

Report on Parking Services

2017/18

Foreword



I am pleased to introduce Sedgemoor District Council's report on parking services for 2017/18. The year has seen much activity with the re-opening of Northgate and completion of the new Blake car parks in Bridgwater. Berrow Road car park in Burnham-on-Sea was the first to benefit from our 5-year refurbishment programme and should give trouble-free service to the town for many years to come.

Charges remained the same as the previous year and generated a steady income to cover the cost of the car park service and support other services provided by the Council. Our membership of the Somerset Parking Partnership continues to show benefits through working together to reduce costs and enhance the service to the public.

Our policy is to meet the parking needs of our towns with provision appropriate for the shopper, commuter and visitor. We aim to achieve this by operating well-managed and maintained car parks, offering a value for money service.

This report shows how the Council tried to achieve the goal of providing a welcoming facility for visitors and residents. I hope you find the report informative.

Councillor Dawn Hill
Deputy Leader

- 1 Introduction
- 2 The Service
- 3 Staff
- 4 Income
- 5 Expenditure
- 6 Maintenance
- 7 Acquisitions and Disposals
- 8 Enforcement
- 9 Customer Contact
- 10 Summary

Appendix

- A Parking Charges
- B Car park income
- C Car park income per space
- D Phone and Pay income
- E Expenditure
- F Penalty Charge Statistics
- G Enforcement process
- H Car Park Location Plans

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1 Introduction

The district of Sedgemoor is part of the county of Somerset in south-west England. Bridgwater is the principal town with a mixture of light industry, retail and warehousing. Burnham-on-Sea and Cheddar are popular tourist destinations, particularly in the summer season.

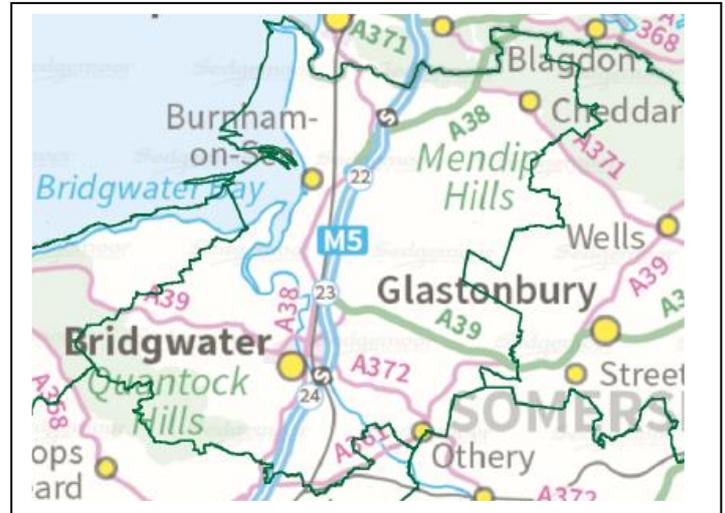
Sedgemoor District Council provides parking facilities for residents, visitors, businesses and shoppers in four town centres across the district. Thousands of customers use the car parks each week. For some customers, this service is the only contact with the Council. Clean, tidy and well-maintained car parks give a good first impression for visitors and tourists to Sedgemoor. It is therefore important to provide a high quality service while minimising cost to the Council. This report shows how the service has met this aim during the year 2017/18.

2 The Service

The Council charged for the use of car parks as shown on the scale of charges in the Appendix A. Coaches may park in designated bays in Bridgwater and Burnham-on-Sea.

Drivers with a disabled badge may park in any bay free-of-charge. The Council sells season tickets, valid for all long-stay car parks, at a discount of around 40% over day-ticket charges. Town centre residents who live within 200m of a car park may buy a residents' season ticket at a discount of around 70% over day-ticket charges. The Council also manages loading areas and season-ticket-only car parks in Bridgwater.

District councils within Somerset, along with Somerset County Council, are members of the Somerset Parking Partnership. The partnership members meet monthly to discuss enforcement policy and issues of common interest. The member councils extended Civil Parking Enforcement to cover the whole county in June 2012.



Town	Number of car parks	Number of spaces
Bridgwater	11	754
Burnham	4	666
Highbridge	1	97
Cheddar	2	193
Total	17	1,710



Somerset CC is the highway authority, responsible for enforcing on-street parking regulations. District councils manage off-street car parks. Somerset CC offers a range of services to the districts and each district buys services appropriate for its needs through an agreement with Somerset CC. An enforcement contractor, NSL Services, carry out some services on behalf of Somerset CC.

