

Report on Parking Services 2012/13



Contents

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

Appendices

- A Parking Charges April 2012 to March 2013
- B Complaints Received
- C Car Park Location Plans

1 Introduction

Sedgemoor District Council's Parking Service provides facilities for residents, visitors, businesses and shoppers 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 expenditure. This report shows how the service has met this aim during the year 2012/13.

2 The Service

The table below shows the location of Council owned car parks across the district.

Town	Number of car parks	Number of spaces
Bridgwater	9	708
Burnham	4	642
Highbridge	1	109
Axbridge	1	20
Cheddar	2	193
Nether Stowey	1	19
Total	18	1,691

Apart from Nether Stowey, the Council charges for the use of all of these car parks as shown on the scale of charges in Appendix A.

Drivers with a disabled badge can park in any bay free of charge. The Council sells season tickets 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. In addition, the Council manages loading areas and season-ticket-only car parks in Bridgwater.

In June 2012, Somerset CC adopted a Civil Parking Enforcement regime for on-street parking enforcement. At the same time, Sedgemoor DC adopted Civil Parking Enforcement for off-street car parks. Sedgemoor DC employs Somerset CC to enforce parking regulations in off-street car parks so the same officers patrol car parks and the neighbouring streets. Somerset CC uses an enforcement contractor, NSL Services, to discharge this function. Sedgemoor DC carried out the following functions up to June 2012 -

- Car parking policy
- Collecting cash and issuing Excess Charge Notices
- Maintenance and repair of car parks and ticket issuing machines
- Selling season tickets, residents season tickets, receipt of cash from ticket machines, receipt of Excess Charge income
- Processing Excess Charge Notices

After June 2012 the functions were split as below –

In-house

- Car parking policy
- Collecting cash
- Maintenance and repair of car parks and ticket issuing machines
- Selling season tickets, residents season tickets, receipt of cash from ticket machines

Contracted out

- Patrolling car parks and issuing Penalty Charge Notices
- Processing Penalty Charge Notices

3 Staff

Up to June 2012, the Council employed 3 full-time inspectors to issue Excess Charge Notices and collect cash from ticket machines. On adoption of CPE, 2 members of staff transferred to NSL under TUPE legislation and 1 transferred to Council’s in-house contractor to operate the cash collection service.

Up to June 2012, Sedgemoor DC’s Revenues Service processed the Excess Charge Notices. On adoption of CPE, notice processing transferred to NSL. Cash Office staff continue to sell season tickets and bank cash from ticket machines.

The transport officer and external works officer direct policy and supervise maintenance and repairs in addition to duties in other areas,

