	44,442.50	48,922.00
Penalty charge notices	178,816.69	239,816.42	232,730.55
Other income	37,784.04	38,690.86	40,664.08
<b>Total</b>	<b>637,242.28</b>	<b>645,520.36</b>	<b>638,711.76</b>

Direct costs of Civil Parking Enforcement	2009/10 £	2010/11 £	2011/12 £
Enforcement	281,567.08	245,530.60	279,653.25
Admin., appeals, debt recovery	256,850.84	221,334.50	261,688.00
Infrastructure maintenance	31,131.69	18,374.10	34,340.71
Capital charges	0	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>569,549.61</b>	<b>485,239.20</b>	<b>575,681.96</b>

Summary	2009/10 £	2010/11 £	2011/12 £
Total parking income	637,242.28	645,520.36	638,711.76
Total direct costs of CPE	569,549.61	485,239.20	575,681.96
<b>Surplus income</b>	<b>67,692.67</b>	<b>160,281.16</b>	<b>63,029.80</b>

The table below summarises the areas of expenditure of the surplus income from civil parking enforcement in 2009/10, 2010/11 and 2011/12.

Use of surplus income	2009/10 £	2010/11 £	2011/12 £
Supported bus services	35,000.00	38,000.00	35,000.00
Other public transport services	28,000.00	32,000.00	25,000.00
Concessionary bus fares	0	0	0
Other Transport schemes	2,500.00	21,000.00	0
Carried forward in Parking Reserve	2,192.67	69,281.16	3,029.80
<b>Total</b>	<b>67,692.67</b>	<b>160,281.16</b>	<b>63,029.80</b>

In 2011/12, the surplus income from Civil Parking Enforcement was £63,029.80, compared with the surplus of £160,281.16 in 2010/11 and £67,692.67 in 2009/10.

## ACHIEVEMENTS IN 2011/12

### Civil Enforcement Officer Recruitment

Following a recruitment campaign and a series of interviews, permanent employees were recruited to three CEO positions that were previously covered by temporary agency staff in 2011/12.

### Car Park Improvements

Following a routine inspection of the Council's car parks, maintenance work was undertaken in the following ones in 2011/12:

- *Corringham Police Station car park*
- *Grays Beach car park*
- *Grover Walk car park*
- *Cromwell Road car park*
- *Giffords Cross car park*
- *Lodge Lane car park*

In 2011/12, a consultation was undertaken in respect of a proposal to make the Darnley Road car park in Grays available to certain residents' parking permit holders in the Grays town centre controlled parking zone; an area of high demand for on-street parking spaces. A decision on whether to implement this proposal is due to be made shortly after publication of this report.

A series of surveys of the Council's car parks is planned for 2012/13, which will look at the condition and existing layout, and whether improvements are required. An ongoing programme of car park refurbishment will be developed from these surveys.

### Support for Businesses

Support for local businesses and shops experiencing difficult times in the current financial downturn was given by the Council when it introduced free parking for the first 15 minutes at all of its on-street pay and display bays in 2011/12. Locations where free on-street parking places could be introduced to encourage people to shop locally were also investigated.

In addition, free weekend parking was available during December 2011 in all on and off-street pay-and-display parking places controlled by the Council, to encourage people to shop locally.

### Verges

In 2011/12, the policy guidance document on verge parking were updated, and new policy guidance was introduced for dealing with vehicles left for sale on the highway. These documents contribute towards the Council's Corporate Priority of ensuring a safe, clean and green environment.

## PLANS FOR THE YEAR AHEAD

### **CCTV Enforcement Vehicle**

During 2011/12, the Council has been investigating options for the introduction of a CCTV enforcement vehicle, to augment the role of the Civil Enforcement Officer. It is anticipated that the findings will be reported to and considered by Cabinet shortly after publication of this report.

If introduced, the vehicle would mainly be used for the enforcement of parking contraventions to improve the safety and efficient movement of traffic in hard to reach areas, such as outside schools and at bus stops, and in no waiting/loading areas.

### **Security Cameras for Civil Enforcement Officers**

The Council has been trialling different types of chest-mounted security cameras, to gauge their effectiveness for improving the safety and security of Civil Enforcement Officers (CEOs). The trial has indicated that the cameras would enable evidence of the increasing number of confrontational situations experienced by CEOs to be gathered, and would help to defend the formal complaints received about the alleged conduct of CEOs. The Council is therefore planning to provide chest-mounted security cameras for all of its CEOs in 2012/13.

### **Controlled Parking Zones**

Residents and businesses in Tilbury were consulted in 2011/12 about the feasibility and desirability of introducing a controlled parking zone, to reduce the impact of commuter parking in the locality of the station. The results analysed at the time this report was produced indicate that there were mixed opinions about the proposal. A decision on whether to implement this proposal is due to be made once the analysis is completed, which should be shortly after publication of this report.

The business case surrounding controlled parking zones will be reassessed in 2012/13, and will include a review of the cost of residents/business/visitors parking permits.

### **Electric Vehicle Charging Points**

Working in partnership with Evalu8, the Council will be providing electric vehicle charging points in the car parks in Argent Street and Crown Road in Grays, Canterbury Parade in South Ockendon, and King Street in Stanford le Hope in 2012/13.

### **Parking Strategy Review**

The Thurrock Parking Strategy 2007, which contains the Council's parking policies, will be reviewed in 2012/13.

### **Heavy Goods/Commercial Vehicles**

The Council will continue to rigorously enforce restrictions on the parking of heavy goods and commercial vehicles to improve the environment of the Borough.