Responsibility for the various functions within Sedgemoor is shown below –

Sedgemoor DC direct

- Car parking policy
- Maintenance and repair of car parks and ticket issuing machines
- Sale of season tickets and residents season tickets,

Through an agreement with Somerset CC

- Patrol of car parks and issue of Penalty Charge Notices (by NSL)
- Processing Penalty Charge Notices
- Collection and banking of cash from ticket machines (by NSL)
- Management of Phone and Pay service

3 Staff

Two members of staff at Sedgemoor DC are responsible for the direction of car park policy, management of the agreement with Somerset CC and supervision of maintenance, along with duties in other areas. Somerset CC staff or contractors carry out other functions

4 Income

Car park income comes from the sale of season tickets, sale of day tickets from ticket machines and through a ticketless 'pay by telephone' system. The proportion of customers using the ticketless option was 7% on average over the year. About 85% of customers continue to buy pay-and-display tickets with the remainder of income coming from the sale of season tickets.

Community Use

Car parks are used for more than just parking! In 2017/18 our car parks hosted the following –

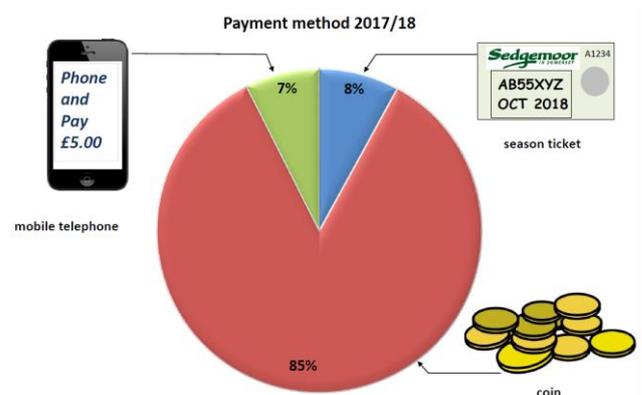
Cheddar Festive Night Fair,

The Burnham-on-Sea temporary ice-rink

Visits by Deaf-Plus and Somerset Sight public information vans

Film crew for filming an episode of a TV series.

Charity events by a local hospice, Rotary Club and McMillan Cancer Care.



Pay by Visit

There were no changes to car park charges over the report period. Pay-by-visit income from the sale of tickets and 'phone and pay' sessions showed an increase of 4%. Wessex Water occupied Northgate car park for a portion of the report period but most customers diverted to other car parks. Appendix B shows the number of tickets sold for each car park, split by length of stay. Appendix C shows the income by parking space for each car park.

Season Tickets

Season ticket sales show an increase from previous years. Somerset CC was the largest single customer for season tickets, accounting for 35% of sales.

Cashless Parking

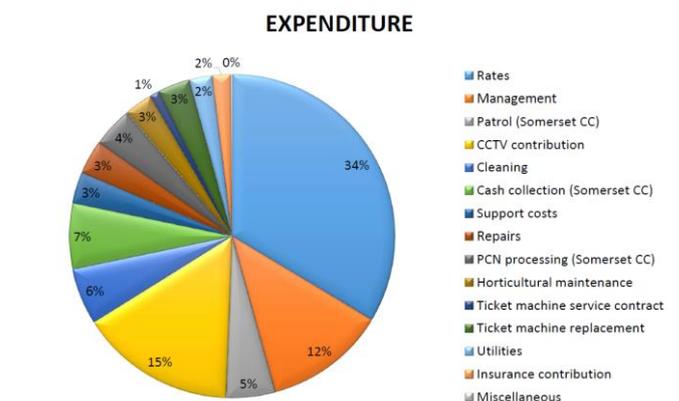
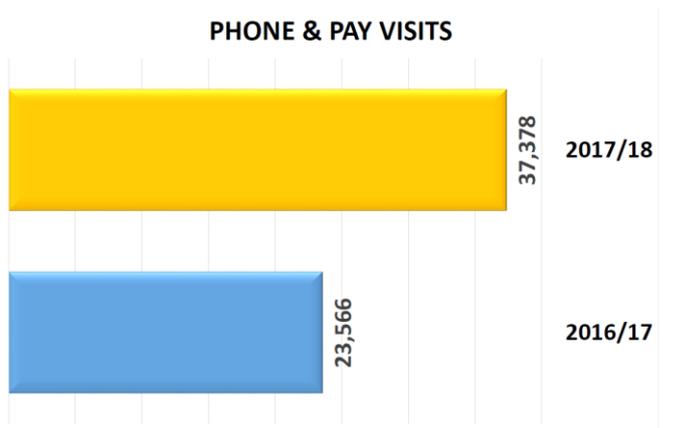
The Council joined the Somerset Parking Partnership 'payment by mobile telephone scheme' in March 2014. The scheme covers all public car parks and on-street pay bays in Somerset. Bemrose Booth operate the scheme under their 'Phone and Pay' brand. The scheme charges customers a fee of 14p for each transaction. The scheme also offers additional services such as an expiry reminder text and the opportunity to extend a stay.