4 Income

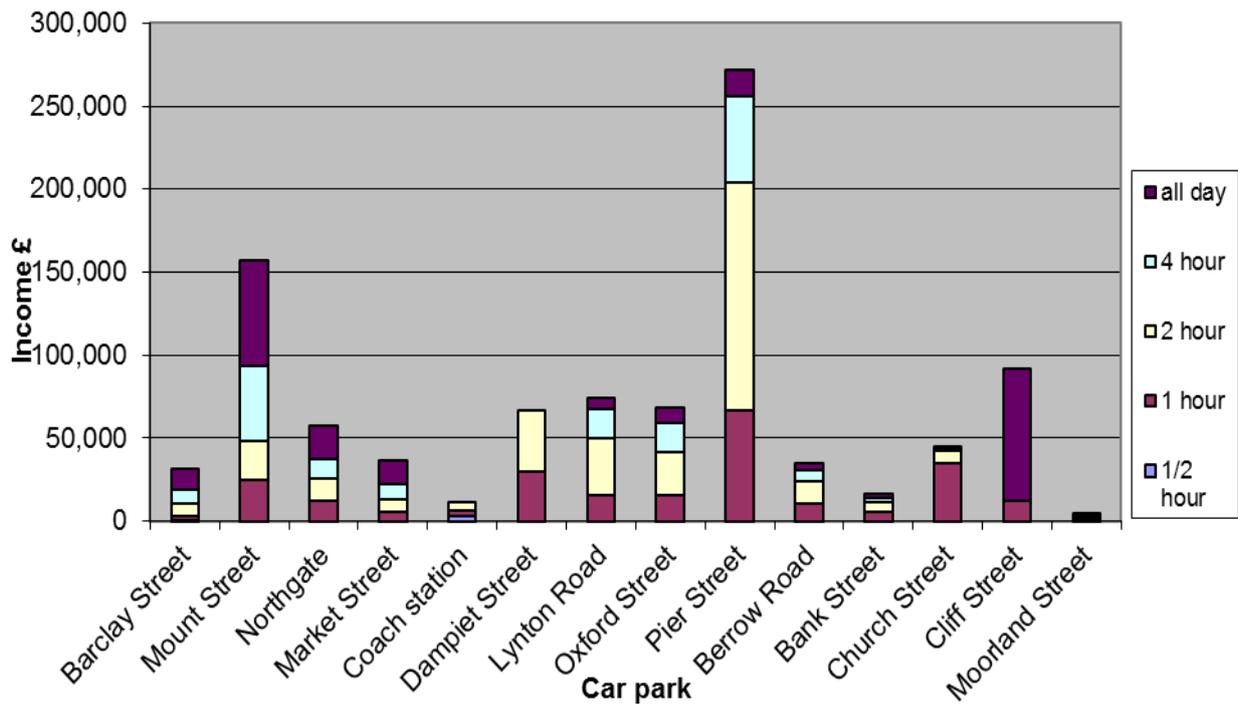
Off-street Car Parks

The table below shows the change in ticket income since last year.

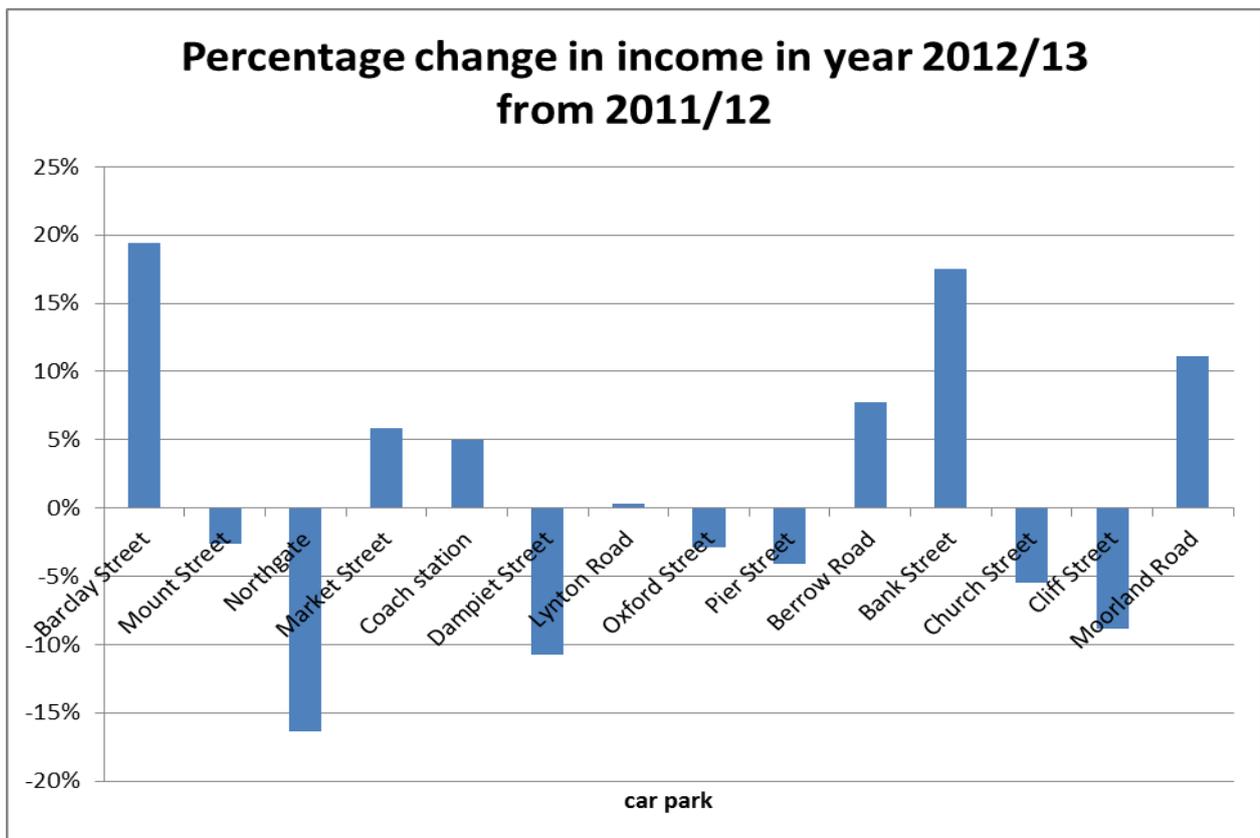
Year	2011/12	2012/13	Difference
Day ticket sales	£849,165	£819,360	-3.5%

