



**TRAFFORD
COUNCIL**



Civil Parking Enforcement
Annual Report
2017/18

www.trafford.gov.uk

Foreword

Welcome to Trafford Council's Annual Parking Report for 2017/18.

Trafford is a thriving place to live and work with a number of worldwide visitor attractions such as Old Trafford Football Stadium and Emirates Old Trafford Cricket Ground, the Trafford Centre and the Imperial War Museum. With visitor numbers in the tens of thousands when large events are being held, keeping roads free flowing to ensure the borough is a safe place to visit with good accessibility to attractions is essential.

With 16 years of experience delivering a parking enforcement service our responsibility is to ensure a balanced service is delivered in a fair and consistent way with regular patrols monitoring restrictions, as well as staff being visible to provide drivers with customer support and advice to ensure Trafford remains a safe place and one people come back.

It is our aim to provide vital parking support to local businesses, residents and visitors, therefore we continue to provide low cost parking and free parking on Sundays and evenings across the borough. This helps keep our town centres as attractive places to visit.

Through the operation of chargeable parking areas across the borough the service is self-financing without the need for financial support from Council Tax to fund the service. In fact there is a surplus income each year that is invested back in to highway improvements and maintenance across the borough.

I am pleased to oversee a service that provides both a reactive and a proactive solution to safe parking across the borough.

Executive Member for Environment, Air Quality and Climate Change – Councillor Stephen Adshead

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Civil Parking Enforcement

Trafford Council obtained the legal powers to operate Decriminalised Parking Enforcement (DPE) in 2001 which included enforcing parking restrictions in place across the borough in both on street locations and public car parks.

In March 2008, the Department for Transport introduced changes to the Decriminalised Parking scheme through the Traffic Management Act (TMA) – part 6 replacing ‘Decriminalised’ with ‘Civil’, known as ‘Civil Parking Enforcement’ (CPE). Parking officers are now identified as Civil Enforcement Officers (CEO’s).

About Trafford

Trafford is in the south of the Greater Manchester region and is one of 10 local authorities within the Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA).

Trafford is a thriving borough for industry, retail, residential, leisure and offers many well-known visitor attractions such as the Imperial War Museum; Dunham Massey National Trust park; Silverblades Ice Rink as well as two world renowned sporting event stadiums – Old Trafford football ground and Emirates Old Trafford Cricket Ground as well as one of Europe’s largest shopping centres, the Trafford Centre.

With these being important drivers of growth for the local economy we also have four Town Centres; Altrincham, Sale, Stretford and Urmston; as well as Trafford Park, the first planned industrial estate in the world, which remains the largest industrial centre in Europe. Transport access to all these locations is provided through a good road network across the borough with key access linking to nearby motorways; the M60/M56 and to the south, the M6.

Huge improvements to public transport services operating throughout the borough have brought a new Bus Interchange in Altrincham that also operates as the final stop on the Metrolink for the south of the borough. The Metrolink expansion now means that services are available across the borough linking Altrincham to Manchester; Eccles; Bury; Rochdale; East Didsbury; Ashton under Lyne and Manchester Airport.

Parking Facilities

There is a wide range of parking available on streets and roads close to town centres across the borough to help provide accessibility to services and shops for all users. A mix of short and long stay parking on street with disabled marked spaces helps keep town centres vibrant and easy to access. Alongside on street general parking facilities there are taxi ranks positioned close to busy locations and easy access bus stops with a balance of loading bays close to businesses in areas where there is high demand.

Across the borough we have introduced a number of residential permit areas close to town centres to help provide accessible parking at busy times. The use of yellow lines across the borough helps to control traffic flow, congestion, safety and accessibility.

To ensure the safety of children as schools, the use of ‘School Keep Clear’ markings have been introduced to deter parking which helps maintain a safe, clear access to school entrances at busy times.

Car Parks

Across the borough the council provides 20 surface car parks with the operation of Pay and Display and cashless parking facilities. These car parks vary in size and proximity with the majority being highly used and in demand on a daily basis.

3 car parks have rapid charging posts in place to charge electric vehicles, these were provided through the Office for Low Emission Vehicles (OLEV) which is a grant funded scheme set up by Central Government to encourage the use of electric vehicles to reduce carbon emissions. Electric vehicle users join their scheme “Charge your Car” as an annual membership system to gain access to use these charging posts.

In 2017/18 we were successful in retaining the safety standard “Parkmark Awards” for 10 public car parks.

Pay and display charges

Low cost parking has been a priority across Trafford for many years providing much needed support for local residents and businesses and to continually attract visitors to the borough.

Pay and Display charges for 2017/18:

	1/2 hour	2 hours	3 hours	4 hours	All day
On-street	70p	£1.50	£2.50	£3.50	£6.00
Off-Street*	70p	£1.50	£2.50	£3.50	£7.00

It has remained Council policy to keep free parking on Sundays and our charging periods have remained constant for on and off street parking for many years.