Use of the system has increased to account for an average of 7% of pay-by-visit sales, but some commuter car parks reach 20%, see Appendix D

5 Expenditure

Expenditure on car parks in 2017/18 was £475,000 on the items shown under broad headings in Appendix E

Expenditure in 2017/18 was in line with expenditure in 2016/17. Management and support costs are internal Sedgemoor DC recharges reflecting the proportion of staff time spent on car parking issues.



6 Maintenance

Sedgemoor District Council's Clean Surroundings Service cleans the car parks and maintains the landscaped areas. Sedgemoor DC officers conduct bi-monthly checks of the car parks and commission repairs as necessary.

The Council has a rolling renewal programme for the 30 car park ticket machines and 17 car parks. Surface markings and signs are replaced as required. During the report period, the Council has –

- Replaced 3 obsolete Stelio ticket machines at Pier Street car park, Burnham-on-Sea with new Strada machines.
- Resurfaced Discount car park (Berrow Road) at Burnham-on-Sea
- Relined Cliff Street car park, Cheddar
- Patched potholes in various car parks.

Customers report faults with ticket machines by contacting Customer Services. NSL staff rectify most defects but some require a visit by the manufacturer's service engineer, retained under a service contract. Most service visits are complete within 48 hours of call-out.

7 Acquisitions and Disposals

Wessex Water occupied Northgate car park in Bridgwater for a portion of the report period to undertake construction of an underground storm sewage tank. The car park reopened in November 2017.

Bridgwater's new Northgate primary school opened in September 2017. The development included a new public car park with 66 spaces. The Council decided to name the car park 'Blake' in recognition of its location on the site of the former Blake hospital. The car park is 'season ticket only'. This arrangement removes the need for ticket machines and frees up spaces in other car parks for day-ticket customers. The Mount Street site is scheduled for redevelopment so this new car park places the Council in a good position to cater for the future parking needs of the town.



Resurfaced car park at Berrow Road, Burnham on Sea



Relined car park at Cliff Street, Cheddar



New Blake car park, Bridgwater

8 Enforcement

Somerset CC carried out a review of enforcement arrangements during 2017. Following the review, NSL continue to deliver the patrol service but PCN processing moved to Somerset CC's in-house enforcement team. Sedgemoor DC conducts monthly 'mystery shopper' exercises to monitor performance of NSL enforcement officers.

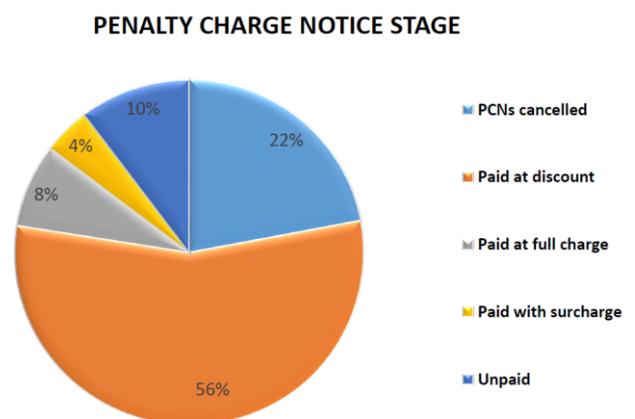
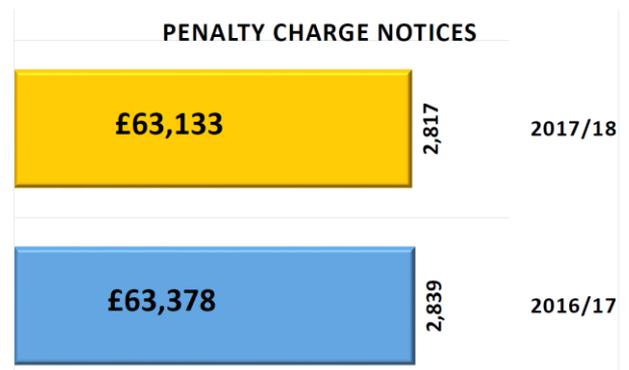
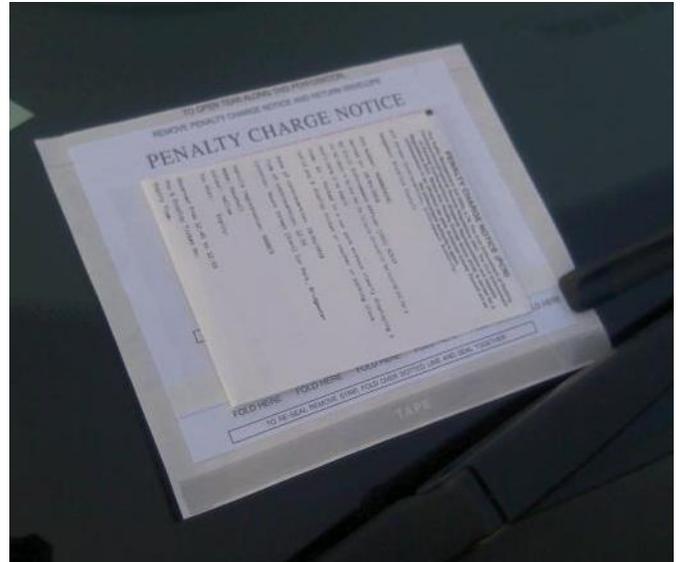
The Civil Enforcement Officers issue Penalty Charge Notices using electronic ticket issuing machines. The machines also take photographs of the contravention. These machines download by Wi-Fi to Somerset CC's notice processing system. Somerset CC follows the Parking Partnership's Challenges and Representations Guidance (<http://www.somerset.gov.uk/roads-parking-and-transport/parking/view-or-challenge-a-penalty-charge-notice/>) based on the DoT national guidelines. Somerset CC handle most of the challenges on the issue of PCNs but forward queries on policy to Sedgemoor DC.