The tables below shows income from ticket sales from car park ticket machines by car park split into type of ticket sold. Pier Street car park generates by far the greatest income because it is the largest car park and is very popular in summer. Mount Street car park is the principal commuter car park in Bridgwater.

Cash receipts 2012/13

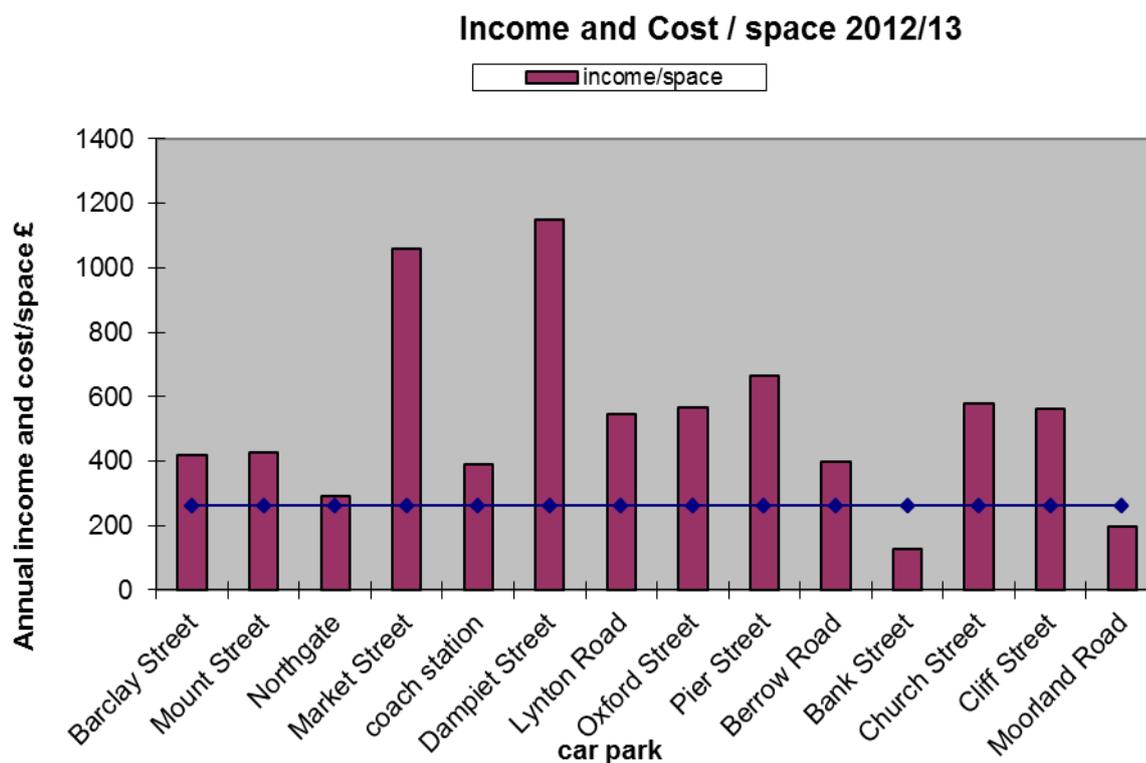


Percentage change in income in year 2012/13 from 2011/12



Barclay Street shows a marked increase in income, possibly due to shoppers looking for a lower priced car park. Part of Northgate car park is being used as a contractor's compound for repair work on the West Quay river-wall, hence the reduction in income. Dampiet Street car park is mainly used by shoppers and perhaps the slow decline in the town centre economy is reflected in the reduction in use of this car park. The chart below

shows income/space for each car park. Dampiet Street in Bridgwater is a short-stay car park has the greatest turnover per space.



