

Parking Report 2013 - 2014



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Annual Parking Report - 2013/2014

Introduction

Under the terms of the statutory guidance issued by the Secretary of State for the Department for Transport under Part 6 of the Traffic Management Act 2004 the parking enforcement authority should produce an annual report detailing its enforcement activities. This is to promote openness and a better understanding of enforcement and why it is carried out. The Traffic Management Act 2004 came into effect on the 31 March 2008.

This second annual report covers the period 1 April 2013 to 31 March 2014.

Background

The County Council adopted Civil Parking Enforcement (CPE) powers on the 11 June 2012.

In respect of on-street parking enforcement Somerset County Council acts as the Enforcement Authority being the Highway Authority for the County.

The County Council also enforces off-street (car parks) parking controls for Mendip District Council, Sedgemoor District Council and Taunton Deane Borough Council.

Enforcement for the District Councils is undertaken by way of an agency agreement covering the provision of enforcement services, processing of penalty charge notices and where required cash collection and meter maintenance services.

These powers to undertake such duties coincided with the signing of a 5 year contract with NSL to provide a number of parking related services to the County Council.

The Purpose of Civil Parking Enforcement

Historically on-street parking enforcement was undertaken by police officers or traffic wardens employed by the police service. Over the last 20 years or so the operation of parking enforcement has been provided by Local Authorities, following the decriminalisation of parking. Initially this was known as Decriminalised Parking Enforcement (DPE), since 2008 DPE has been replaced by Civil Parking Enforcement (CPE).

The key aims of CPE, as detailed within the Secretary of States, Statutory Guidance is to assist Highway Authorities deliver their transport objectives and the management of the road network (its Network Management Duty) in the following areas;

- To enable the efficient movement of all traffic. The movement of traffic includes pedestrians and cyclists.
- Improvement of road safety
- Improving the local environment
- Improvement of the quality and accessibility of public transport
- Meeting the needs of people with disabilities, whether they are able to use public transport or totally reliant upon the use of a car.
- The management and reconciliation of the competing demands for limited parking.

These objectives can be met by undertaking CPE operations and are achieved by the encouragement of drivers to comply with the relevant restriction.

It can be difficult at times to establish that CPE has had a positive impact. For example a successful CPE operation is unlikely to be in the drivers mind as they drive along a free flowing and uncongested road en-route to their home or place or work.

Likewise, the ability to find an available parking space either on-street or in a car park is often taken for granted.

Whilst the Local Authority can decide upon its objectives for CPE, the Government is very clear on what CPE cannot be.

The legislation is very clear in stating that parking enforcement cannot be undertaken solely to raise income and must not be seen as a revenue raising process.

All authorities undertaking CPE should aim to ensure the operation covers its costs. Whilst it is recognised that authorities may from time to time generate a loss, the Department for Transport is clear that any shortfall must be met within existing budgets and should not fall on either the local or national taxpayer.

Full details of the Somerset County Council Transport Strategy, Road Safety Strategy and Parking Strategy are available on our website.

<http://www.somerset.gov.uk/policies-and-plans/strategies/transport-strategy/>

Traffic Management Act 2004

The Traffic Management Act 2004, replaced the Road Traffic Act 1991 under which Local Authorities had enforced until October 2004.

The County Council, through its contractor NSL employs Civil Enforcement Officers (previously known as parking attendants, commonly called traffic wardens) to enforce all yellow lines and other parking restrictions and parking places throughout the County.

This includes the major towns of each District as shown below.

Mendip	Sedgemoor	South Somerset	Taunton Deane	West Somerset
Wells	Axbridge	Bruton	Taunton	Dulverton
Frome	Bridgwater	Chard	Wellington	Dunster
Glastonbury	Burham on Sea	Crewkerne	Wiveliscombe	Minehead
Street	Cheddar	Ilminster		
Shepton Mallet	Highbridge	Langport		
		Martock		
		Somerton		
		Wincanton		
		Yeovil		

The impact on motorists who park in contravention of the regulations under the Traffic Management Act are:

1. Differential charging of Penalty Charge Notices (PCN). There are two different levels of PCN, for example a vehicle parked on a yellow line restriction will be issued a PCN at the higher rate of £70 (£35 if paid within 14 days) whilst a vehicle parked over time on street or in a car park is not deemed to be as serious a contravention and would therefore be issued with a PCN at the lower rate of £50 (£25 if paid within 14 days).
2. The other effect of the Traffic Management Act 2004 is that a PCN may be served through the post if the driver prevents it being served or drives away.