The number of notices issued and income remained similar to the previous financial year. The number of contraventions is very small compared to the 800,000 visits to the car parks each year. Appendix F shows statistical information on PCNs issued and appendix G shows the full enforcement process

Customers sometimes fail to display a valid ticket, season ticket or blue badge and subsequently receive a PCN. For first contraventions of this type, the Council will consider waiving the PCN if the customer can provide a copy of the valid ticket, blue badge etc. Most of the cancellations are due to this policy.

Of the remaining PCNs, the proportion paid is encouraging (87%) compared with the industry norm (70%-80%). The unpaid PCNs are at various stages of processing and some may yet result in payment.

Somerset CC appointed two firms of bailiffs in 2017. During the report period, the Parking Partnership passed 110 Sedgemoor DC cases to bailiffs.



9 Customer Contact

Sedgemoor District Council welcomes comments from customers. Season ticket holders receive a questionnaire when they renew their ticket and there is a customer feedback form on the Council's web site

10 Summary

Despite the disruption caused by the temporary closure of Northgate car park, income overall is about 4% up on the previous year. The new Blake car park will ensure adequate parking places for Bridgwater when Mount Street car park closes for redevelopment. The use of the 'Phone and Pay' parking option has increased in popularity. Transfer of notice processing to Somerset County Council has resulted in prompt settlement of challenges and fewer customers making representations to the Traffic Penalty Tribunal.

Year	2016/17	2017/18	Change
Income £	1,088,050	1,173,500	+4%
Expenditure £	432,200	475,000	+10%
Net Income £	655,850	698,500	+7%

Refurbishment projects 2017/18	Cost £
Resurface Berrow Road car park	21,600



Wessex Water's storm sewage storage tank under construction at Northgate car park Bridgwater



Northgate car park, Bridgwater, re-opened after Wessex Water work

- A Parking charges
- B Car park income
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- D Phone and Pay income
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Appendix A