Season Tickets

Season ticket sales have increased as customers realise the benefit over purchasing daily tickets. The Council has reduced staff season ticket charges for certain categories of staff so income has reduced accordingly.

Year	2011/12	2012/13	Difference
Season ticket sales	£53,152	£59,589	+12%
Staff season tickets sales	£38,839	£28,446	-27%

On-Street parking

Up to June 2012, Sedgemoor DC operated on-street parking at the Esplanade, Burnham-on-Sea under a management arrangement with Somerset CC. Somerset CC took over the operation of on-street parking direct after June 2012.

Year	2011/12	2012/13 part	Difference
On-street income	£56,359	£18,140	N/A
Sedgemoor DC expenses	£19,248	£5,610	N/A
Payment to Somerset CC	£37,111	£12,530	N/A

Excess Charges and Penalty Charges

The table below shows the income from Excess Charge Notices up to June 2012 and Penalty Charge Notices after the introduction of CPE in June 2012. Sedgemoor DC set the level of Excess Charges at £60, reduced to £40 if paid within 7 days. National legislation sets Penalty Charge levels at £50 reduced to £25 if paid within 14 days. The income from PCNs is therefore lower than Excess Charges but the number issued is very similar, see section 8.

Year	2011/12	2012/13	Difference
Excess Charge Income	£106,851	£16,310	
Penalty Charge Income	Nil	£42,556	
Total	£106,851	£58,866	-45%

5 Expenditure

Expenditure in the report period is shown under broad headings in the table below –

Item	2011/12	2012/13
Rates	120,529	131,624
Patrol and cash collection (in-house)	94,180	17,825
Patrol (Somerset CC)	nil	55,898
Cash collection (Clean Surroundings)	nil	28,301
Management	55,804	58,333
CCTV contribution	27,911	28,602
Cleaning	24,967	21,658
Support costs	13,509	7,128
Receipt of cash / sale of season tickets	10,497	12,215
Repairs	16,136	8,099
ECN processing (in house)	22,752	1,760
PCN processing (Somerset CC)	nil	12,012
Ticket machine service contract	18,204	13,739
Insurance	6,750	4,950
Horticultural maintenance	9,068	9,889
Ticket machine replacement	0	6,930
Utilities	10,520	13,128
Computer licences	3,737	1,848
Miscellaneous	10,287	2,574
Depreciation charges	1,172	0
Total	£446,022	£436,514

Expenditure in 2012/13 was in line with expenditure in 2011/12 despite outsourcing patrols and notice processing.

6 Maintenance

Sedgemoor District Council's Clean Surroundings Service continues to clean the car parks and maintain the landscape areas.

All the line markings were replaced in Oxford Street and Moorland Street car parks and various markings refreshed in other car parks. Five reserved bays were converted to short-stay bays in at Eastover short-stay car park. Two ticket machines were replaced in Church Street car park. The External Works Officer carries out monthly inspections to ensure the car parks meet the Council's high standards of safety and cleanliness.

Customers report faults with ticket machines by contacting Customer Services. Some faults are customer error, and some due to defects with the machine. Most defects can be readily rectified by the Inspector but some require a visit by the service engineer retained under a service contract. Most service visits are completed within 48 hours of call-out.

7 Acquisitions and Disposals

There were no acquisitions or disposals during the report period

8 Enforcement

The Civil Enforcement Officers issue Penalty Charge Notices using electronic ticket issuing machines. The machines also take photographs of the offence. These machines download by Wi-Fi to NSL's notice processing system. NSL follows the national guidelines for recovering any un-paid PCNs. The chart below shows the number of notices issued compared with the previous financial year. There was a reduction in the number of notices issued over the transfer period as officers were engaged in training prior to their transfer from Sedgemoor DC to NSL.

