

Parking Partnership Annual Report 2012/13

*A report detailing the enforcement
year in retrospect*



www.parkingpartnership.org/north

North Essex Parking Partnership
Annual Report 2013: Issue 2.2
(amended final version)

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*This report follows guidance issued
by the Department for Transport,
British Parking Association and
The Traffic Penalty Tribunal.*

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The North Essex Parking Partnership Area



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Executive Summary

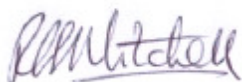
This second Annual Report of the North Essex Parking Partnership considers the financial year ending 31 March 2013, providing an overview of operational performance. This includes all financial and statistical data which is recommended in the operational guidance issued under TMA2004.

The Partnership comprises the Parking Enforcement Agency including Civil Enforcement Officers, Car Park Operations, Traffic Order Making responsibilities, Sign and Line Maintenance, and the Business Unit processes relating to permit applications, the enforcement of issued Penalty Charge Notices and other legal documentation.

Consistency between councils' areas has been strengthened by the adoption of a single set of published policies, compliant with national framework, under which the combined enforcement operation and processing function operates, reporting to the Joint Committee.

The Partnership implements operations based on the core principles of fairness, transparency and consistency. Parking matters impact upon many areas and it is of course the way in which all cases are dealt with by the council which is of most interest to errant motorists. The Partnership aims to be *fair reasonable and responsible* in both its enforcement activity and support operations with each case being treated individually on its own merits. In particular, enforcement action is focussed on *dangerous, careless and negligent* parking.

This was the last of two transitional years set out in the Business Plan; the largest change in the year was the completion of the merger of the Epping Forest operation into the North Essex Parking Partnership. The overall Partnership performance during the transition was successful and the operation is now well-placed to deliver efficient services in 2013/14.



Cllr Robert Mitchell

**Chair,
North Essex Parking Partnership**

Deputy Cabinet Member for Place,
Braintree District Council

November 2013

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Introduction

This report relates to the year to the end of March 2013 with a brief commentary on more recent changes.

Foreword from the Group Manager

Group Manager, Richard Walker, said: “This year has seen a mixture of both consolidation and change. The first part of the year saw the operation settling in, whilst planning for the merger of the operations of Epping Forest which joined in October 2012. The operation has now grown into the seven-authority Partnership originally envisaged.

The main challenges last year were to achieve the full establishment – to recruit, train, and develop sufficient staff in all areas and disciplines – and to monitor and maintain a balanced budget.

The North Essex Parking Partnership has focussed on making the operation a success against its Business Objectives. It remains an interesting journey in helping to make this new operation more efficient and responsive than that which went before, whilst improving local input and consultation through our client officers and Joint Committee.

The North Essex Parking Partnership’s aim is to deliver good quality, innovative and efficient public services at minimum cost, whilst aiming to be the best all-inclusive parking operation possible.

This report is a summary of the second transitional year of operation for the new service detailing the steps we have taken, and highlighting those we have yet to take, in order to build the successful and efficient operation outlined in our plans”.

About the Parking Partnership

The North Essex Parking Partnership (NEPP) is a local government service, which reports to a Joint Committee of Essex County Council.

The Joint Committee governs the operations and is known as the North Essex Parking Partnership Joint Committee, or Joint Parking Committee (NEPP JPC).

The County Council and six District and Borough councils of North Essex are Members of the NEPP JPC and are represented by Executive Councillors at the Committee, which meets six times a year, with an AGM in June. The NEPP JPC receives operational, financial and other topical reports of interest from lead officers.

Each “client authority” (District and Borough Councils of NEPP) has an officer with whom the NEPP officers maintain regular contact. The officers of the NEPP are employed by Colchester Borough Council.

The NEPP Joint Committee is governed by an Agreement with the County Council. The County Council parking function is delegated to the NEPP. Various powers are delegated to officers on a day-to-day basis by the JPC.

By Agreement, client authorities can also sign up for their car parks to be operated by the NEPP, which provides service modules based on local need.

The NEPP provides services highway parking enforcement and operations in the districts/borough of Braintree, Colchester, Epping Forest, Harlow, Tendring and Uttlesford for Essex County Council and the districts/boroughs are members of the NEPP Joint Committee.

Members of the NEPP JPC can also elect to have their car park services provided. The NEPP operational service also provides off-street car parking services in the districts/boroughs of Braintree, Colchester, Epping Forest, Harlow and Uttlesford on their own account as members of the NEPP JPC Off-Street Parking Sub-Committee.

The County Council has also delegated powers to make parking Traffic Regulation Orders (or “TROs”, the legal underpinning regulations for the making of parking restrictions/permissions such as “yellow lines” and parking bays and permit areas) to the NEPP.