On street charging period – 9am to 5pm**, Monday to Saturday/Off street charging period – 8am to 6pm, Monday to Saturday

* Regent Road Car park all day tariff is £6

** Some roads are chargeable up to 10pm)

Levels of demand for parking

Town centre parking is at a premium in Altrincham, our Historic Market town; with shopper parking provided as a mix of short stay on street parking for up to 2 hours which is available widely and a range of longer stay car park provision, both public and private. Car parks are provided across the town with close access to shops, restaurants, leisure and other facilities such as the minor injuries hospital unit and other local businesses.

Public Realm works across Altrincham are improving the visual Streetscene and linking the town in a more strategic way. Improvements for directional on street signage are part of the planned work to help people find accessible parking in the right locations.

Other areas, including when large events take place, also see a high demand for parking. Details of how to find Approved Event Parking can be found on our website: www.trafford.gov.uk/parking/event-parking to help reduce the need for visitors wrongly parking in residential areas which operate resident permit schemes on event days. There is also a RingGo scheme in operation in the Trafford Park area to accommodate a large number of vehicles on event days at the low cost of £4.50 per event using the RingGo mobile app or phoning to pay to park on arrival. Metrolink 'park and ride' facilities are also available within the borough at Sale Water Park.

Parking Enforcement

Parking patrols keep traffic moving, as well as helping to ensure turnover of much needed parking spaces. Across Trafford, we value the role of the Civil Enforcement Officer (CEO) when monitoring school road safety as a priority, as well as ensuring parking patrols monitors the main arterial routes and town centre areas at peak times. The presence of CEO's across the borough helps reduce accidents by acting as a deterrent and where needed enforcing illegally parked vehicles where restrictions are in place such as; parking too close to junctions on double yellow lines blocking visibility and parking in areas that block traffic flow, especially at peak times.

Trafford has the highest levels of school performance in the North West provided by 114 schools, many of which are in residential areas. High numbers of vehicles at school peak times often cause problems for other road and pedestrian users, CEO patrols are planned so that 3 to 5 schools per day are monitored during term time to deter illegal and dangerous parking.

The Role of the CEO

Trafford employs the services of a professional parking company, Indigo, to carry out Civil Parking Enforcement across the borough. The team carry out patrols both on foot in a number of residential or town centre locations or alternatively on a scooter/car to provide cover in out of town areas. Their duties include checking resident permit areas; pay and display parking; monitoring a number of schools per day linked to a Road Safety Rota; checking loading/unloading activity; ensuring bus stops are kept free to maintain bus journey times as well as patrolling town centre locations where it is important they are seen as a deterrent to dangerous parking occurring as well as there is a turnover of spaces to support local businesses. CEO's also patrol pay and display surface car parks to ensure they are safely used as well as monitoring blue badge parking spaces on and off street, to ensure genuine blue badge holders have access to available dedicated parking spaces, checking badge holders are not misusing the badge and providing advice on where the badge allows a parking exemption. Officers also monitor taxi ranks in busy areas alongside checking the areas of yellow lines and clearway restrictions in place across the borough.

Officers undertake a certified training level prior to patrolling on street and receive additional local training to ensure they get to know the patrol areas in advance of patrolling on their own. All patrol officers are equipped with radios, for safety reasons, as well as handheld computers and printers to enable them to make observations of vehicles and take enforcement action if needed. The handheld computers allow officers to take pictures as additional evidence where a parking contravention has taken place and a penalty charge notice has been issued. The Council has in place facilities for the driver of the vehicle to view any photographs taken with the driver able to appeal or pay the penalty directly through the

Council's website. The full appeals process is available to the driver at the time the penalty is issued with details provided on the ticket left on the windscreen, or handed to driver.

When the Council introduces a new permit scheme the use of 'Advisory Notices' takes place for one or two weeks, as needed, to ensure drivers are given the chance to understand the new restrictions.

Whilst patrolling the borough officers are also required to report defective, missing or damaged signs and worn or broken lines as well as other street furniture. They also report any fly tipping that may occur on car parks as well as graffiti or broken glass, which all helps to maintain Trafford as a vibrant area to live, work and visit.

There is also a requirement for officers to check that pay and display machines are operating correctly to ensure members of the public have the correct access to park.

Council Priorities

Requests for enforcement

The Parking Services team receives numerous requests from residents, businesses and taxi operators who contact the council for enforcement action to be taken, often where vehicles are parked causing problems in their local area. Where possible a rapid response approach is taken to tackle reported issues and in most cases the problems are overcome by frequent visits over a few days. The parking contractor records progress for each request on information provided to the Council daily to assist with repeat calls about the same problem to reassure residents and business owners that officers are monitoring the location regularly.