Parking Charges 2017/18

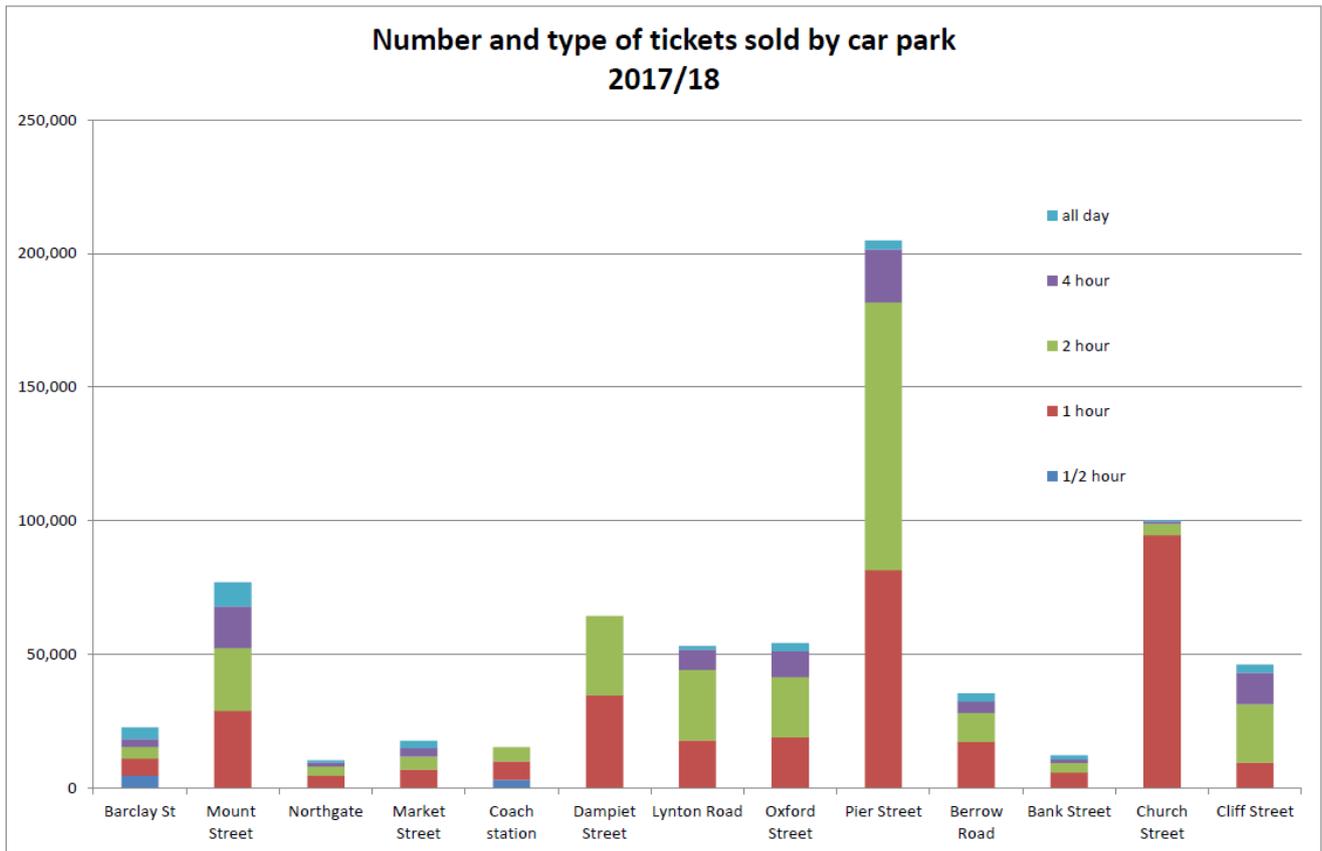
Car park	Phone+Pay Location Number	Cars and LGVs under 7.5t					Other vehicles		Type	Sunday/ Bank Hol Charge
		1/2 Hour	1 Hour	2 Hours	4 Hours	9.00 am - 6.00 pm	Up To 3 Hrs	9.00 am - 6.00 pm		
Bridgwater										
Eastover Shoppers * (Barclay St)	3900	40p	70p	£1.40	£2.50	£4.00	Coaches		long	N
Mount Street E*	3901	X	80p	£1.60	£3.00	£5.00	XC	XC	long	N
Mount Street W *	3902	X	X	X	£3.00	£5.00	Free	Free	long	N
Northgate *	3903	X	80p	£1.60	£3.00	£5.00	XC	XC	long	N
Market Street*	3904	X	80p	£1.60	£3.00	£5.00	XC	XC	long	N
Dampiet Street	3905	X	80p	£1.60	X	X	XC	XC	short	N
Eastover short stay (Coach Station)	3906	40p	80p	£1.60	X	X	XC	XC	short	N
Coach Station	3907	permit parking for coach passengers				60p	XC	XC	long	N
Blake*	season ticket parking only 09:00 to 18:00 Mon - Sat						XC	XC	permit	N
Mount Street S	allocated season ticket parking only 24hrs/day						XC	XC	permit	N/A
Queen Street	allocated season ticket parking only 24hrs/day						XC	XC	permit	N/A
Eastover Park	free parking all year						XC	XC	free	N/A
Bridgwater House	permit parking only						XC	XC	permit	N/A
Burnham-on-Sea										
High Street * (Lynton Rd)	3908	40p	80p	£1.60	£3.50	£5.50	Boat trailers (Coaches free)		long	Y
Oxford Street *	3909	40p	80p	£1.60	£3.00	£5.00	XC	XC	long	Y
Pier Street E *	3910	X	80p	£1.60	£3.50	£5.50	£4.50	£6.50	long	Y
Pier Street S *	3911	X	80p	£1.60	£3.50	£5.50	XC	XC	long	Y
Discount (Berrow Rd) *	3912	X	70p	£1.40	£2.50	£4.00	XC	XC	long	Y
Pier Street W	3913	40p	80p	£1.60	X	X	XC	XC	short	Y
Highbridge										
Bank Street *	3915	40p	70p	£1.40	£2.50	£4.00	XC	XC	long	N
Cheddar										
Church Street *	3916	X	70p	£1.40	£2.50	£4.00	XC	XC	long	Y
Cliff Street *	3917	X	80p	£1.60	£3.50	£5.50	XC	XC	long	Y
Season tickets										
Season tickets may be used in all car parks indicated by *						discount on the bulk sale of tickets				
						number	discount			
Season Tickets						1 - 4	nil			
Annual	£720					5 - 9	5%			
Quarterly	£200					10 - 19	10%			
Residents Season Tickets						20 - 39	20%			
Annual	£360					40 - 69	30%			
Quarterly	£100					70 - 99	40%			
						100+	50%			
administration fee for issuing duplicate for lost or stolen season tickets £5.50										
Contractors vehicles										
£10/vehicle/week										
Conditions						Penalty Charges				
X = Not available						Set by national legislation, £70 or £50 reduced by				
XC = Coach parking not available						50% if paid within 14 days				
Charging Times						Pay and Display car parks 9.00 am to 6.00 pm				
						Season ticket and permit car parks 24 hours/day				