The NEPP JPC oversees this technical function as part of its main meeting – an improvement over the first year where schemes could only be presented at special meetings. The change means now the JPC can take reports of schemes from cases discussed locally at any meeting.

This document

Guidance issued under the Traffic Management Act 2004 (TMA) means that enforcement authorities are encouraged to produce an Annual Report about their enforcement activities within six months of the end of each financial year.

This report, which covers the last financial year 2012-13 in retrospect, summarises the whole Parking Partnership operation in North Essex.

The requirements are given in:

- *the TMA itself and the related Statutory Guidance (SG), issued in February 2008i.*
- *the Operational Guidance (OG), issued in March 2008, with minor revisions in May 2008.ii*

Other published documents

Other documents of interest include:

- Protocols, policies and plans
- Strategy Document

The Partnership publishes its enforcement protocols and plans on the website, accessible at **www.parkingpartnership.org** and other details of parking and enforcement are covered in our Parking Strategy Document.

Legislation

The principal legislation affecting parking enforcement is Part 6 of the TMA. Parts 2 and 7 are also relevant.

Part 2 imposes a network-management duty on all local traffic authorities. This is aimed at ensuring the efficient management of the road network to reduce congestion and delays. Part of the network-management duty is to manage parking and other traffic regulations, to achieve the required aims.

The network management duty is for the County Council, as highway authority, Essex being a two-tier authority area.

Part 7 covers amendments to the blue badge scheme and the application of parking surpluses. These amendments have already been brought into effect. The annual report is an opportunity for councils to describe this policy background, explain any specific policy objectives and report on how these are being met.

The aim of Part 6 of the TMA is to provide a consistent set of regulations and procedures throughout England, while allowing parking policies to suit local circumstances. It promotes fairness, openness and accountability. Statutory Guidance sets out the policy framework for civil parking enforcement. It is relevant to quote here the CPE policy objectives.

Links with the Local Transport Plan

Essex County Council's Local Transport Plan (LTP) currently in its third edition introduced the concept of Parking Partnerships, and states:

- *The County Council, working jointly with these partnerships, will develop an Essex Parking Strategy in order to ensure the management of parking across Essex is consistent with the aims of the Essex Transport Strategy.*

LTP Management Strategy

The LTP Traffic Management Strategy also includes for:

- *Working in partnership with the Essex district councils to improve the management of parking within urban areas, including the possible development of Park & Ride facilities to remove traffic from congested corridors;*
- *Stronger parking enforcement, particularly where illegally parked vehicles impede traffic flows or block access by public transport; and*
- *Working with partners to improve the management of goods deliveries, ensuring that appropriate vehicles are used and that delivery and loading does not inhibit traffic flows.*

The LTP characteristics and their relevance to how parking enforcement schemes are linked are shown by the highlighted sections below:

- *on street charging and controls and enforcement;*
- *specific proposals, or references to the individual strategies, for the major town centres and evidence that enforcement issues have been considered;*
- *Consistent and coherent strategy which brings together planning standards, charging and on street controls;*
- *Clear strategy for effective enforcement;*
- *Helps to reduce the traffic levels in town centres whilst at the same time ensuring enough good quality publicly available parking to support the continuing economic viability of retail and leisure investment in these locations;*
- *Discourages commuting by car, particularly into congested areas such as town centres – through charging policies and active management to favour short term visitor parking;*
- *Where the overall amount, quality and location of publicly owned car parks are managed to deliver the objectives of the LTP and development plan.*

Parking Enforcement Policy

NEPP has a Parking Enforcement Policy (PEP) which is published on the Web Site www.parkingpartnership.org.

The PEP seeks to bring a local context by clearly prioritising the different parking enforcement needs across the Partnership area. The aim is to manage parking in the NEPP on a fair and consistent basis.

The PEP is based upon prioritising clearly identified needs, such as the needs of people with disabilities, residents, visitors and businesses and will help to manage parking in the Partnership's area on a fair and consistent basis.

Alongside the Development of an *Essex Parking Strategy*, the PEP aims to support the LTP Traffic Management Objective of *Congestion and Network Resilience*:

Policy: County Council LTP:

- *The County Council will facilitate the improved reliability of journeys*

Aims and Objectives

The aim of enforcement is to maximise compliance with regulations to make our streets safer for all road users, particularly vulnerable road users; to prevent obstruction and delays (especially for buses and emergency vehicles); to ensure that parking bays are available for their intended use and to improve the general street scene.

Parking Enforcement Priorities and Policy (PEP)

Enforcement is targeted to tackle problem areas. The PEP specification provides a schedule and prescribes the hierarchy of patrol visits (high priority, medium or low), dependent upon the location type and requirements.