Pavement Parking

The Council's parking officers currently provide a reactive service where reports of limited pedestrian, wheelchair and pushchair access on the pavement are received, officers will issue a 'Pavements are for People' leaflet to encourage drivers to park leaving at least a 1 metre gap on the pavement. Where there is a yellow line restriction, officers can take enforcement action.

The leaflet also advises that Greater Manchester Police could issue Fixed Penalties for obstruction. Leaflets are generally successful in removing the reported road safety concern.

Blue Badge monitoring

Blue badge fraud or misuse is monitored by a small team of specially trained staff who patrol and monitor the areas where frequent high use of blue badges occurs across the borough. Enforcement staff carry out a number of special patrols, in addition to regular patrols, where blue badge use is specifically checked. Officers will take time to speak to blue badge users and not only check badges but also give advice and support to ensure that genuine badge holders understand how and where the badge can and cannot be used. This approach has been successfully received by the public who have been pleased to see that badge use is being monitored.

In 2017-18 Trafford Council did not take any Blue Badge cases to the prosecution level however officers continue to monitor areas where blue badge use is high to be a deterrent and to take action if the need arises. It is important that all spaces, especially disabled spaces, turn over regularly to ensure availability is at a high level for users.

Parking Penalty Appeals

The Traffic Management Act 2004 became operational in April 2008 introducing a differential penalty charge structure;

Higher level charge (£70) - introduced to deter parking where there was a greater impact on other users.

Lower level charge (£50) - introduced where it was felt that the situation caused less of an impact on other users.

Both charges are discounted by 50% if paid within 14 days.

Challenges, Representations and Appeals

Informal Challenge

Written correspondence received following the issue of the penalty, usually within the first 14 days, is regarded as an “informal” challenge.

Formal Representation

The DVLA recorded owner/keeper of the vehicle are served with a Notice to Owner document if the penalty charge is not paid in full or challenged successfully. This document allows “formal representations” to be made and mitigating circumstances may be considered.

Traffic Penalty Tribunal Appeals

Where a “Notice of Rejection” of a formal representation is sent, a form advising how the appellant can apply for an independent review to the Traffic Penalty Tribunal to appeal against the Council’s decision is also included. A final binding decision will be made by an Independent Adjudicator. When acceptable additional evidence is submitted during this process the Council will not contest the appeal.

The role of the Council

The Council reviews parking appeals at the informal and formal stages considering each appeal on its own merits taking the proper consideration of any extenuating or mitigating circumstances provided. The Council ensures that responses to customers are clear and factual to allow customers the understanding of the appeal opportunities available to them.

Council policies are applied fairly and proportionately with a cancellation policy that supports blue badge holders; resident permit holders; pay and display ticket users; loading or unloading as well as grounds for emergencies. In some cases a request for further evidence will be necessary.

Where an informal appeal is received on or within the 14 day discounted period which after full review is rejected, it is our policy to always offer the discounted payment amount for a further 14 days from the date of our correspondence.

With a dedicated parking email as well as the availability to appeal via the Council's website, out of hour's communication for appeals has been made a simpler process for our customers. The majority of our appeals are now electronic. There are also two office receptions to visit for customers who prefer a 'face to face' interaction.

Debt Recovery & Bailiffs

If a penalty is not paid or successfully challenged the statutory process allows for the case to become registered as a debt at the Traffic Enforcement Centre (Northampton County Court). The motorist is served an Order for Recovery and is liable for full payment of the outstanding penalty and the additional court registration fee. Alternatively, a witness statement may be filed should the appellant meet one of the 4 criteria available to them at this stage of the appeal process.

The final stage of the Traffic Management Act 2004 statutory process allows the Local Authority to apply to the Traffic Enforcement Centre for the authorisation of a warrant which is provided to a contracted Enforcement Agent (formerly bailiffs) to recover the debt.

Once the case is passed to an Enforcement Agents the following statutory notices will have been served to the motorist or owner/keeper of the vehicle:

- Penalty Charge Notice (14/28 days to respond)
- Notice to Owner (28 days to respond)
- Notice of Rejection (28 days to refer case to independent Traffic Penalty Tribunal)
- Charge Certificate (14 days to respond)
- Order for Recovery/Witness Statement (21 days to respond)

Appeals

An overview of the guidance for response times

Activity	Suggested target from date of service, receipt of communication or relevant activity	Statutory limit
Informal challenge	14 days	None given ('In a timely manner'.)
Formal Representation	21 days	Must reply within 56 days
Referral by the Adjudicator for re-consideration of mitigation		35 days
Despatch of Notice to Owner	56 days	6 months from the 'relevant date' – normally the date on which the PCN is served

Resident Parking Permits

Trafford first introduced a resident permit scheme in 1996 to support a large area close to Old Trafford football ground, since then additional permit schemes have been implemented to support parking demand for local residents. These have usually been in areas that are close to town centres or large sporting event grounds across the borough.