Transport Act 2000

The County Council using powers under the Transport 2000 Act undertakes CCTV enforcement in two areas where bus lanes/gates are present.

The two locations being the Old Ilminster Road in the Blackbrook Park area and Mountway Road, both within Taunton.

CCTV enforcement is undertaken to deter drivers using the bus lanes/gates as these are present to improve local buses and the park and ride services within Taunton.

Drivers who contravene the regulation by driving in the bus lane/gate are liable for a penalty charge notice. The penalty will be sent to the registered keeper who will have 14 days to make payment at the discounted amount of £30, after 14 days the discount will be removed and the full amount of £60 will be payable.



Statistical Information Relating to Penalty Charge Notices

For the period 1 April 2013 to 31 March 2014 the following Penalty Charge Notices (PCNs) were served to vehicles in contravention of the relevant restriction.

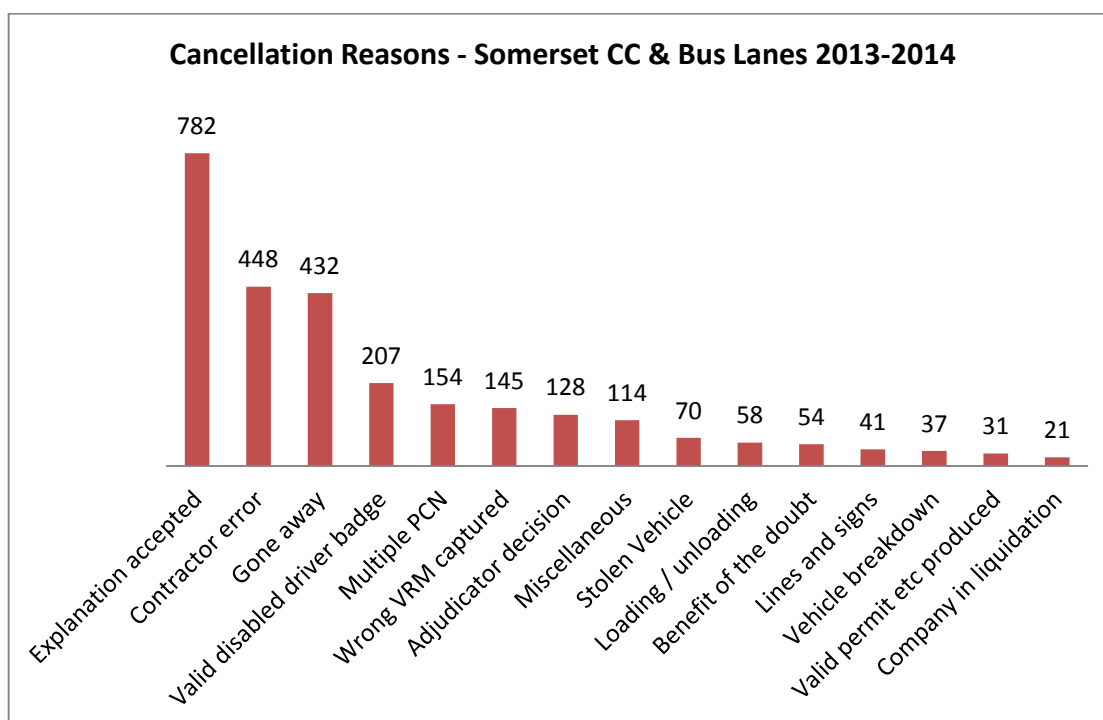
	Somerset On-Street	Somerset Off-Street	Somerset Bus Lanes	Mendip	Sedgemoor	Taunton
Higher Level PCNs served	14,904	1	14,488	465	208	398
Lower Level PCNs served	10,311	38	-	4,681	2,050	5,670
Number of PCNs paid	20,746	29	12,005	4,258	1,708	4,278
Payment rate	82%	74%	83%	83%	76%	71%
PCNs paid at discount rate	17,657	29	11,297	3,656	1,493	3,367
PCNs paid at full charge before Charge Certificate	1,763	-	152	427	131	626
PCNs paid after service of Charge certificate	666	-	418	103	42	217
PCNs paid after issue of Warrant	660	-	138	72	42	68
Number of PCNs against which an informal or formal representation was made	5,300	-	2,445	1,527	578	2,160
Number of PCNs subject to adjudication at the Traffic penalty tribunal	152	-	81	38	4	12
Number of PCNs cancelled as a result of an informal or formal representation	1,056	-	276	301	245	1,194
Number of PCNs registered at the Traffic Enforcement Centre	1,771	-	694	138	129	437
Number of PCNs written off	526	-	428	48	47	132
Number of vehicles immobilised or removed	-	-	-	-	-	-

Reasons for Cancellation

Drivers who receive a penalty charge notice who consider there are mitigating circumstances as to why it should be cancelled are encouraged to contact Somerset County Council via our contractor NSL. The contact details are shown on the penalty or via our website.