This ensures a good parking enforcement regime that is both consistent and transparent. It is also flexible, allowing early, late and specialist patrols to take place as required.

Policy: From the Statutory Guidance:

'11 CPE should contribute to the authority's transport objectives. A good CPE regime is one that uses quality-based standards that the public understands, and which are enforced fairly, accurately and explicitly.

12 Enforcement authorities should aim to increase compliance with parking restrictions through clear, well designed, legal and enforced parking controls. CPE provides a means by which an authority can effectively deliver wider transport strategies and objectives. Enforcement authorities should not view CPE in isolation or as a means of raising revenue.

13 Enforcement authorities should design their parking policies with particular regard to:

- *managing the traffic network to ensure expeditious movement of traffic (including pedestrians and cyclists), as required under its Network Management Duty (as per Part 2 of the TMA);*
- *improving road safety;*
- *improving the local environment;*
- *improving the quality and accessibility of public transport;*
- *meeting the needs of people with disabilities, some of whom will be unable to use public transport and depend entirely on the use of a car; and*
- *managing and reconciling the competing demands for kerb space.'*

Local Context

The PEP seeks to put LTP policy into a local context and meet the needs of all road users by clearly prioritising the different parking enforcement needs across the Partnership area. The aim is to manage parking in the Partnership area on a fair and consistent basis.

Policy: The PEP and local protocols:

The PEP helps support a better and safer environment and generally improve parking conditions across the Partnership area by:

- *meeting the needs of all road users;*
- *supporting effective parking management;*
- *seeking to improve sustainable access;*
- *meeting environmental objectives;*
- *focussing on customer needs;*
- *being comprehensive, including consideration of on- and off-street parking enforcement regimes, on-street controls and parking standards;*
- *co-ordinating and being compatible with neighbouring decriminalised authorities;*
- *providing a clear strategy for effective enforcement; and*
- *ensuring that the needs of disabled people, motorcycles, buses, coaches, business and freight are taken into account, along with loading and signing issues in relation to parking.*

Civil Enforcement Benefits

In addition Civil Parking Enforcement brings the following benefits:

Benefits of CPE

- *With fewer illegally parked cars there will be fewer accidents, better traffic flow and accessibility, because the focus of enforcement will be on lessening inconsiderate and dangerous illegal parking in order to improve safety and minimise congestion;*
- *Emergency and service vehicles will be able to operate more effectively along roads and low floor buses will be able to reach the kerb at bus stops since fewer inconsiderately parked vehicles will be in their way;*
- *The general environment will improve by providing a more environmentally efficient transport system in terms of reducing congestion, energy conservation; use of other modes of transport will be encouraged such as walking and cycling (healthy options);*
- *Sensible and safe parking within the Partnership will be encouraged – as will greater compliance with Traffic Regulations. The regulations will not change but will have greater significance;*
- *Parking provision will become more responsive to the public's needs because the local Council will control both provision and management of parking;*
- *Single responsibility for parking means greater clarity to the public. The Council's integrated transport strategy can be linked to local issues in enforcement. Since income will come to the Council, any surpluses after reasonable running costs can be spent on transport projects in the local area;*
- *Police resources able to concentrate on other priorities.*

The purpose of Civil Parking Enforcement can be summarised as follows:

Purpose of CPE

- *It will be safer for drivers and pedestrians since the new focus on enforcement means clearer roads and pavements;*
- *It will be better for local businesses since areas of short term parking such as those outside local shops will receive more attention, increasing the potential for local trade;*
- *It will support town centre needs by encouraging commuters and other drivers to use long stay car parks where appropriate thereby freeing up short stay car park spaces for drivers who need them;*
- *It will increase parking for residents by discouraging commuters from parking in permit only areas;*
- *It will increase Blue Badge benefits since the increased enforcement of existing parking spaces for disabled drivers will improve availability for Blue Badge holders.*

The Challenges for Parking Enforcement

Enforcement must be balanced and prioritised on an 'as required' basis depending upon resources available, including:

Challenges of CPE

- *the needs of disabled people and effective enforcement of parking regulations to enable easy access to activities and facilities.*
- *road safety initiatives (especially for pedestrians, cyclists and other vulnerable road users), and emergency access requirements.*
- *managing local parking problem areas, e.g. for child safety near schools caused by the school run (including Safer Routes to School initiatives) and associated short-stay on-street parking activity.*

- *legitimate parking and loading requirements of businesses, taking into account commercial needs for delivery and servicing movements and the opportunity for changing delivery schedules and vehicle sizes*
- *supporting the safe and efficient operation of the public transport network, especially on low-floor bus corridors.*
- *enforcement against observed parking patterns of demand to allow targeting of known problem areas*

The basis for this is fair, consistent, transparent, policy-driven and quality-led operational enforcement.