Each scheme is designed to provide parking for residents at times and days when peak demand for non-residential parking has been high. The policy for issuing permits in Trafford is applied so that one annual permit per property is issued if there is an off street parking provision; or two annual permits per property if there is no off street provision. Each household is currently able to purchase up to 12 books of visitor cards and are issued in books of 25. These are available at a cost of £10.50 for a book and work well for residents as the books don't expire and are easy to obtain.

Permits are administered by the same team who manage all parking related matters such as dispensations and suspensions. This synergy has been very helpful to residents as often when there is a change of vehicle a temporary dispensation is authorised.

Permits are easy to apply for and are renewed each year; residents provide two forms of proof – one for the vehicle and one to confirm they currently live at the property. Permits can be issued the same day to assist residents.

Trafford also issue carers permits to help those in need of daily assistance; both the carer permits and for residents who have a blue badge permits are free of charge.

Permit schemes vary in type across the borough with the introduction of 'Past this Point' schemes in areas where roads are narrow or there are numerous roads leading off a central entrance point. There are a number of these types of permit schemes in place around sporting event grounds that operate only on match days; these alleviate the need for numerous signs and road markings.

Other permit schemes are designed to allow some general parking which is usually time-limited to help with short stays close to town centres.

Permit areas are monitored regularly by civil enforcement officers to deter abuse in some areas.

Website information

www.trafford.gov.uk/parking

The following parking information can be found on the Trafford Council website:

- How to pay/appeal or view photographic evidence online of a parking penalty issued to your vehicle
- How to find information about where to park in Trafford providing on street and off street car park information
- Pavement parking information
- Parking dispensations and suspensions to help with house moves or building works
- How to apply for a resident's parking permit or visitor cards
- Event/match day parking information for Old Trafford and LCCC, including a list of Approved Car Parks

Trafford Council financial details 2017-18

	2017/18	2016/17
On Street Income		
On street parking income	£525,958	£358,028
Permit income	£167,651	£156,963
On street PCN income*	£895,128	£842,298
Blue badge application fees	£ -	£ -
Other	£53,801	£38,138
Total On Street Income	£1,642,537	£1,395,425
On Street Parking Direct Costs		
Civil enforcement**	£481,485	£465,925
Admin, appeals, debt recovery & maintenance***	£507,735	£417,711
Scheme review / new schemes	£ -	£ -
Capital charges	£15,020	£820
Other direct costs of on street parking	£ -	£ -
Total On Street Direct Costs	£1,004,240	£884,456
On Street Parking Surplus / Deficit	£638,297	£510,969
On Street Parking Surplus / Deficit Spend		
Off street parking provision	£ -	£ -
Park & Ride	£ -	£ -
Supported bus service	£ -	£ -
Concessionary fares & passes	£ -	£ -
Community transport	£ -	£ -
Shopmobility	£ -	£ -
School crossing patrols	£ -	£ -
Highway maintenance & traffic improvement	£638,297	£510,971
Transport planning costs	£ -	£ -
Other	£ -	£ -
Off Street Income		
Off street parking income	£902,297	£646,857
Off street PCN income*		
Other off street parking income	£393	£1,650
Total Off Street Income	£902,690	£648,507
Off Street Parking Direct Costs	£143,207	£226,874
Off Street Parking Surplus / Deficit	£759,483	£421,633

* pcn income cannot be split between on-street and car parks

**parking contract and enforcement - total enforcement contract costs included here as no split between on and off street

***all staffing and running costs and central costs less enforcement and capital

Statistical Report for 2017/18

	On- street	Off- street	Total issued
Number of higher level PCNs issued	14003	457	14460
Number of lower level PCNs issued	6399	5841	12240
Number of PCNs paid	14945	4693	19638
Number of PCNs paid at discount rate	12608	4025	16633
Number of PCNs for which an informal or formal representation was made	3372	1278	4650
Number of PCNs cancelled as a result of an informal or formal representation	1302	650	1952
Number of PCNs cancelled/written off for other reasons (e.g. CEO error or keeper untraceable by the DVLA)	183	59	242
% of higher level PCNs issued	52.45%	1.71%	54.16%
% of lower level PCNs issued	23.97%	21.88%	45.84%
% of PCNs paid	55.97%	17.58%	73.55%
% of PCNs paid at discount rate	47.22%	15.07%	62.30%
% of PCNs against which an informal or formal representation was made	12.63%	4.79%	17.42%
% of PCNs cancelled as a result of an informal or formal representation	4.88%	2.43%	7.31%
% of PCNs cancelled/written off for other reasons	0.69%	0.22%	0.91%

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