'Phone and Pay' transaction charges

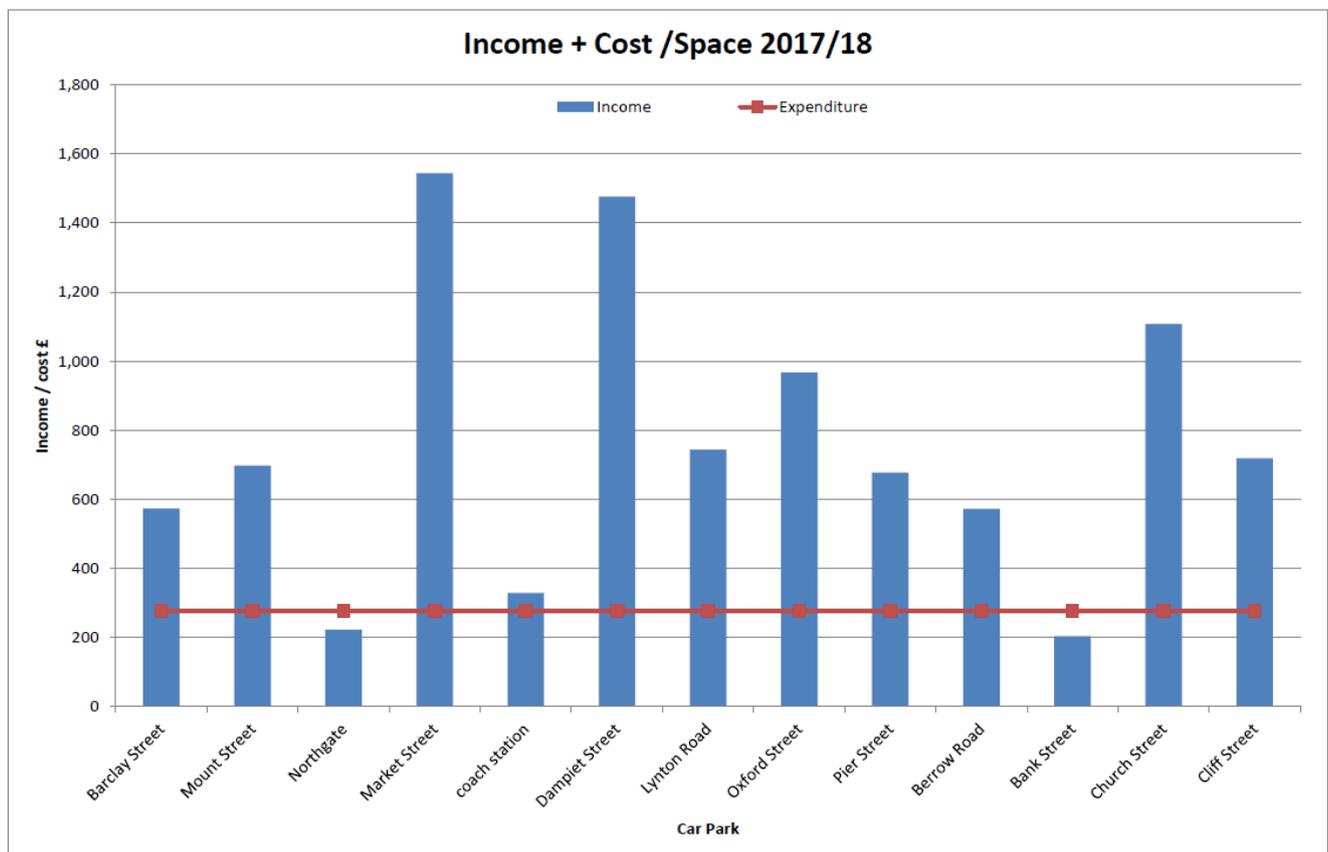
Set by service provider

Initial parking	14p
Optional confirmation text	10p
Optional end of stay warning text	10p
Optional stay extension	10p

