



Parking Services

Annual Report 2015 / 2016

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Introduction & Foreword

Welcome to Bedford Borough Council's annual Parking Services report for 2015 / 2016. This report provides an overview of the Council's Parking Service for the financial year of April 2015 to March 2016 and states our objectives and plans for the future.

The principal aim of the parking service is to discourage inconsiderate and obstructive parking throughout the Borough by enforcing parking regulations fairly and consistently whilst considering the needs of drivers, residents, businesses, visitors and Blue Badge holders.

On a daily basis the Parking Services team faces a number of challenges, but it has a vital role in delivering our local vision and objectives through an effective and efficient service for the benefit our local communities.



Dave Hodgson

Mayor of Bedford Borough



Cllr Charles Royden

Deputy Mayor & Portfolio Holder
for Environment & Transport

Bedford Borough

Parking & the Local Transport Plan

The Traffic Management Act 2004 sets out the statutory network management duty for all local Highway authorities and determines the enforcement mechanisms that can be used by local authorities in order to effectively achieve this.

There are also parking policies set out in Planning Policy Guidance on Transport and the Planning Policy Statement on Housing. Further information relating directly to Town Centre parking can be found in Planning Policy Statement on Town Centres and Retail Development.

Bedford Borough operates the national Blue Badge Scheme under the provisions of the Traffic Management Act 2004 which enables disabled people to park in places where other drivers are not permitted to ensure they have access to public facilities.

The Council's Parking Strategy provides a comprehensive framework for determining parking provision in Bedford Borough. By providing parking and having controls in place, the Council aims to provide sufficient short-stay parking facilities to support retail, commercial and leisure activities whilst safeguarding the needs and requirements of residents, businesses and visitors.

Current off-street parking provision is predominantly located in the town centre in the form of formal surface and multi-storey car parks which are mainly owned and operated by the Council. There are, however, a significant number of private off-street parking facilities over which the Council has little control. The adjacent residential areas are covered by on-street control parking zone (CPZ) treatments, including shared use of available kerb space between residents and paid-for shorter stay use.

Bedford currently has one operational bus based park and ride site at Elstow with 486 parking spaces.

Parking controls are currently in the form of charges and/or time limits as a method of managing demand. Enforcement of these is undertaken directly by the Council.

The CPZ is self-financing. To achieve this, regard needs to be had to on and off street parking tariffs, the cost of off-street season tickets and the charges levied for on-street parking permits. The current tariffs are available to view via the Council's website at: [Car Parks - Public and Private](#).

Parking Services

Parking Services Objectives

Car ownership has increased and the number of on-street controlled parking spaces has also increased. The need for good management of parking and enforcement operations has become more and more significant. Due to the nature of the service there are many complaints about parking and enforcement. It is therefore important to explain how the Council's undertakes these activities in an open and honest way.

Civil Parking Enforcement (CPE)

CPE is concerned with who can and cannot park in restricted areas and when they may do so. With the Borough it is intended to:

- Actively discourage indiscriminate parking that causes obstruction to other motorists, pedestrians, cyclists and disabled persons and ensure that the Town remains accessible to all equally and safely.
- Maintain and where possible improve the flow of traffic.
- Discourage the use of cars and encourage the use of public transport.
- Ensure that Blue Badge holders have equal access to the Town.

The Bedford Controlled Parking Zone (CPZ) is an area where parking regulations have been introduced to deal with a range of parking problems. Designated parking bays are provided with signs indicating their use. Yellow line restrictions, both single and double, apply outside the designated bays.

Enforcement of the bays and lines is carried out by the Council's Civil Enforcement Officers (CEOs). Only vehicles displaying a parking permit, a valid pay-and-display ticket or Blue Badge can park in designated bays.

In addition to civil parking enforcement duties, Parking Services provide many other services to the public to prevent them receiving a penalty charge notice (PCN). These other services include the management and maintenance of on-street and off-street payment machines, daily operation of the car parks and the issue and administration of parking permits.

Civil Enforcement Officers also have the power to issue Fixed Penalty Notices (FPN) to people caught committing environmental crimes such as littering or allowing dog fouling.

Civil Enforcement Officers are seen as ambassadors of the Council, often being the first or daily contact by the public with the Council. It is essential that the training of staff has the joint objectives of efficient and effective enforcement coupled with the ability to give assistance and information to the public.

Car Parks

Bedford Borough Council has a variety of car parks to offer whether it be a location for work-place parking or somewhere to park while shopping in Bedford town centre. The car parks comprise of a mixture of multi-storey and open surface car parks with payment systems ranging from 'pay and display' to 'pay on foot'.

Multi-Storey Car Parks

Bedford has four multi-storey car parks all operating a pay-on-foot system as a payment method. Motorists take a ticket from the terminal at the entrance barrier and then park their vehicle as normal. When they are ready to leave, they visit one of the payment machines, insert their ticket and the cost of parking will be displayed. Payment can be made with either coins, notes or a credit/debit card. Having paid the fee the motorist retrieves the ticket, drives to the exit barrier, inserts their ticket into the machine and the barrier will lift for exit. Help points are sited in all multi-storey car parks should assistance be required. These are located by each entry/exit door on all car park levels, in all lifts, on all payment machines and entry/exit vehicle barriers.

Staff or members parking in a Council car park must display a staff parking permit. Permits are only valid during periods when official duties are being carried out.



Surface Car Parks

All chargeable surface car parks in the Borough operate a pay-and-display payment system. Payment for parking is purchased at the time of parking the vehicle.

If purchasing a ticket from a ticket machine, the ticket should be displayed on the dashboard of the vehicle ensuring that the date, time and other details of the ticket are visible and easily read through the windscreen of the vehicle.

Parking can also be paid for by using the Phone and Pay system via a mobile phone. Motorists must first download the Phone and Pay smartphone app and register their information, including their vehicle and payment card details. A motorist need only register once as all of the information is stored for future use.



The motorist parks their vehicle, rings the Phone and Pay area number (clearly displayed on our signage), quotes the site code shown on the machine and select their desired length of stay. Opting for SMS services will enable the motorist to receive a text confirming their booking and when their parking is due to expire.

Text the following information to 07786 207 708:

- Location number
- Length of stay (in minutes)
- Payment card 3-digit security code

For example: to park at location 2500 for 60 minutes with payment card security code 530, text: 2500 60 530.