Local Authority Structure

From 2002, Essex County Council had an Agreement with the twelve District and Borough Councils to carry out all enforcement in their own areas on its behalf.

The county gave two years notice on its Agreements in 2009 in order to find a more efficient solution. As a result, parking enforcement in the Partnership area has undergone a whole-scale review and the North and South Essex Parking Partnerships are the result.

The Partnership is challenged to remove the former £500,000 deficit support previously paid by the County Council by the third year of operation.

Under the new arrangement all employment is under a single "host authority", being Colchester Borough Council for the North. Colchester is a second-layer authority in a three-tier local authority structure (Essex County Council being the top layer authority with Parishes below). All front line staff of the Partner authorities transferred to Colchester, which handles all administration centrally whilst retaining locally-based enforcement staff.

Essex County Council has formed a joint committee to manage each of the Parking Partnership areas (one in the North, one in the South) and these are run according to local requirements.

The North Essex Parking Partnership's operational service reports to the joint committee, which comprises Members from each of the six district and Borough Councils plus the County Council.

There is now just a single Agreement with the North area and one organisation is involved in delivering the civil enforcement process. In addition, each district and borough can elect to have its off-street car park operation in their own account delivered by NEPP.

The County Council remains the highway authority and on-street enforcement authority, but with duties being carried out by NEPP. NEPP also enforces the off-street car parks in Colchester, Braintree, Epping Forest Harlow and Uttlesford.

Enforcement and parking restrictions

There are two types of enforcement carried out in the Partnership area: mobile and foot patrol. The mobile teams cover the more rural areas and schools, and the foot patrols cover a selection of predefined urban beats, and in doing so cover all areas on a fair basis.

On normal enforcement days, there are two out of three enforcement teams present. This equates to up to forty officers each day plus Leading Officers in charge of each team who carry out the management and administration functions and overlay that provision.

Random or specific enforcement operations, including provision to cover special events, means the extension to cover a full range of times.

Overview & Local Context

A Sense of Place

North Essex is in East Anglia, predominantly rural in nature, with a number of market towns such as Braintree and Saffron Walden and the area stretches from the Essex coast at Harwich and Clacton-on-Sea through to and Waltham Abbey.

The surrounding area boasts picturesque villages steeped in history surrounded by beautiful unspoiled country landscapes. The area has easy links by road, train, coach, ferry and plane, with the centre of London.

The main centre of population, Colchester is home to the University of Essex, an Army Garrison, has Roman town walls and a historic castle. The town has a Roman history, and claims to be the oldest recorded town in England. The Roman heritage led to the urban area being set out in grid pattern.

The North Essex Area has a great many important old buildings, some with Dutch influence and the unique Essex weatherboarding style; for tourists there are a number of attractions such as Mountfitchet Castle, Castle Hedingham and Constable Country, an interesting place to retrace the footsteps of the artist.

Alongside the many market towns and picturesque villages, the area has a port, and Mersea island which is separated at high tide.

Setting the scene

National policy context on parking enforcement is set by the OG; on Local Policy, the OG recommends that each local authority should have a clear idea of what its parking policy is and what it intends to achieve by it. They should appraise their policy and its objectives regularly.

The Government's policy on parking provision is set out in Planning Policy Guidance Note (PPG) 13, Transport. Specific policy on parking provision for housing development is

in Planning Policy Statement (PPS) 3, Housing. These were updated in 2011.

The Local Development Framework policy is given fully in the document available separately. The thrust of the text, linking to pricing of parking, states that the Council has influence over the provision of public car parking through the local management and pricing structure of its car parks.

The Parking Partnership

Formation

The Essex Parking Partnerships were created after a review of highway parking services by Essex County Council. Two Parking Partnerships bring together all parking matters into a single point of contact for twelve districts, six in each of the two Partnerships (North/South Essex).

The council-run service is a partnership between Essex County Council and two lead councils for the two areas; the North Partnership is led by Colchester Council and the South Partnership by Chelmsford Council. The aim is to run parking enforcement to a fair and consistent standard in order to provide the same level of service but in a more efficient way.

The Partnerships endeavour to reduce a previous operating deficit of £0.9M (in 2009/10) within three years by adopting new ways of working in Partnership Joint Committee through lead delivery authorities.

The two Partnerships are responsible in each area for the on-street Civil Enforcement Officers (“traffic wardens”); the parking enforcement process together with challenges to, and payments of, parking penalties (“parking fines”) plus administration of the parking restrictions (“yellow lines”) and the management of the scheme.

Operation and Delivery

The Partnership reports to an Essex County Council Joint Committee which comprises Executive Members from each of the districts in its area with services delivered by the Lead Authority.