Year	2011/12	2012/13	Difference
Excess Charge Notices issued	2,440	350	N/A
Penalty Charge Notices Issued	nil	1,897	N/A
Total	2,440	2,247	-8.0%

9 Civil Parking Enforcement

Somerset CC introduced civil parking enforcement across the whole of the county in June 2012. Under this arrangement, the County Council took over enforcement of on-street parking regulations from the Police. Civil Parking Enforcement regime applies to all public parking areas, both on-street and off-street. Sedgemoor District Council buys enforcement and notice processing from the Somerset CC at an agreed rate to enforce off-street car parks. The County Council employs an enforcement contractor to enforce

parking regulations both on and off-street. Sedgemoor continues to receive revenue from the car parks and be responsible for car park policy and maintenance.

CPE has proved to be very beneficial to town centres. Commuters no longer park all-day in limited-waiting bays, leaving vacant parking for visitors and shoppers.

10 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. In addition, comments and complaints received in writing from the public are registered with Customer Services. In 2012/13, 5 written complaints were recorded concerning operation of the car parks summarised in appendix B

When Sedgemoor was operating enforcement direct, the greatest number of complaints came from customers who received an Excess Charge Notice after the ticket has blown off the dashboard and the customers subsequently produce a valid ticket. The Council does not use adhesive tickets for reasons of economy. It was formerly Council policy not to waive the Excess Charge in these circumstances and this generated a certain amount of bad feeling with customers. This policy was revised as part of the transfer to CPE so now PCNs are waived in such circumstances to ensure common practise across the county.

The council's cash collection and maintenance officer attends to a ticket machine fault as soon as practical but often no fault is found. The problems could be customer error. Contacts between the Civil Enforcement Officer and the public can be under stressful circumstances, such as after issue of a Penalty Charge Notice. Verbal complaints against staff are sometimes made in the heat of the moment. Any written complaints against staff are thoroughly investigated and action taken if appropriate. CEO's receive training for dealing with such 'person to person' situations. No written complaints concerning staff were received in this period.

11 Summary

The year 2012/13 has seen a continuation of the economic downturn but car park income remains in line with similar districts. Views from customers remain positive.

Year	2011/12	2012/13	Difference
Income £	£1,048,007	£996,261	-5%
Expenditure £	£464,950	£441,692	-5%
Net Income £	£583,057	£524,569	-10%