Car Parks Information

	Allhallows Multi-Storey	Lurke Street - Multi-Storey	Queen Street - Multi-Storey	River Street Multi-Storey
Payment Method	Pay-on-Foot	Pay-on-Foot	Pay-on-Foot	Pay-on-Foot
	Machines accept coins, notes, credit & debit cards	Machines accept coins, notes, credit & debit cards	Machines accept coins, notes, credit & debit cards	Machines accept coins, notes, credit & debit cards
Machine Locations	Allhallows Foyer	Lurke St Foyer	Wellington Street Stairwell	River Street Entrance
	East Stairwell Level 1	Howard Street by Ramp	Derby Place Stairwell	Horne Lane Pedestrian Entrance
	West Stairwell Level 1			Howard Shopping Centre
Lifts	3	4	4	3
	With access to: Greenhill Street	With access to: Lurke Street	With access to: Wellington Street	With access to: Howard Shopping Centre
	Hassett Street	Duke Street	Derby Place	River Street
	Not operational on Sundays	Howard Street		Horne Lane
Help Points	All Levels	All Levels	All Levels	All Levels
Bays	428	790	640	465
	Blue Badge: 10	Blue Badge: 14	Blue Badge: 4	Blue Badge: 14
	Parent & Child: 0	Parent & Child: 16	Parent & Child: 8	Parent & Child: 8
Opening Hours	Monday to Sunday: 6am-8pm	Monday to Sunday: 24 hours	Monday to Saturday: 6am-8pm	Monday to Sunday: 24 hours
Chargeable Hours	Monday to Saturday: 6am-6pm	Monday to Saturday: 6am-6pm	Monday to Saturday: 6am-6pm	Monday to Saturday: 6am-11:59pm

Tariff

Monday to Friday	Up to 1 hour	£1.20	Up to 1 hour	£1.20	Up to 1 hour	£0.50	Up to 1 hour	£1.20
	Up to 2 hours	£1.80	Up to 2 hours	£1.80	Up to 2 hours	£0.90	Up to 2 hours	£1.80
	Up to 3 hours	£3.30	Up to 3 hours	£2.90	Up to 3 hours	£1.60	Up to 3 hours	£3.30
	Up to 4 hours	£4.10	Up to 4 hours	£3.80	Up to 4 hours	£2.30	Up to 4 hours	£4.10
	Over 4 hours	£7.70	Up to 5 hours	£4.40	Over 4 hours	£3.40	Over 4 hours	£7.70
			Over 5 hours	£7.00			Overnight: 8pm-02:59am	£1.00
							Overnight: 3am-05:59am	£4.00
Saturday	Up to 2 hours	Free	Up to 2 hours	Free	Up to 2 hours	Free	Up to 2 hours	Free
	Up to 3 hours	£1.20	Up to 3 hours	£1.20	Up to 3 hours	£0.50	Up to 3 hours	£1.20
	Up to 4 hours	£1.80	Up to 4 hours	£1.81	Up to 4 hours	£0.90	Up to 4 hours	£1.80
	Up to 5 hours	£3.30	Up to 5 hours	£2.90	Up to 5 hours	£1.60	Up to 5 hours	£3.30
	Up to 6 hours	£4.10	Up to 6 hours	£3.80	Up to 6 hours	£2.30	Up to 6 hours	£4.10
	Over 6 hours	£5.50	Over 6 hours	£4.40	Over 6 hours	£3.40	Over 6 hours	£7.70
						Overnight: 8pm-11:59pm	£1.00	
Sunday	Free	Free	Free	Closed	Closed	Free	Free	

Surface Car Parks

Car Park	Payment Method	No. of Machines	Bays	Chargeable Hours	Tariff					
					Monday to Friday		Saturday	Sunday		
Ashburnham Road	Pay & Display	3	200	Monday to Sunday	All Day	£7.50	Per Visit	£2.50	Per Visit	£2.50
			Blue Badge: 12	6am to 11:59pm	10:00am to 11:59pm	£3.50				
			Parent & Child: 5 EVC: 2		(max stay 14 hours)					
Borough Hall	Pay at Barrier	N/A	202	Saturday to Sunday	N/A		Per Visit	£1.00	Per Visit	£1.00
			Blue Badge: 5 *EVC: 1	At any time						
Duckmill Lane	Pay & Display	1	12	Monday - Saturday 8am - 6pm	Up to 2 hours	£1.50	Up to 2 hours	Free	Free	
Foster Hill Road	Pay & Display	1	66	Monday to Sunday	Up to 3 hours	Free	Up to 5 hours	Free	Up to 5 hours	Free
			Blue Badge: 4	8am to pm	Up to 4 hours	£1.00	Over 5 hours	£8.00	Over 5 hours	£8.00
					Up to 5 hours	£2.00				
Greyfriars	Pay & Display	2	143	Monday - Saturday	Up to 2 hours	£1.80	Up to 2 hours	Free	Free	
			Blue Badge: 8	8am - 6pm						
Melbourne Street	Pay & Display	2	197	Monday - Saturday	Up to 2 hours	£1.10	Up to 2 hours	£1.10	Free	
				7am - 6pm	Up to 4 hours	£2.70	Up to 4 hours	£2.70		
					Over 4 hours	£3.90	Over 4 hours	£3.90		
Prebend Street	Pay & Display	3	284	Monday - Sunday	Up to 2 hours	£1.80	Up to 2 hours	£1.80	Per Visit	£1.80
			Blue Badge: 7	7am - 11.59pm	Up to 4 hours	£4.10	Up to 4 hours	£4.10		
Robinson Pool	Pay & Display	1	34	Monday - Sunday	Up to 2 hours	Free	Up to 5 hours	Free	Up to 5 hours	Free
			Blue Badge: 3	6am - 10pm	Up to 3 hours	£1.00	Over 5 hours	£8.00	Over 5 hours	£8.00
					Up to 4 hours	£2.00				
					Up to 5 hours	£3.00				
St. Peter's	Pay & Display	2	113	Monday - Saturday	Up to 1 hour	£1.20	Up to 2 hours	Free	Free	
			Blue Badge: 3	7am - 6pm	Up to 2 hours	£1.70	Up to 3 hours	£1.20		
			*EVC: 1		Up to 4 hours	£3.00	Up to 4 hours	£1.70		
					Over 4 hours	£6.00	Up to 6 hours	£3.00		
						Over 6 hours	£6.00			

* EVC - Electric Vehicle Charging Point

Free Car Parks

Car Park	Ward	Bays	Blue Badge	Parents & Child
Avon Drive	Brickhill	18	4	0
Brickhill Drive	Brickhill	18	2	0
Church Lane	Goldington	114	8	10
Hartop Close	Putnoe	19	2	0
Halsey Road	Kempston North	19	2	0
Havelock Street	Queens Park	29	3	0
Library Walk	Putnoe	14	2	0
Queens Drive	Putnoe	45	2	0
St Johns	Cauldwell	7	0	0

Safer Parking Scheme

The Safer Parking Scheme is a national standard for UK car parks that have a low crime level and where there are measures in place to ensure the safety of people and vehicles.