All challenges and representations will be considered in accordance with our Guidelines for Dealing with Challenges and Representations; this extensive guidance document is available on the Council's website;

www.somerset.gov.uk/parking



Financial Reporting

The income and expenditure of local authorities in connection with their on-street charging and their on-street and off-street (car parks) enforcement activities are Governed by section 55 of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 (as amended).

This means that all of our income and expenditure related to parking services and income from PCNs in respect of off-street parking is covered by section 55 of the Act.

Details of the income and expenditure relating to section 55 is detailed below.

	01/04/2013 to 31/03/2014
Total Expenditure £**	
NSL Contract	1,573,513
Traffic Penalty Tribunal	44,094
Council Officer Costs	176,839
Recruitment Advertising	1,322
Training	1,787
General office cost (stationery etc.)	2,363
Subscriptions	619
Consultancy & legal	30,611
Maintenance	3,528
Central services	105,478
Total	1,940,154

Total Income £**	
On street pay and display income	309,031
Off street PCN income	1,039
On street PCN income	735,115
District enforcement services	534,745
Bus gate PCN income	383,375
Permit Income	116,829
Total	2,080,134

** The total income and expenditure represents the consolidated figures for all enforcement activity. Internally, off street and on street activity is allocated in line with the level of enforcement activity.

The modest surplus (£139,980) contributes to the Council's spending priorities in respect of Highway and Transport initiatives; for example notably the provision of the park and ride services (circa £500,000 and traffic management initiatives circa £800,000).

Local Government Transparency Code 2014

The above transparency code requires the publication by local authorities details of the revenue collected from on street and off street parking activities along with information relating to penalty charge notices.

Parking Income

Details of the cost of enforcement, income from on street parking and penalty charges are shown within the report.

Details of how any surplus revenue is used are also contained.

Parking Resources

Local authorities should also publish the number of marked out spaces that are controlled and within their area.

Details of the number and location of on street parking spaces across Somerset County Council are shown below.

Number of on street parking spaces across Somerset County Council

Mendip	Limited Waiting (Free) eg 1 hour maximum	Pay & Display	Resident Parking
Frome	127	-	-
Glastonbury	94	-	-
Shepton Mallet	111	-	-
Street	69	-	-
Wells	205	-	-
South Somerset			
Bruton	55	-	-
Chard	236	-	-
Crewkerne	66	-	-
Ilminster	104	-	-
Langport	19	-	-
Somerton	20	-	-
Wincanton	86	-	-
Yeovil	284	43	650
Others	138	-	-
Sedgemoor			
Bridgwater	619	-	-
Burnham	229	344	-
Cheddar & Axbridge	49	-	-
Vilages	9	-	-
Taunton Deane			
Taunton	514	178	2,062
Wellington	85	-	-
Wiveliscombe	26	-	-
West Somerset			
Minehead	254	370	-
Watchet	13	-	-
Williton	56	-	-
Villages	45	-	-

Milestones relating to Parking Services

During the period covered by this report there have been a number of milestones relating to Parking Services that impact on residents and visitors across the County.

New Resident Parking Schemes

Discussions in Bridgwater and Wells have taken place with local Councillors, residents and scheme champions regarding new resident parking areas. It is anticipated these will progress in the coming year depending upon the overall support from residents.

Introduction of Cashless Parking

Following the appointment of Bemrose Mobile as the County Council's provider for 'cashless parking' services. Sedgemoor District Council became the first District to go live in March 2014.

It is anticipated the service will be extended to other Districts in the coming year.

For further information relating to parking within Somerset County Council

please contact:

**Somerset Parking Services
Somerset County Council
Po Box 167
Sheffield
S98 1JN**

Telephone 0845 337 1000

<http://www.somerset.gov.uk/parking>

somerset@parkingenquiry.co.uk