Appendix A

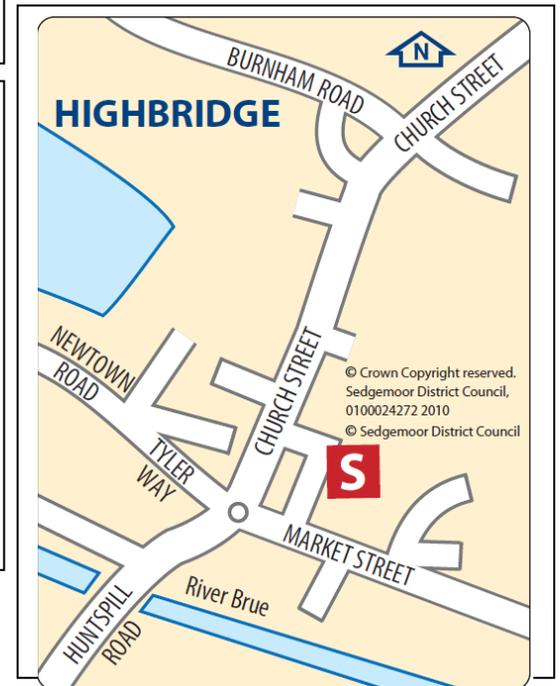
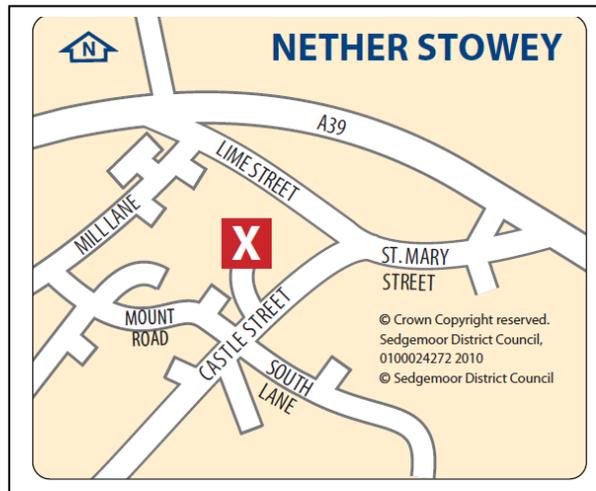
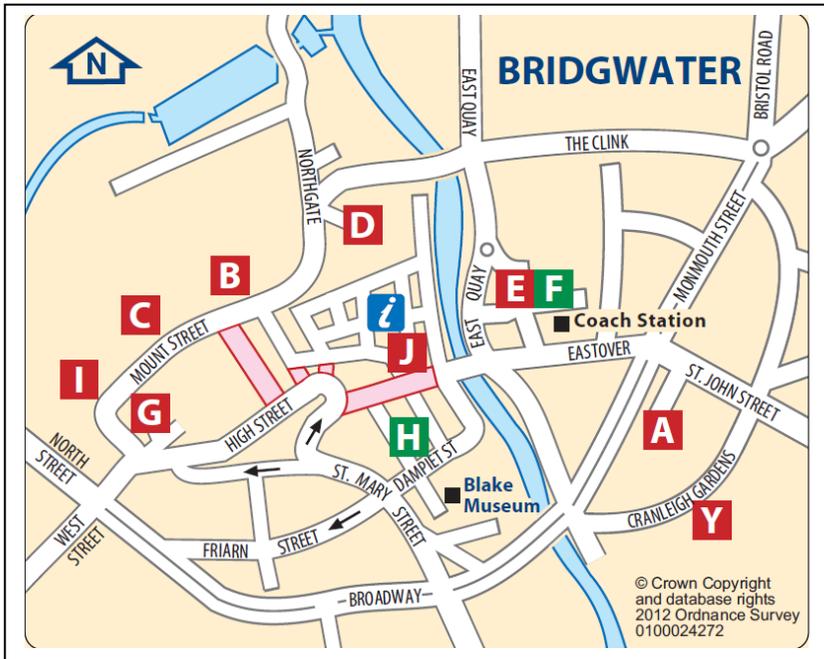
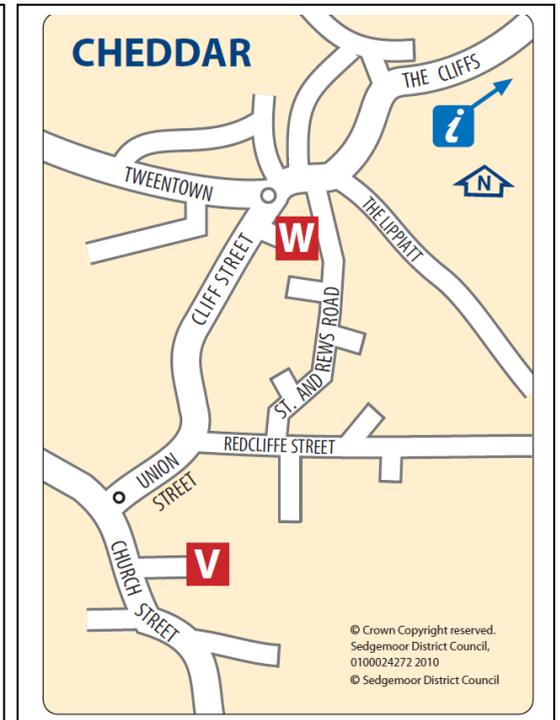
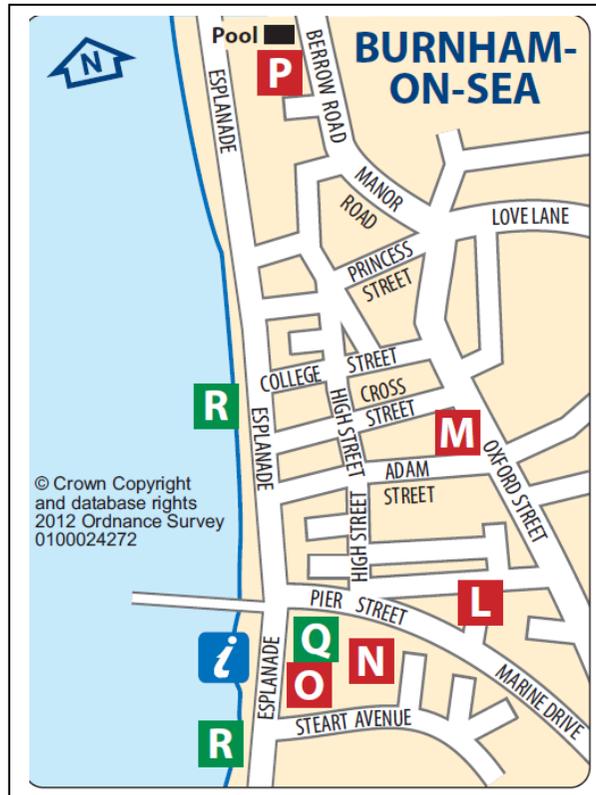
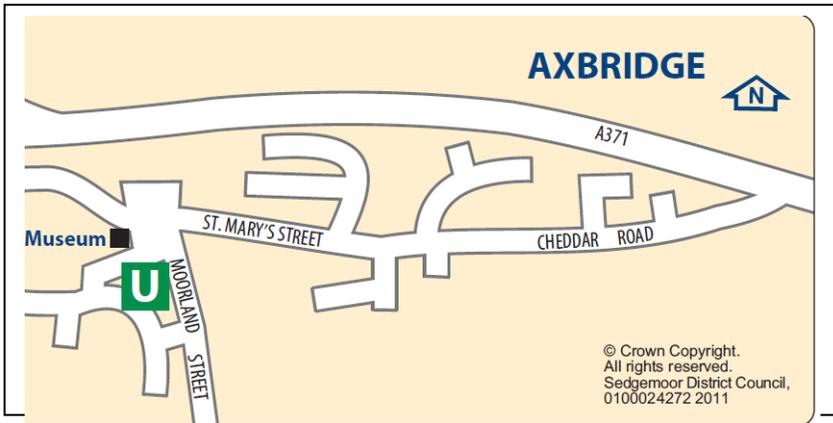
Parking Charges Jan 2011 - Mar 2013