The enforcement service is delivered by three teams of CEOs and supported by a single back office Business Unit. A third section covers the technical aspects such as car park operations, restrictions and sign and line maintenance. The CEOs work from bases in Colchester, Braintree and Harlow and the Business Unit is located in Colchester. The technical team works from bases across the area.

The operation is split between the on-street and off-street operations which share the enforcement activity between them. The Partnership works closely with the county and its client authority Members in reviewing existing restrictions, enforcement, signage and road markings.

The Partnership Vision

Our strategic vision and aim of the Joint Committee is:

To provide a parking service that results in a merging of services to provide a single, flexible enterprise providing full parking services for a large group of Partner Authorities.

It will be run from a central office, with outstations providing bases for local operations.

There will be a common operating model, adopting best practices and innovation, yet also allowing variation in local policies and decision-making.

Progress will be proportional to the level of investment in the Annual Business Plan.

Each member of staff contributes to the strategic vision through smart objectives, with

training plans linked to the Strategy and Business Plan forming a golden thread.

Objectives & Performance

The wider performance issues, including overall transport aspects such as road safety, traffic flow, transfer of car journeys to public transport (changing travel behaviour), environmental (air-quality) issues, are explained in more detail by the County Council in their Local Transport Plan.

The Parking Partnership's contribution is concerned with enforcing fair reasonable and responsible parking and giving access for disabled drivers in a clear consistent and transparent manner.

The Parking Partnership operates under an Agreement which provides for deficit support in two transitional years – where the county council will underwrite the agreed Business Plan. After transition, the Partnership is expected to support its activities with no financial support. The media have often wildly misinterpreted this although the Partnership has budgeted against the two transitional years support, with the third year being break-even. The off-street parking element of the operation runs according to agreed local contributions.

Best Practice

Our own assessments, including visits to other authorities, indicate that the Partnership is following best practice.

The Operational Guidance encourages councils to maintain links with neighbouring authorities and others in order to investigate and build best practice. The North and South Partnership officers meet on a fortnightly basis to share ideas and solutions. Links with a number of other operations exist through a regional Forum and some site visits were made during the year. Other authorities have

also visited the Partnership office at Colchester.

The most successful operations have been responsive to change, and the Partnership has been no exception. The challenge is to stay ahead of the legislation in order to provide an economic, efficient and responsive enforcement service.

Business Unit Administration

The ability to challenge tickets as part of an Appeal process is an integral part of the process. The administrative function is managed by the Business Unit, a single team for the whole area which is based at the Colchester Headquarters.

The ability to challenge online increased in popularity such that around two-thirds are now contacting the Partnership online (up from around a half). A series of guidance, discretion and protocol documents are in place and available online to assist motorists.

On Street Parking Places

The North Essex Partnership area is fairly unusual in not having many areas of on-street pay-and-display parking. The payment machines which control the few areas that have paid-for parking have all been renewed during the last year. The Business Plan referred to the possible implementation of other areas of machine control, and latest reports would mention this depending upon local circumstances.

Off Street Parking Places

NEPP also provides parking services in off-street town centre car parks and a number of other facilities in local towns and villages and little has changed since the last Annual Report.

In all surface car parks the payment technology used is Pay and Display, with a Pay by Phone service to back this up. The

Pay by Phone service involves a one-off registration, and is then cashless in operation.

Full details of all Partnership car parks are given on the web pages at www.parkingpartnership.org using the area portals below the main text.

Civil Enforcement Officers

A code of practice for Civil Enforcement Officers (CEOs) has been developed by the Partnership as part of its training programme. The handbook for CEOs gives details of shift procedures, general approach, and the underpinning Regulations.

All CEOs undergo an extremely thorough training regime including up to two months beat area familiarisation plus 'buddying' with experienced officers to learn evidence gathering, pocket book note-taking, handheld computer usage and the types of contraventions occurring in different areas.

Following this induction, a week-long City & Guilds course and Level 2 examination must be passed before any tickets can be issued.

It can be seen that we take the correct issue of PCNs very seriously. It is also worth dispelling the myth about bonuses at this point: CEOs are salaried employees of the council and do not receive any performance incentives of any kind.

Representations Handling

Challenges and Representations are dealt with by the in-house team, divided into Case Officers and Appeals Officers. Any informal challenges are handled in the Case Management section. Formal Representations are handled by a separate group, giving an independent "second look" to cases where formal Representations have arisen.

Response Master

The integration of the Epping Forest service had been planned for a number of months. The number of cases and challenges coming in from the new areas combined increased the work of the back office; in order to speed up the response rate to challenges a number of measures were put into place. This has included the use of agency staff, and later the investigation of a policy management system called "Response Master", to assist in the response to challenges.