A Park Mark is awarded to each car park that achieves the challenging standards. The distinctive Park Mark signage helps drivers find car parks where they can confidently leave their vehicle, knowing the environment is safer.

Each car park undergoes a rigorous assessment by specially trained police assessors and it is the car park that is awarded not the organisation. This is because organisations, such as local authorities or large private companies can have many car parks, but not all of them will achieve the standard.

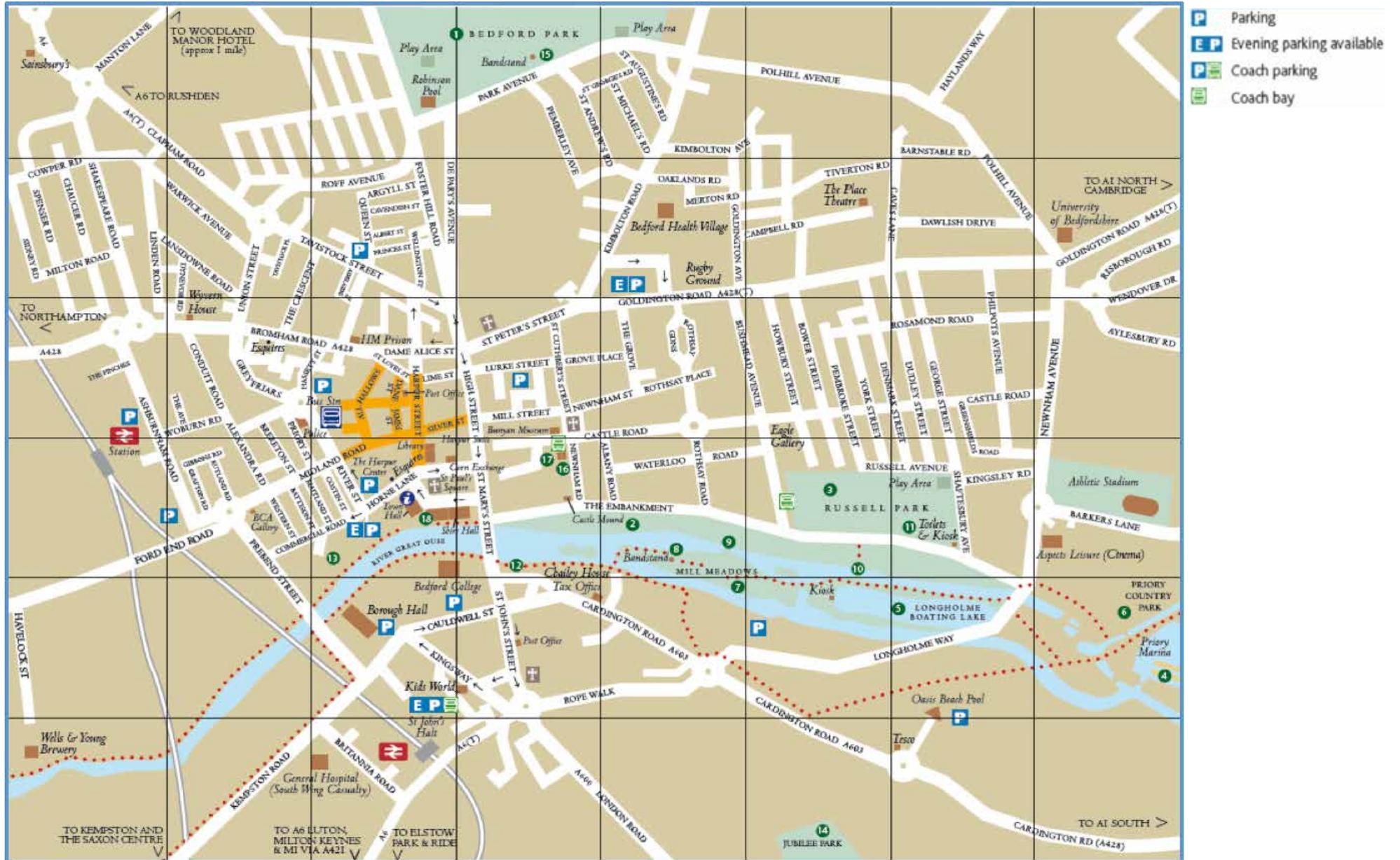
The car parks that achieve the award have had their management practices and security measures assessed and the assessors are satisfied these practices actively reduce crime. Park Mark car parks look safer, feel safer and are safer.

Ten of the Council's car parks have been awarded the Park Mark:



- Allhallows Multi-Storey Car Park;
- Lurke Street Multi-Storey Car Park;
- Queen Street Multi-Storey Car Park;
- River Street Multi-Storey Car Park;
- Melbourne Street Surface Car Park;
- St. Peter's Street Surface Car Park;
- Greyfriars Surface Car Park;
- Prebend Street Surface Car Park;
- Ashburnham Road Surface Car Park
- Park & Ride Elstow

Town Centre Car Park Locations



On-Street Parking



The Council's Controlled Parking Zone was implemented in 2000. Before then on-street parking was almost a 'free for all'. Residents, visitors, shoppers, workers and commuters were all competing for the same space. Even though there were over 5,000 spaces, too often it was the resident who lost out.

Councils cannot control or restrict car ownership, but they can influence car use by managing parking. Adopting appropriate policies can also make alternative forms of transport more attractive than journeys by car. The right parking controls are an important contribution to improving travel conditions in the Borough and making Bedford Borough a more attractive place to live, work and shop.

A Controlled Parking Zone means residents have a much better chance of finding a parking space close to their home that they can use all day if they need to, without the worry of penalty fines. Shoppers are able to find a space reasonably close to where they wish to shop and commuters can use public transport or park in areas that don't create problems for residents.

The rationale behind a Controlled Parking Zone is that every parking space that can be safely provided is marked out in white as parking bays. Parking is permitted only within these marked bays. Elsewhere, yellow lines will indicate where parking is not permitted. The aim is to maximise safe parking space and yellow lines are retained where necessary to ensure good visibility at junctions and crossing points and to ensure parked cars do not obstruct the flow of traffic. The objective is to persuade long stay commuters to avoid parking in residential streets. This releases parking spaces for residents and shoppers.

Any solution to the parking problem must consider the needs of local shops and businesses operating in the area. People who have mobility disability or who are providing regular care to residents are equally in need of access to parking spaces. All factors are taken into account when formulating the Council's parking strategy.

Income from on-street parking is only used for certain purposes connected with transportation matters; it cannot legally be used for anything else. Any surplus is re-invested within Bedford Borough.