Car park	Cars					Other vehicles		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						Coaches			
Eastover Shoppers *	20p	50p	£1.00	£2.10	£3.20	XC	XC	N	
Mount Street E*	X	60p	£1.20	£2.50	£4.20	£4.20	£6.20	N	
Mount Street W *	X	X	X	£2.50	£4.20	XC	XC	N	
Northgate *	X	60p	£1.20	£2.50	£4.20	XC	XC	N	
Market Street*	X	60p	£1.20	£2.50	£4.20	XC	XC	N	
Dampiet Street	X	60p	£1.20	X	X	XC	XC	N	
Eastover short stay	30p	60p	£1.20	X	X	XC	XC	N	
Coach Station	permit parking for coach passengers					50p	XC	XC	N
Mount Street S	allocated season ticket parking only 24hrs/day						XC	XC	N/A
Queen Street	allocated season ticket parking only 24hrs/day						XC	XC	N/A
Bridgwater House	permit parking only £5.00, 24 hrs/day						XC	XC	N/A
Burnham-on-Sea						Boat trailers (Coaches free)			
Lynton Road (Winter) *	X	60p	£1.20	£2.50	£4.20	XC	XC	Y	
Lynton Road (Summer) *	X	60p	£1.20	£3.10	£4.70	XC	XC	Y	
Oxford Street *	X	60p	£1.20	£2.50	£4.20	XC	XC	Y	
Pier Street E (Winter) *	X	60p	£1.20	£2.50	£4.20	£2.50	£4.20	Y	
Pier Street E (Summer) *	X	60p	£1.20	£3.10	£4.70	£4.20	£6.20	Y	
Pier Street S (Winter) *	X	60p	£1.20	£2.50	£4.20	XC	XC	Y	
Pier Street S (Summer) *	X	60p	£1.20	£3.10	£4.70	XC	XC	Y	
Berrow Road *	X	50p	£1.00	£2.10	£3.20	XC	XC	Y	
Pier Street W	X	60p	£1.20	X	X	XC	XC	Y	
Highbridge									
Bank Street * (Mon-Sat)	X	50p	£1.00	£2.10	£3.20	XC	XC	Y	
Bank Street * (Sun)	X	X	X	X	50p	XC	XC	Y	
Bank Street* (Bank hol)	<i>free on bank holidays</i>					XC	XC	N	
Cheddar									
Church Street *	X	50p	£1.00	£2.10	£3.20	XC	XC	Y	
Cliff Street *	X	60p	£3.20	£3.20	£3.20	XC	XC	Y	
Axbridge						Coaches			
Meadow Street *	20p	50p	£1.00	£2.10	£3.20	£4.20	£6.20	N	
Moorland Street	20p	50p	£1.00	£2.10	X	XC	XC	N	
Nether Stowey									
Castle Street	<i>free parking all year</i>								
Season tickets	The following season tickets can be purchased:					The following residents permits can be purchased:			
Season tickets may be used in all car parks indicated by *	Annual £525		Quarterly £140		discount on annual tickets for 5 tickets 5%		discount on annual tickets for 10 or more tickets 10%		
	Annual £260		Quarterly £70						
Conditions	X = Not available XC = Coach parking not available				Excess Charges £60 reduced to £40 if paid within 7 days				
Charging Times	Pay and Display car parks				9.00 am to 6.00 pm				
	Season ticket and permit car parks				24 hours/day				
	Summer = (March - Oct inc.) Winter = (Nov - Feb inc.)								