Other Related Issues

Civil Enforcement Officers (CEOs) have powers to inspect Blue Badges to make sure they are being used correctly. Blue badges are administered by the County Council, and lists of lost or stolen badges are received frequently and passed to Civil Enforcement Officers in case these are seen being used.

Where CEOs encounter abandoned or untaxed vehicles on beat, they will report them to the appropriate section which can take action (under alternative legislation) to deal appropriately with them.

Customer Service

The North Essex Parking Partnership focuses on customer needs by:

- Ensuring an efficient, robust and customer-friendly parking system.
- Effective tackling of parking fraud, such as permits and abuse of the Blue Badge Scheme.
- Ensuring an effective, fair and consistent enforcement operation to maximise compliance with parking regulations.
- Consulting and communicating with both internal and external stakeholders to inform parking management issues.

The service meets customers' special needs effectively for special events such as the Clacton Air Show, Mersea Regatta,

Colchester Cycle Event, and other town centre and local events by providing a safety 'no waiting cones' service.

Special operations take place around football matches and at school times, where CEOs work closely in Partnership with Police.

Contact overview

North Essex Parking Partnership has enabled telephone payment systems, and accepts credit/debit card transactions over the telephone on the general administration line. The service accepts cheques for some payments.

Challenges and representations can be made in writing, by email or directly using the Internet.

Details of what the process entails are included on the website

www.parkingpartnership.org and
www.patrol-uk.info

Communication and Consultation

During the year, consultation has taken place about the Colchester Resident Parking Review and Clacton Town Centre Review. These are ongoing reviews which gather informal information about the existing schemes to help the Partnership plan for and make improvements.

Contacting the Parking Partnership

Contact can be made:

- Through **www.parkingpartnership.org**;
- By telephone on 01206 282316;
- In writing to PO Box 5575 Colchester CO1 9LT;

Parking information is provided to the public in a number of ways.

The website **www.parkingpartnership.org** contains lots of data about the pay or challenge process, and also the locations of

car parks. In the interest of the environment, paper maps are no longer produced.

During the Epping Forest transition, posters giving details of the changes were made available in the client authority's offices.

A Year in Retrospect

Traffic Regulation Orders

We have better publicised details of where changes to Traffic Regulation Orders have been made, in order to conform with the *transparency* requirements of the latest Guidance.

The most obvious changes centre around parking and waiting restrictions and there is now a consistent workflow and standard template for gathering information about new Traffic Regulation Orders which all receive local consultation.

Merging into One Operation

The biggest challenge was to merge the operations of Epping Forest into the Partnership. This operation was previously contracted out, and through a service level agreement with client authority, the car parks operations are also managed on their behalf.

The Partnership has acted as the consultant in a number of other schemes to suit the local needs of parking in Dedham, Wivenhoe and Hatfield Peverel.

Much work was also done with the Town Council at West Mersea alongside local businesses to ensure the parking solutions implemented the previous year were effective whilst having regard to the town's viability.

Enforcement Changes

It is good practice to review enforcement operations regularly, and make changes to patterns on a random but regular basis. Shift patterns have been changed over the year.

The Partnership initially brought together and harmonised the enforcement patrol beats to ensure consistency and fairness in deployment across the area.

Additional enforcement hours were considered as part of the enforcement planning process and have traditionally been within the scope of 07:30 to 22:00 depending upon the day in question. In light of casual observations of compliance outside these hours and evenings enforcement is extended on a random basis.

Tackling Schools Enforcement

Possibly one of the greatest areas of conflict, and certainly the greatest matter for concern amongst correspondents is that of enforcement and restrictions around schools at the time children are arriving and leaving.

Schools enforcement was therefore kept under constant review in the year, with a team visiting all enforceable school markings in rotation. This gives the ability to make extra patrols if deemed necessary, and feedback from the local Neighbourhood Action Panels and PCSOs is used in this respect. The enforcement teams at schools have worked with locally based PCSOs to good effect, having been reported in local newspapers.

The main issue that has become apparent is that with the resources available it is impossible to keep a reasonable enforcement presence with the demand which is experienced, and residents nearby have been asking for additional patrols that cannot be supplied.

Camera Enforcement Car

New technology in the way of an enforcement car can assist, and this has been investigated and debated. Approval to procure a vehicle for a one-year trial to gather data to see if this could be a future option has been given.

There has been much coverage in the local press about the car, although the real benefit of a vehicle is to increase the level of enforcement whereby drivers consider it is not worth the chance of parking dangerously on the school markings for fear of being caught. Foot patrols will supplement the work of the camera enforcement car.

The procurement exercise has been completed and the Partnership is working with the supplier to implement the secure systems required to process the data. Meanwhile comparative data is being collected to show performance and compliance in a number of locations before implementation.