Parking Places by Zone

Zone A	Zone B	Zone C	Zone D	Zone E	Zone J	
Battison Street	Alexandra Road	Byron Crescent	Adelaide Square	Albany Road	Beverley Crescent	
Commercial Road	Alexandra Place	Chaucer Road	Albert Street	Bushmead Avenue	Granet Close	
Costin Street	Beckett Street	Cowper Road	Argyll Street	Castle Road		
Duke Street	Brereton Road	Dynevour Road	Cavendish Street	Grove Place	Zone K	
Gadsby Street	Conduit Road	Keats Close	Chandos Street	Little Grove Place	Clarendon Street	
Lurke Street	Gibbons Road	Lansdowne Road	De Parys Avenue	Newnham Street	Palmerstone Street	
Maitland Street	Grafton Road	Linden Road	Derby Place	Rothsay Place	Beaconsfield Street	
Mill Street	Greyfriars	Milton Road	Foster Street	Rothsay Gardens	Park Road West	
Ram Yard	Greyfriars (North Parade)	Sidney Road	Foster Hill Road	Rothsay Road		
St Loyes Street	Roise Street	Spenser Road	Harpur Street	St Cuthberts Street	Zone M	
St Paul's Square	Rutland Road	Tudor Close	Peel Street	The Embankment	Kingsbrook Road	
Western Street	The Avenue	Union Street	Queen Street	The Grove		
<i>Parking places in Sovereigns Quay and Poulter Close are privately owned and a resident's permit is not valid for those areas</i>	Woburn Road	Warwick Avenue	Tavistock Place		Zone N	
	<i>Parking Places in The Finches and some areas of Beckett Street are privately owned and a resident's permit is not valid for those areas</i>	<i>Parking places in Chesterton Mews and Milne Row are privately owned and a resident's permit is not valid for those areas</i>	<i>Parking places in some areas of Albert Street, Argyll Street, Foster Street and Queen Street are privately owned and a resident's permit is not valid for those areas</i>	Tavistock Street	Zone F	Althorpe Street
				The Crescent	Oaklands Road	Amphill Road
				Wellington Street		Houghton Road
					Zone G	Millbrook Road
					Glebe Road	Ossory Way
						St Leonard's Street
					Zone H	Aspley Road
					Pemberley Avenue	Edward Road
						Kempston Road
	Zone L	Ombersley Road				
	Ellis Road	Victoria Road				

Permits

Every resident within the CPZ is eligible to apply for Resident Parking Permits for their vehicles, except residents of new developments of flats/apartments and houses constructed/adapted after 1 April 2008 or residents of a single dwelling, flat/apartment or a house of multiple occupancy that has been formed as part of a conversion of a building or part of a building after 12 August 2013. Permits are valid for 12 months from the beginning of the month the application is made.

For the Council to issue a Resident Parking Permit, the resident must provide proof of residency and demonstrate that they are the owner of the vehicle (although there are a few exceptions, for example, with company cars). Each permit states a zone where parking is allowed; however, there can be no guarantee that residents will be able to park directly outside their property or in their street.

Resident Parking Permits are valid for one year. Up to three permits per household can be purchased. The cost for the first vehicle is £25, the second £73 and the third vehicle is £94. A charge of £5 is made for changes to permits.

Visitor Parking Permits

A visitor parking permit book containing timed vouchers is sent annually to each property within the CPZ free of charge. An additional two books may be purchased by residents at £15 per book during the same year.

Business Parking Permits

Business vehicles can park in any pay-and-display bays in the CPZ. Businesses based within the CPZ may apply for permits if they can demonstrate a need and cost £180 per year for the first permit and £250 for the second. Each permit would have the name of the company displayed, but can be used by any vehicle registered by the business.

Healthcare and Voluntary Organisations

Healthcare Parking Permits are available to doctors, nurses, midwives and other key healthcare workers to enable parking within the CPZ in a bay while attending to patients. Charges for the permits are £20 for Healthcare / £5 for Voluntary and are valid for two years.

Suspensions

There is sometimes need to suspend or partly suspend bays and spaces for specific purposes such as: building work, roadwork and loading or unloading. The Council may suspend bays at any time and any vehicle parking in a suspended bay may be issued with a penalty charge notice. Warning notices will be displayed at the relevant bay(s) advising of any suspensions due.

Waivers

A 'waiver' is a form that allows a vehicle to wait on a yellow line while it is being used in an agreed way. It does not give permission to park, but is intended to help with temporary work and short-term needs.

A Waiver is charged at £5 per day for up to 4 hours per vehicle and £10 per day for a period of over 4 hours per vehicle. Waivers can be issued for up to a week and can be extended for further periods if necessary.

In most cases applications are processed within 24 hours. However, there may be a need to refer the request to our Highways Service in the first instance as in some circumstances a Waiver is not required.

Loading and unloading on a yellow line is permitted without a break for a maximum of 15 minutes as long as loading restrictions are not in force. Signed removals vehicles may carry out removals for as long as is necessary, providing loading restrictions are not in force.

Waivers are issued for:

- continuously loading and unloading bulky goods from a vehicle (when this will take longer than 15 minutes);
- continuously using a vehicle as a workshop (such as for fitting kitchens and using carpentry machinery from a vehicle); and
- continuously using a tar boiler, welding cylinder, compressor or generator from your vehicle.

Waivers are not issued for:

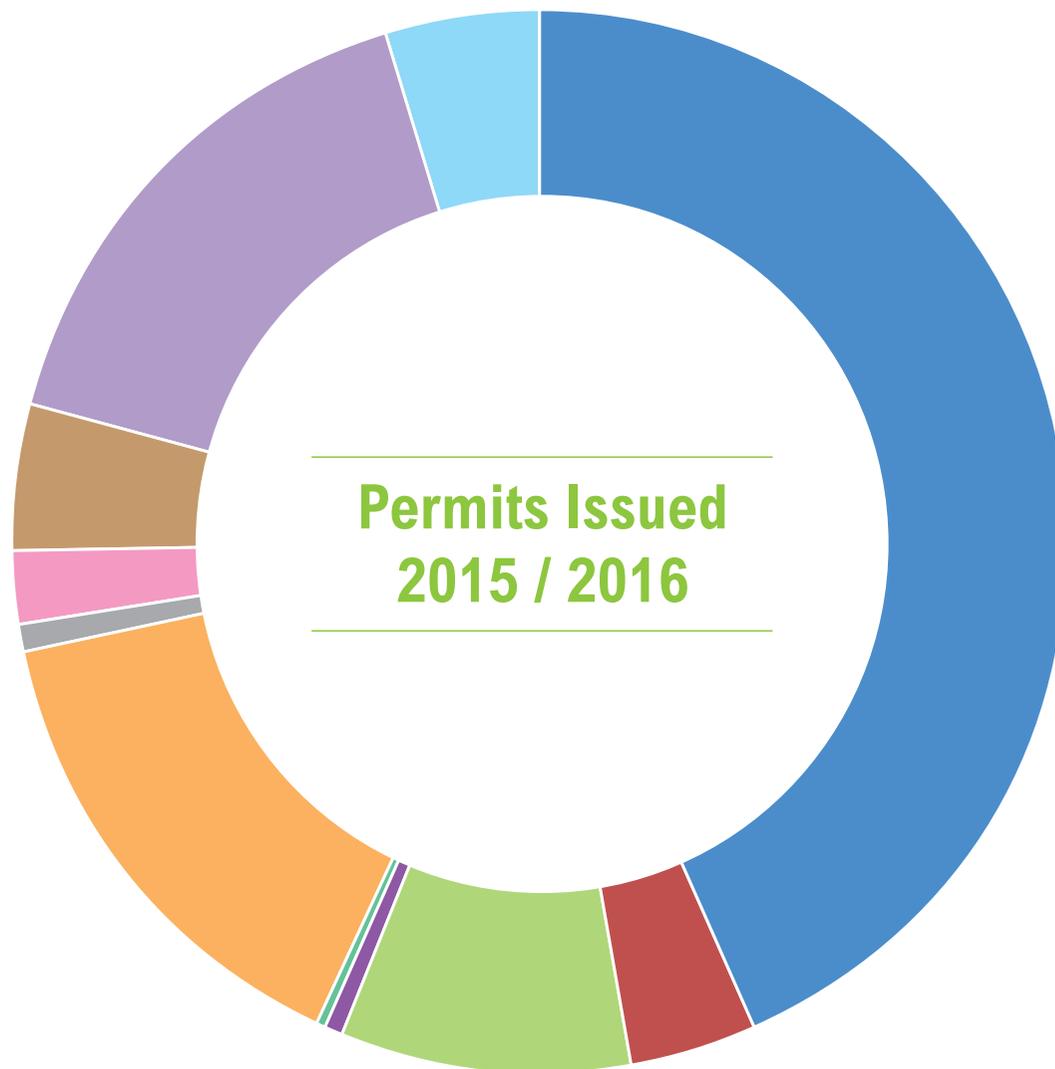
- vehicles being used for storing tools;
- parking the vehicle whilst working elsewhere;
- trailers; or
- unloading goods which are not bulky.

Applications for waivers to be issued on the Town Centre Pedestrianised Area (where there is a prohibition of traffic) must be supported by:

- a Certificate of Public Liability Insurance for a minimum of £5 million; and
- a Risk Assessment of the task that is to be undertaken.

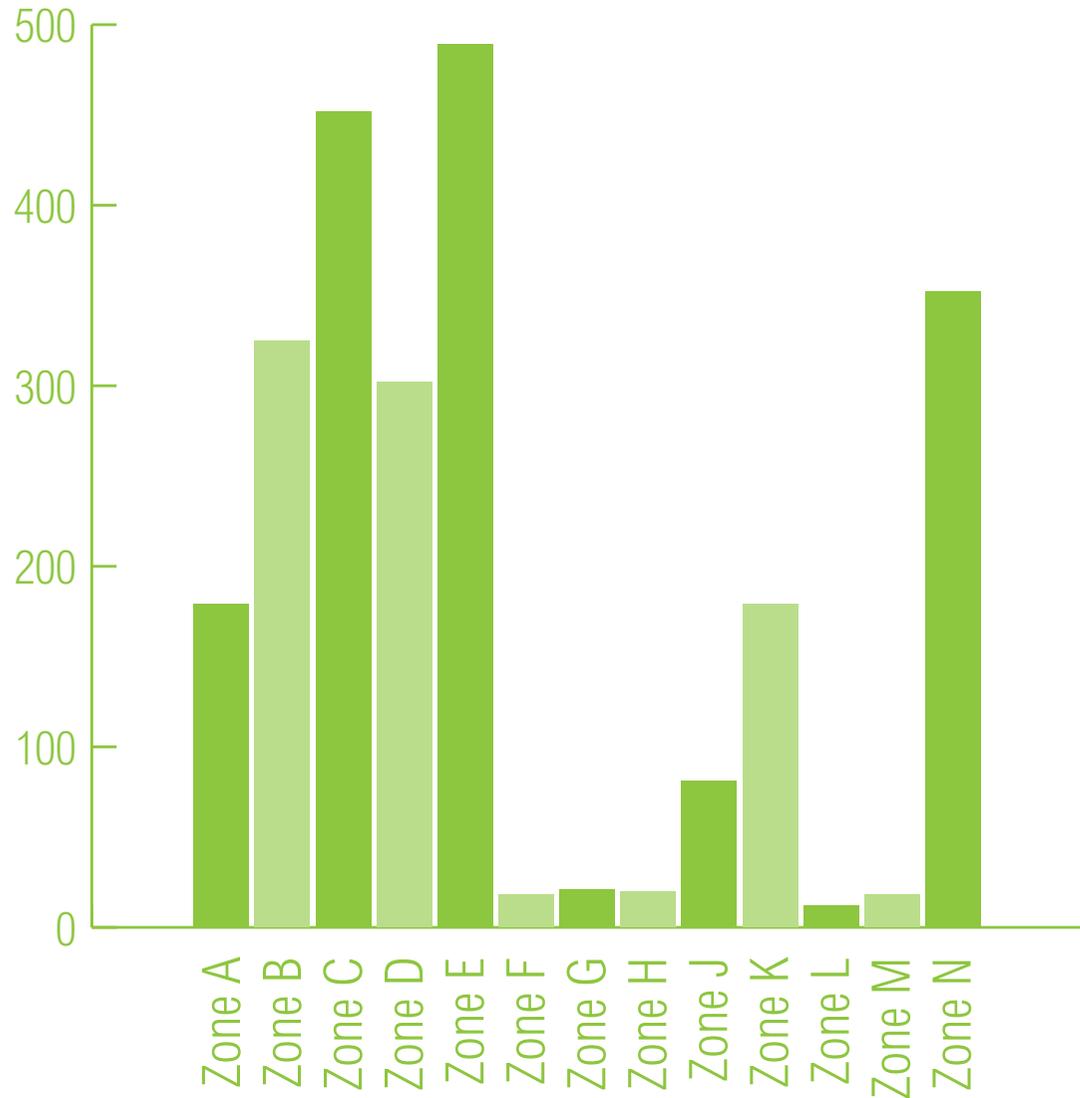
Permits Issued

Permits 2015 / 2016		
Type	Number Issued	Percentage
Resident	2,448	44.14%
Business	217	3.91%
Car Park Season Tickets	497	8.96%
Councillor	7	0.13%
Discretionary	4	0.07%
Dispensations	820	14.79%
Doctors	8	0.14%
Healthcare	130	2.34%
Staff	249	4.49%
Visitor	909	16.39%
Waiver	257	4.63%
Total	5,546	



Residents Permits Issued by Zone

Residents Permits 2015 / 2016	
Zone	Number Issued
Zone A	179
Zone B	325
Zone C	452
Zone D	302
Zone E	489
Zone F	18
Zone G	21
Zone H	20
Zone J	81
Zone K	179
Zone L	12
Zone M	18
Zone N	352



New CPZ – Extension of Zone N

In 2013 Bedford Borough Council carried out a consultation with residents of Amphill Road and its adjoining roads. This was in response to complaints received by residents that they were struggling to find parking spaces near to their homes.