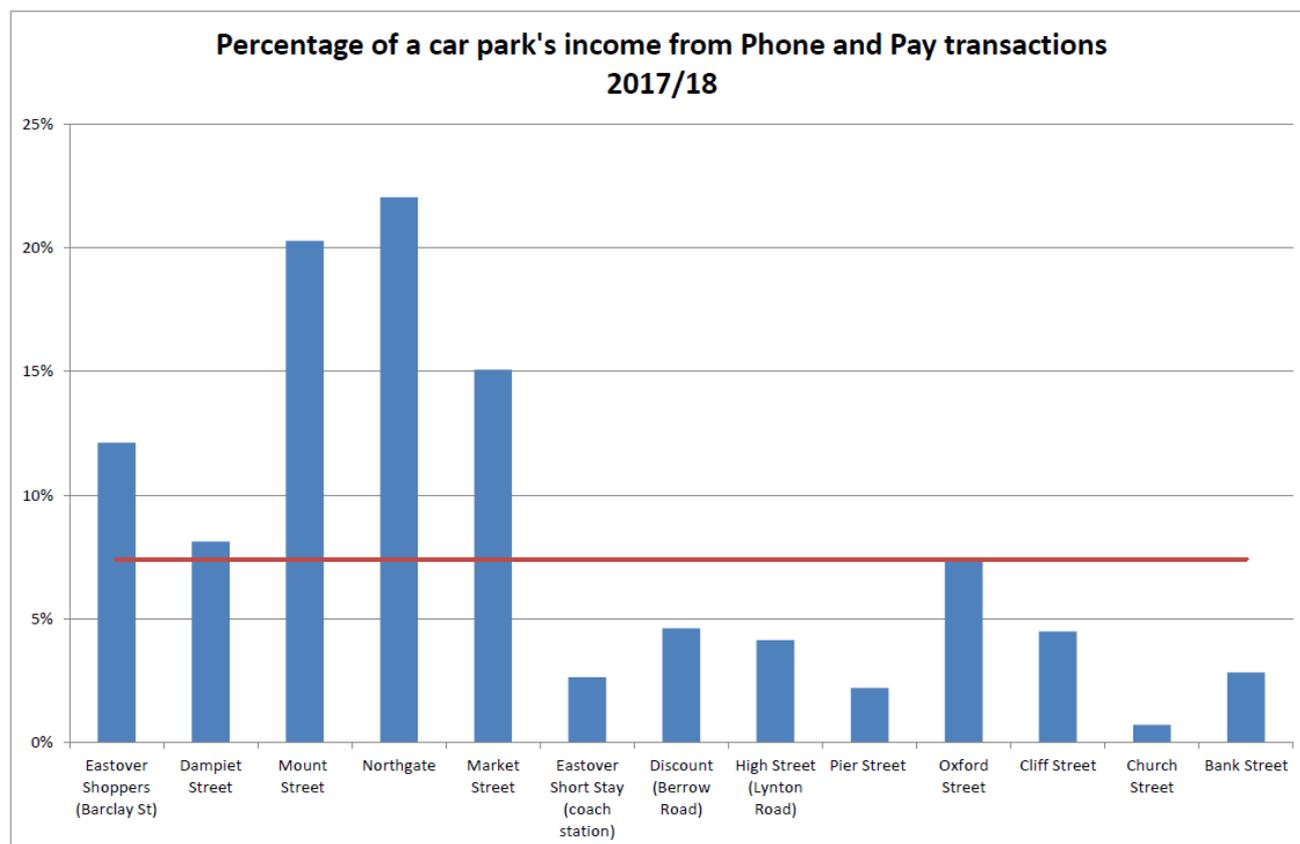
Appendix B



Appendix C



Appendix D



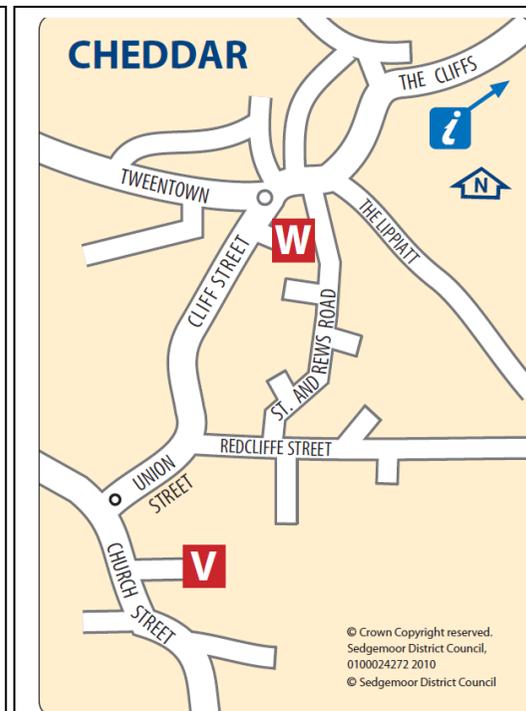
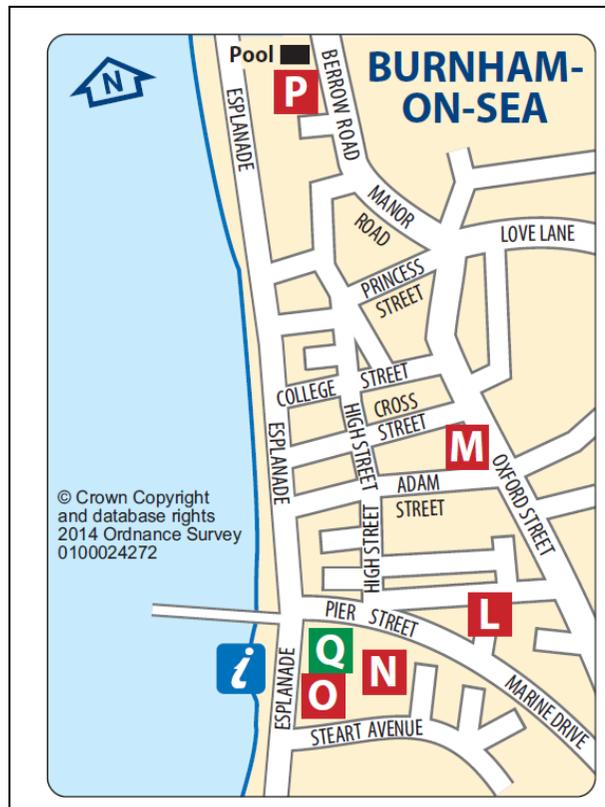
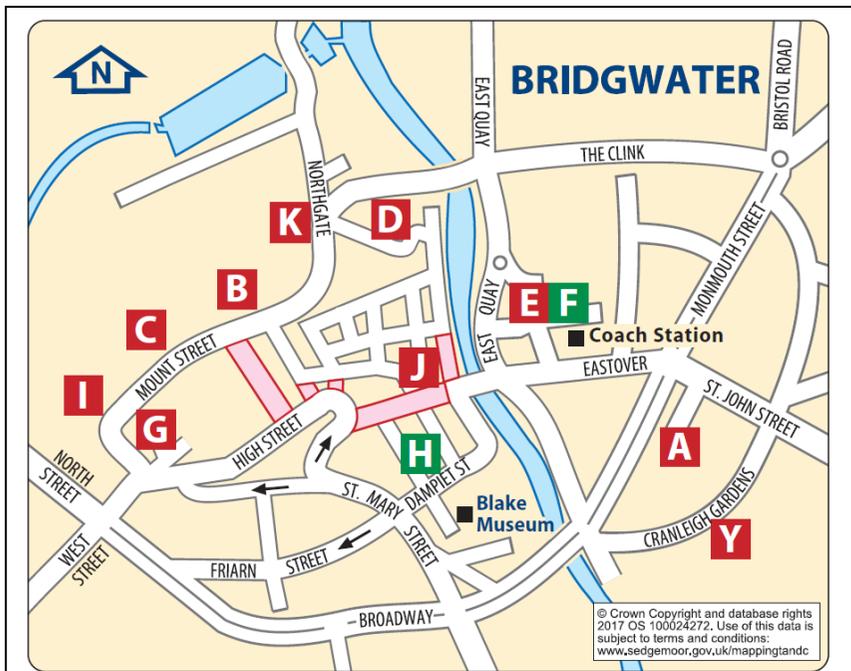
Appendix E

Expenditure Item	2016/17	2017/18
Rates	137,623	159,904
Patrol (Somerset CC)	57,997	57,357
Cash collection (Somerset CC)	24,995	23,062
Management	56,993	73,444
CCTV contribution	25,880	26,916
Cleaning	27,326	31,151
Support costs	18,735	14,901
Repairs	15,240	16,178
PCN processing (Somerset CC)	18,492	19,064
Ticket machine service contract	11,016	13,175
Insurance contribution	4,500	4,500
Horticultural maintenance	12,333	15,244
Ticket machine replacement	7,212	10,783
Utilities	11,788	8,864
Miscellaneous	2,073	489
Total	£432,203	£475,032

Appendix F

Penalty Charge Notice - Statistical information	2016/17	2017/18
Higher level PCNs served	266	381
Lower level PCNs served	2,583	2,406
PCNs paid	1,980	1,940
PCNs paid at discount rate	1,612	1,590
Challenges or formal representations made	889	952
PCNs cancelled as a result of challenges or representations	526	632
Appeals to the Traffic Penalty Tribunal	11	3
Appeals to the Traffic Penalty Tribunal allowed	3	0
Appeals to the Traffic Penalty Tribunal dismissed	1	1
Appeals to the Traffic Penalty Tribunal not contested	6	2
Appeals to the Traffic Penalty Tribunal awaiting decision	1	0





Appendix H

Sedgemoor District Council Car Parks

BRIDGWATER

- A St John St
- B Mount St East
- C Mount St West
- D Northgate
- E Coach Station
- F Eastover
- G Market Street
- H Dampiet Street
- I Mount St South
- J Queen Street
- K Blake
- Y Eastover Park

BURNHAM

- L High Street
- M Oxford Street
- N Pier Street East
- O Pier St South
- P Discount
- Q Pier Street West

CHEDDAR

- V Church St
- W Cliff St

HIGHBRIDGE

- S Bank St

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