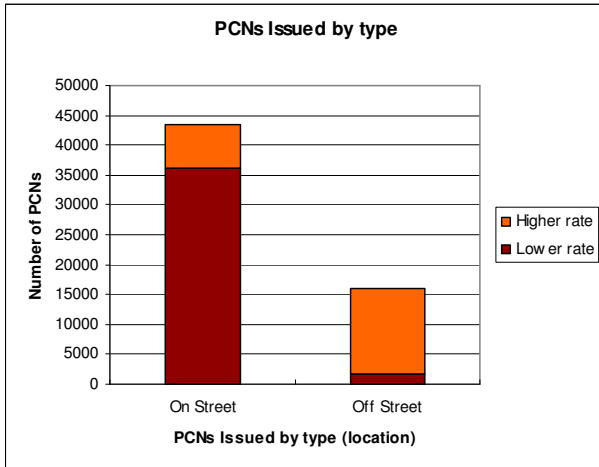
Statistics

The OG recommends many areas which should be included in this report and this section outlines areas measured. We use best practice in presenting the data.

Statistics for Parking PCNs

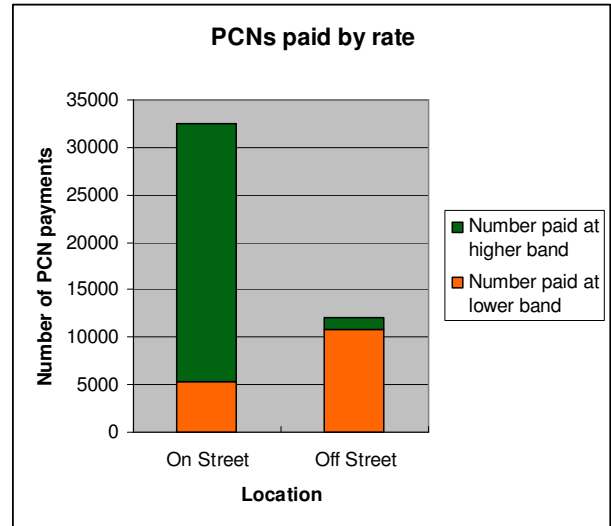
The following pages give more detailed statistical information in the form of tables, graphs and charts. There is some amplification and description of the more notable statistics.

The following charts show data from the last financial year from 1 April 2012 to 31 March 2013 (i.e. the Financial Year 2012/13).

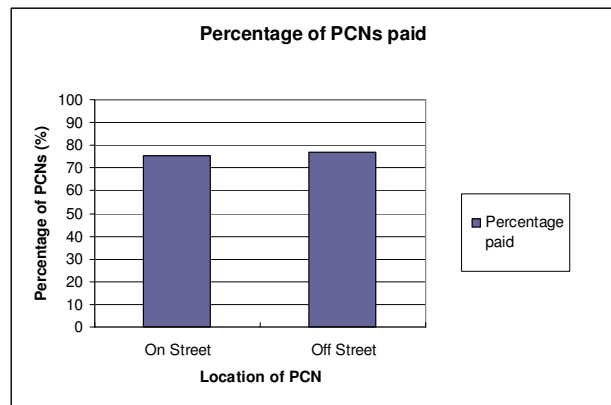


From 31 March 2008, the penalty charge level varied according to the “seriousness” of the contravention. The chart above demonstrates that the more serious contraventions are found on-street and lesser contraventions, off-street. Examples of the higher (£70) penalty include contravening yellow lines. The lesser (£50) contraventions include overstaying time on a parking ticket. The penalty charge for promptly paid PCNs is reduced by 50%.

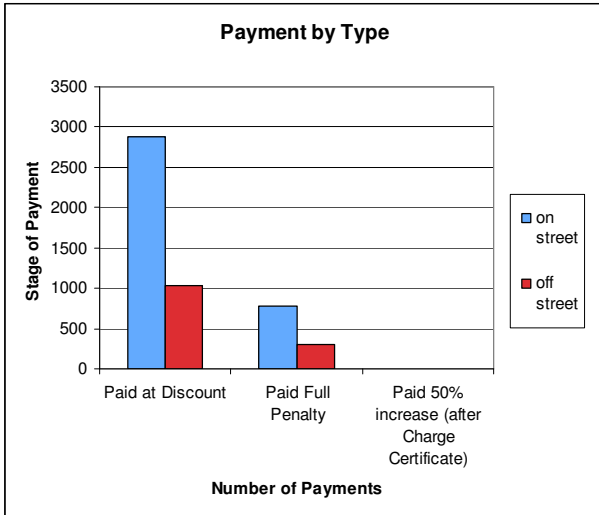
It is **not** correct to assume that the number of PCNs issued multiplied by the rate is equivalent to the Partnership’s income, since many cases are paid at discount, some have surcharges applied, including collection at bailiffs, and some cases are cancelled. The financial position is shown in the table on page 26.