Having carried out a consultation, the results were verified and a third of the consulted area was supportive of a CPZ.

At the same time, the Council received a petition from residents of Sandhurst Road against a CPZ. As the first road out of the CPZ, the Council had concerns that by excluding Sandhurst Road from a CPZ the road would suffer from displacement commuter parking. However due to the local strong opposition against including Sandhurst Road, a decision was made to implement a CPZ on part of Amphill Road excluding Sandhurst Road.



Following the implementation of a CPZ on part of Amphill Road and its side roads, it has become evident that commuter traffic has displaced further along Amphill Road and other adjoining roads.

A further petition was received requesting an extension to the CPZ into Sandhurst Road. The resulting consultation showed a strong level of support from residents to expand the CPZ and this was included as part of the new zone. The extension of Zone N is set to go live September 2016.

Parking Enforcement



Parking controls can only be effective if they are continuously enforced. Effective enforcement has many benefits and the Council provides a co-ordinated and locally accountable 24 hour, 7 day week parking enforcement service across the Borough.

Effective enforcement can keep roads clear of vehicles parked in contravention of a restriction that may cause safety issues for other users. It can also assist in improving traffic delays and reliability of bus services.

The Council employs civil enforcement officers to patrol the streets and car parks. They have a responsibility to issue Penalty Charge Notices (PCNs) to any vehicles contravening parking regulations. The Officers work to clear guidelines derived from the relevant legislation and the Council's Traffic Regulation Orders.

Since the introduction of civil parking enforcement, the parking industry has seen many changes driven by technology. The Council is committed through its parking strategy to the future modernisation of its parking services in line with the objectives in the Corporate Plan 2016-2020. In particular, it will meet the requirements to transform service quality, improve customer service and improve organisational productivity and process efficiencies.

Bedford Borough residents are able to call the Council's enforcement team when they spot vehicles parked in an unlawful, irresponsible or dangerous way.

The Enforcement Team can be reached 24 hours a day, 7 days a week on telephone number 01234 718359.

Blue Badge Enforcement

Parking Services in conjunction with Community Welfare and the Fraud Investigation Service regularly conduct 'Blue Badge Enforcement days'. The purpose of these days is to check and verify the use of Blue Badges in Bedford Borough and identify any cases of misuse.

In July 2015 a very successful exercise was completed with 162 Blue Badges checked, 5 badges seized, 6 badges identified for further investigation and 4 Penalty Charge Notices issued. The abuses uncovered during the exercise consisted of people using a relative's badge without the Blue Badge Holder being with them, use of expired badges and using a deceased person's badge.

A further 2 cases were identified for physical reassessment as the Investigations Officer believed their abilities were not consistent with the requirements of the scheme.

The mood of genuine Blue Badge holders abiding by the rules on the day was very good and they were happy to see the Council taking action against misuse of the scheme.

It is imperative that the rules of the Blue Badge scheme are adhered to; breaking these rules is a criminal offence and takes away vital parking spaces from the genuinely disabled, impeding their access to vital services, such as doctors, chemists and grocery shopping.

Fraudulent Blue Badge applications and/or use is investigated by the Council and action is taken against those who abuse the system. Blue Badge fraud or misuse can be reported confidentially by calling 0800 917 8491 or visiting www.bedford.gov.uk/bluebadge.



The Deregulation Act and Mobile CCTV Enforcement



Parking related elements of the Deregulation Act came into effect in April 2015 which provided changes to the legislation controlling the use of CCTV but allowed exemptions.

The Government confirmed a major set of reforms amending the Traffic Management Act 2004 which included placing restrictions on camera enforcement by local authorities.

Since the change, local authorities can only enforce parking restrictions by CCTV in the following instances:

- School keep clear markings
- Bus stop/stand clearways
- Red routes
- Bus lanes

Before deregulation, the Council operated two mobile CCTV enforcement vehicles alongside foot and scooter patrols. Approximately 4,700 PCNs were issued each year via mobile CCTV patrols. Of the 4,700 PCNs issued, around 3,700 (78%) were issued for contraventions that are no longer enforceable by a CCTV vehicle. Due to the change in the regulations there was little justification for retaining two vehicles and the Council therefore reduced the CCTV enforcement capability to a single vehicle, re-deploying the remaining vehicle and staff accordingly.

A revised programme for a single CCTV vehicle was developed and the remaining vehicle was redeployed within the Council's fleet either for CEOs or other purposes.

Phone and Pay to Park

Phone and Pay is a fast and easy payment solution that enables motorists to pay for parking via mobile phone. There is no need to find cash or place a paper ticket in the vehicle. There is even the option of receiving a text message as a reminder of when the parking period is due to expire and then have the option to extend the parking whilst away from the vehicle.

Once paid, all information (including vehicle, location details and expiry time of parking) is sent electronically to the handheld device of a civil enforcement officer which enables the officer to know that the parking charge has been paid.

Once registered, there are various ways to pay for parking with Phone and Pay:

- Call 01234 860 249;
- Text 07786 207 708;
- Download the 'Phone and Pay' smartphone app.

How to use Phone and Pay:

1. Register online or phone 01234 860 249;
2. Quote the location code to book parking;
3. Select the length of stay;
4. By using the SMS service, a text message is received to confirm the parking period and when the parking is due to expire;
5. Call back using the App or text 07786 207 708 to extend the parking session (if permitted at the location).

Calls are charged at local rates and will often be included in mobile monthly plans. In addition to the parking charge, a transaction charge of 20p for initial parking will be charged. Further optional charges if opted into are:

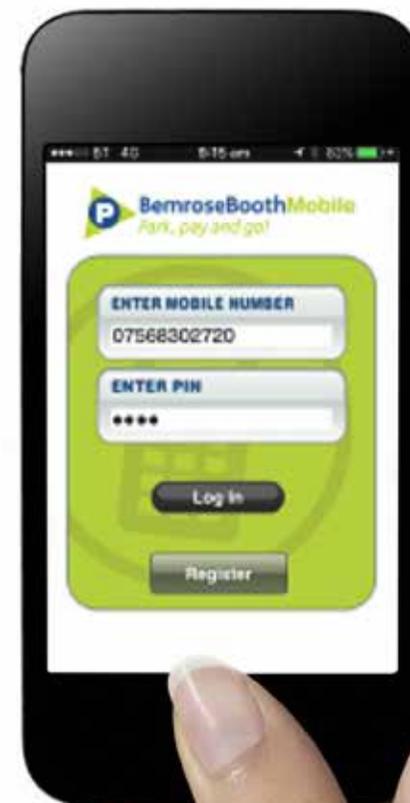
- 10p for a text reminder,
- 10p for extending parking (where permitted) and
- 10p for a confirmation text.