On street parking	1 Hour	2 Hours	3 Hours	4 Hours	Charge times	Sunday Charge
Burnham-on-Sea						
Esplanade (Summer)	60p	£1.20	£2.00	£3.10	9.00 am - 6.00 pm	Y
Summer = (April - Sept inc.) no season tickets no campers over 4.8m long no trailers or HGVs						

Complaints received by Customers Services

Case No	Service	Complaint Reason	Complaint Resolved	Lessons Learnt	Resulting Actions
692603	Community Development and Well Being	Complaint regarding an error in parking beyond the parking bay lines at Pier St car park.	Tom D replied stating that car park regs are in place to ensure the safety and convenience of the members of the public. CEO's do not exercise discretion to ensure all customers are treated equally and avoid any accusations of favouritism. Car park customers may appeal against a Penalty Charge as described on the back of the notice.	Continue to follow parking procedures.	No resulting actions.
633409	Community Development and Well Being	Complaint regarding car park machine ref. 0035 at Burnham	Car park inspector checked whether machine operating correctly, no problems found.	Continue daily inspection of machine/s.	Provided a free day's parking voucher.
620280	Community Development and Well Being	Complaint from Mrs B regarding SDC giving permission for paint spraying in Mount St Car Park	Tom Dougall said no permission given but asked Mrs B to inform SDC if and when paint spraying takes place.	No lessons to be learnt if event has already taken place. Continue to follow SDC procedures and monitor car parks.	Will take action if requested by complainant.
731144	Community Development and Well Being	Faulty ticket machine at Burnham High Street.	The machine has been fixed.	No lessons learnt due to fault with the machine.	Regular checks of the machine



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|-----------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| A St John St | H Dampiet Street | Q Pier Street West |
| B Mount St East | J Queen Street | R Esplanade |
| C Mount St West | L High Street | S Bank St |
| D Northgate | M Oxford Street | U Moorland St |
| E Eastover | N Pier Street East | V Church St |
| F Coach Station | O Pier St South | W Cliff St |
| G Market Street | P Discount | X Castle Street |

Y Eastover Park