Phone and Pay – New and Repeat Users

2014 / 2015			
Site Code	Site Name	New Users	Repeat Users
2000	St Peters Surface Car Park	240	1,105
2001	Ashburnham Road Surface Car Park	764	21,423
2002	Duck Mill Lane Surface Car Park	0	2
2003	Foster Hill Road Surface Car Park	0	4
2004	Greyfriars Surface Car Park	206	770
2005	Melbourne Street Surface Car Park	224	2,582
2006	Prebend Street Surface Car Park	124	583
2008	Robinson Pool Surface Car Park	5	3
Various	On-Street	2,140	8,651

2015 / 2016			
Site Code	Site Name	New Users	Repeat Users
2000	St Peters Surface Car Park	102	1,438
2001	Ashburnham Road Surface Car Park	658	24,718
2002	Duck Mill Lane Surface Car Park	0	21
2003	Foster Hill Road Surface Car Park	3	21
2004	Greyfriars Surface Car Park	266	1,479
2005	Melbourne Street Surface Car Park	124	3,694
2006	Prebend Street Surface Car Park	177	1,687
2008	Robinson Pool Surface Car Park	2	12
Various	On-Street	2,395	12,338



PHONE AND PAY

Parking Incentives

The Council is committed to continuous appraisal of the parking service and to understand the effectiveness of the service overall.

The current economic downturn has impacted nationally on consumer spending and local economies. To seek to alleviate some of the downturn in footfall and provide better access to the amenities, the Mayor introduced parking concessions and improved parking provision in the town known as the “Mayor’s Free Parking Deal”.

During a recent review of parking fees and charges (effective from January 2016), the Council decided that the free parking initiatives should continue.

Car park occupancy rates during February 2016, during the busiest period on Saturdays, are set out below for comparison with statistics presented at the meeting of the Environment and Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 8 October 2015. These figures demonstrate that the car parks continue to be well used on Saturdays and overall occupancy rates remain stable (increased use of Lurke Street MSCP appears to have compensated for slight reductions in River Street and Allhallows MSCPs).

Site Code	Time Period	Average occupancy rate (Saturday)	
		July 2015	February 2016
River Street MSCP	10.30 – 16.00	96%	90%
Allhallows MSCP	10.30 – 16.00	82%	78%
Lurke Street MSCP	10.30 – 16.00	50%	60%

Town Centre footfall continues to increase, as confirmed in the Council’s press release, issued on 5 February 2016;

👁️ Bedford town centre once again bucked the national trend with 2015 seeing a two per cent increase in town centre footfall... in contrast to national and regional figures for High Streets which saw footfall numbers fall by about two per cent. 🗨️

These figures were taken from official national statistics (Springboard) and figures provided by Bedford BID also support these findings.

Parking Service Modernisation

As part of the Council's Business Transformation Programme, Parking Services has started working to modernise the Service in line with the objectives in the Corporate Plan 2016-2020. In particular it will meet requirements to transform service quality, improve customer service and organisational productivity and process efficiencies.

The service is working to streamline its processes beginning with a simplified application process for resident parking permits. The online e-form is quicker and more convenient and will shortly be followed by a car park season ticket e-form. The online applications free customers from having to post or hand in their applications and consequently shortens the time for receipt of the permit.

Virtual Permits

Although the first small steps to digitalising permits have been taken, the Service is further working towards the introduction of virtual permits which will eliminate the need for a physical permit to be produced.

The virtual permit system is a more efficient method of issuing all types of parking permits. Customers moving to the new virtual permits have their vehicle (or visitor's vehicle) registration logged in an application accessed by the Civil Enforcement Officer's smartphone handsets that can verify the vehicle's permit status, making it very easy to check.

Traffic Penalty Tribunal

The Tribunal is introducing a new online appeals portal, allowing appellants to register and manage their appeal online, including viewing evidence and requesting a hearing. This is currently only available to a limited number of people depending on which authority issued the penalty charge notice, but will eventually be rolled out for all authorities.

Using the portal will reduce the time taken to process appeals, improve communication with appellants and cut the cost of administration.

The digital appeals service summary:

- The Council provides information to the appellant on accessing the portal through the Notice of Rejection;
- An appeal form via post will no longer be required;
- Evidence is submitted online and can be viewed and noted by all parties;
- Allows the Council to manage and follow cases and produce reports;
- The portal is accessible on smartphones and tablets as well as laptops and PCs.

Challenges, Representation and Appeals

A motorist wishing to contest liability for a penalty charge may make initial representation to the Council and if rejected, may have grounds to appeal to an independent adjudicator at the Traffic Penalty Tribunal. The adjudicator's decision is final but there is a right of further appeal on a point of law through the High Court.

Guidance on the statutory grounds of appeal and the type of evidence required to support a case is available to the public on the Council's website at www.bedford.gov.uk/PCNGroundsforRepresentation. It is not prescriptive guidance as it is recognised that each case must be assessed on its own merits. All grounds for cancellation submitted will be considered fairly and objectively.

Currently the penalty charge notice rate in the Borough is set at £70 for higher level contraventions and £50 for lower level contraventions both on and off-street. In accordance with national guidance, a discount amount of 50% of the penalty charge is available within 14 days of PCN issue.

The penalty charge is usually payable by the registered keeper of the vehicle unless it can be shown that they were not the owner at the time of the contravention. The charge is not payable if criminal proceedings have been taken or a Fixed Penalty Notice issued with respect to the contravention.

PCNs remaining unpaid after the relevant time and processes become civil debts due to the Council and are enforceable through a streamlined version of the normal civil debt recovery process in the county court.

Summary of Process

1. If no payment or challenge is received, a Notice to Owner will be issued 28 days after the penalty charge notice was issued. Details of vehicle's registered keeper will be supplied by the DVLA.
2. If the penalty charge notice has not been paid within 28 days of the Notice to Owner being issued and no representation or appeal is being considered, then a Charge Certificate will be issued. The charge increases by 50%.
3. If the penalty charge is not paid 14 days after the Charge Certificate has been issued, the authority will apply to the Traffic Enforcement Centre at Northamptonshire County Court to register the debt. The current registration fee of £8 is added to the debt.
4. If payment continues to be withheld, the debtor is sent an Order for Recovery and Witness Statement advising of a further 21-day period to either pay the debt or submit a Witness Statement.
5. Failure to either pay or complete a Witness Statement will result in the authority applying for a Warrant of Control from the Traffic Enforcement Centre.
6. On issue of the Warrant of Control, the Council will instruct approved enforcement agents to collect the debt on its behalf.

Statistics

Penalty Charge Notices Issued

	2015 / 2016						
	Total PCNs	On Street PCNs	% of Total Issue	Off Street PCNs	% of Total Number	Bus Lane PCNs	% of Total Number
Total Number of PCNs	34,909	18,714	54%	2,827	8%	13,368	38%
Higher Level	28,730	14,850	43%	512	1%	13,368	38%
Lower Level	5,995	3,680	11%	2,315	7%	-	-
PCNs Paid	24,825	12,370	35%	1,824	5%	10,631	30%
PCNs Paid At Discount	22,462	10,739	31%	1,587	5%	10,136	29%
PCNs Paid At Full Charge	1,871	1,458	4%	205	1%	208	1%
PCNs Paid At Enhanced Level	563	244	1%	32	0.1%	287	1%
No of Informal / Formal Representations	*6526	5,554	16%	972	3%	-	-
Cancelled From Representation	*3006	2,463	7%	543	2%	-	-
PCNs Cancelled For Other Reasons	*2693	2,600	7%	93	0%	-	-

* includes Bus Lane PCNs

Penalty Charge Notices Issued By Contravention Code 2015 / 2016 - On-Street

Code	Short Description	PCNs	% On-Street PCNs Issued	% of all PCNs Issued
01	Yellow Line	6,178	33%	18%
02	Loading ban	751	4%	2%
12	No permit or payment	4,722	25%	14%
16	No permit	52	0.3%	0.1%
21	Suspended	207	1%	1%
23	Wrong class	526	3%	2%
25	Loading bay	100	1%	0.3%
26	Over 50cm from kerb	9	0.05%	0.03%
27	Dropped Kerb	451	2%	1%
40	Disabled	1,119	6%	3%
45	Taxi	387	2%	1%
47	Bus Stop	52	0.3%	0.1%
48	School	6	0.03%	0.02%
62	On footway	249	1%	6%
99	Zig-Zag	41	0.2%	0.1%
05	Overstay P&D	91	0.5%	0.3%
06	No P&D ticket	11	0.1%	0.03%
19	No valid permit/P&D	3,182	17%	9%
24	Out of Bay	161	1%	0.5%
30	Max Stay Exceeded	254	1%	1%
34J	Being in a bus lane	81	0.4%	0.2%
47J	Bus Stop	27	0.1%	0.1%
48J	School	56	0.30%	0.2%
62J	On footway	1	0.01%	0.003%
Total On-Street PCNs		18,714		54%

Penalty Charge Notices Issued By Contravention Code 2015 / 2016 - Off-Street

Code	Short Description	PCNs	% Off-Street PCNs Issued	% of all PCNs Issued
71	Electric Vehicle Point	71	3%	0.2%
87	Disabled	436	15%	1%
91	Wrong class	5	0.2%	0.01%
80	Maximum stay exceeded	106	4%	0.3%
82	Overstay	159	6%	0.5%
83	No Ticket	1,493	53%	4%
86	Out of Bay	550	19%	2%
93	Suspended	7	0.2%	0.02%
Total Off-Street PCNs		2,827		8%

Penalty Charge Notices Issued By Contravention Code 2015 / 2016 - Bus Lane

Code	Short Description	PCNs	% Bus Lane PCNs Issued	% of all PCNs Issued
34J	Bus Lane	13,368	100%	38%
Total Bus Lane PCNs		13,368		38%

Total On / Off-Street & Bus Lane PCNs		34,909		
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Parking Accounts - Income & Expenditure 2014 / 2015

Parking Account Expenditure	2014 / 2015			
	On-Street (£)	Off-Street Enforcement (£)	Off-Street Other (£)	Bus Lane (£)
Employee Costs	663,400	78,700	392,200	52,900
Premises	7,000	0	815,100	0
Transport Related Expenditure	26,500	0	700	0
Supplies	170,800	10,700	136,300	39,900
Transfer Payments	900	0	200,900	0
Debt Registration Fees	20,000	2,600	0	8,600
Arbitration Fees	13,200	1,700	0	5,000
Dept overheads	86,300	3,700	134,400	0
Overheads	0	0	700	0
Total Expenditure	988,100	97,400	1,680,300	106,400

Parking Revenue Income	2014 / 2015			
	On-Street (£)	Off-Street Enforcement (£)	Off-Street Other (£)	Bus Lane (£)
Pay & Display	-706,500	0	-1,920,200	0
Resident Permits	-83,100	0	0	0
Business Permits	-35,700	0	0	0
Visitor Permits	-13,800	0	0	0
PCN Income	-663,400	-71,200	0	-325,800
Season Tickets	0	0	-139,100	0
Other Income	-21,800	0	-22,100	0
Total Income	-1,524,300	-71,200	-2,081,400	-325,800
Capital	0	0	1,358,300	0
Depreciation	47,300	600	329,200	7,400
Net Total Cost	- 488,900	26,800	1,286,400	-212,000

Parking Accounts - Income & Expenditure 2015 / 2016

Parking Account Expenditure	2015 / 2016			
	On-Street (£)	Off-Street Enforcement (£)	Off-Street Other (£)	Bus Lane (£)
Employee Costs	753,700	106,300	122,600	76,500
Premises	9,800	0	849,200	0
Transport Related Expenditure	19,100	2,900	0	0
Supplies	165,700	8,500	76,800	39,400
Transfer Payments	800	100	188,000	0
Debt Registration Fees	11,700	1,800	0	8,400
Arbitration Fees	11,000	1,700	0	10,100
Dept overheads	174,500	7,300	140,700	0
Overheads	0	0	1,000	0
Total Expenditure	1,146,300	128,600	1,378,300	134,400

Parking Revenue Income	2015 / 2016			
	On-Street (£)	Off-Street Enforcement (£)	Off-Street Other (£)	Bus Lane (£)
Pay & Display	-725,400	0	-1,996,300	0
Resident Permits	-85,800	0	0	0
Business Permits	-38,600	0	0	0
Visitor Permits	-13,100	0	0	0
PCN Income	-568,400	-59,600	0	-375,500
Season Tickets	0	0	-138,700	0
Other Income	-16,100	0	-32,600	0
Total Income	-1,447,400	-59,600	-2,167,600	-375,500
Capital	0	0	-4,400	0
Depreciation	53,800	700	373,600	7,400
Net Total Cost	-247,300	69,700	-420,100	-233,700

Finding out more

If you would like further copies, a large-print copy or information about us and our services, please telephone or write to us at our address below.

Për Informacion

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Za Informacije

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Per Informazione



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