This chart shows the amount of penalties which are paid at each of the two rates explained above.



Not all penalties ever get paid. Collection rates above 70% are considered to be acceptable. Some penalties are cancelled and some have an extended life before being collected. The timescale for collection may be up to a year – so some of those issued in 2012/13 may still be being pursued.



More penalties were paid at the discount amount during 2012/13 than at the full amount.

Statistical Tables

The tables on the following pages give required and additional information.

The rows shown in **blue and bold** in the attached tables are statutorily required. The rest of the information is given voluntarily against guidelines on best practice.

Table 1

ISSUED PCNs

Description	Total PCNs 2010 /11	Total PCNs 2011 /12	Total PCNs 2011/12 excl. Epping Forest	On Street 2011	Off Street 2011	Total PCNs 2012 /13 without Epping Forest	Total PCNs 2012 /13 inc Epping Forest	On Street 2012	On Street 2012 - EFDC	Off Street 2012	Off Street 2012 - EFDC	CCTV (included in columns to the left)
Number of PCNs Issued	47,466	48,108	52,860	36,207	11,901	52,860	59,517	39,128	4,420	13,732	2,237	
Number of higher level PCNs issued	34,691	32,533	34,643	31,263	1,270	34,643	38,056	33,003	3,321	1,640	92	
Number of lower level PCNs issued	12,775	15,575	18,217	4,944	10,631	18,217	21,351	6,125	989	12,092	2,145	
Percentage of higher level PCNs issued	73.09%	67.62%	65.33%	86.35%	10.68%	65.33%	52.80%	84.35%	76.56%	11.95%	41.10%	
Percentage of lower level PCNs issued	26.91%	32.37%	34.56%	13.65%	89.32%	34.56%	48.53%	15.65%	23.44%	88.05%	95.80%	
Number of Reg 9 PCNs issued		47,370	51,715	35,510	11,860	51,715	58,172	38,031	4,220	13,684	2,237	
Number of Reg 10 PCNs issued		738	1145	697	41	1145	1145	1097	0	48	0	

- Approximately 4,500 more Penalty Charge Notices were issued in the comparable area compared with year before, mostly due to full recruitment and better deployment in the latter months of the year.
- With the addition of Epping Forest District Council to the Partnership at the half-year, the total number of PCNs issued rose to 59,000, and looks set to be in the region of 65,000 for the coming year.
- Both on- and off-street operations had more PCNs issued than the previous year.
- The amount of higher-level PCNs continues to drop as a proportion of the total.
- An extra 400 postal PCNs were issued; this type may be sent where the CEO is prevented from serving (e.g. by the motorist driving away or where there is a likelihood of abuse).
- Higher level PCNs are for contraventions such as parking on yellow lines; lower level PCNs are for lesser “offences” such as overstaying a purchased ticket.

Table 2

PCNs PAID

Description	Total PCNs 2010/11	Total PCNs 2011/12	Total PCNs 2012/13 without Epping Forest	On Street	Off Street	Total PCNs 2012/13 without Epping Forest	Total PCNs 2012/13 inc Epping Forest	On Street 2012	On Street 2012 - EFDC	Off Street 2012	Off Street 2012 - EFDC	CCTV (included in columns to the left)
Number of PCNs paid	38,112	36,793	40,625	27,662	9,131	40,625	45,081	30,039	2,878	10,586	1,578	
Number of PCNs paid which were issued at the lower band		11,675	14,040	3,776	8,195	14,040	16,227	4,649	679	9,391	1,508	
Number of PCNs paid which were issued at the higher band		24,606	26,573	23,886	936	26,573	28,842	25,380	2,199	1,193	70	
Percentage of PCNs paid which were issued at the lower band		10.13%	26.56%	7.85%	17.03%	26.56%		11.88%	16.09%	68.38%	67.41%	
Percentage of PCNs paid which were issued at the higher band		37.81%	50.27%	49.65%	1.95%	50.27%		64.86%	52.10%	8.68%	3.12%	
Number of PCNs paid at discount rate (i.e. within 14 days)		32,670	35,857	24,586	8,153	35,857	40,029	26,520	2,683	9,337	1,489	
Number of PCNs paid at full rate		n/a	3,651	n/a	n/a	3,651	3,933	2,711	193	940	89	
Number of PCNs paid after Charge Certificate served (i.e. at increased rate)		789	1096	602	187	1096	1097	793	1	303	0	
Percentage of PCNs paid at Charge Certificate		1.05%	2.02%	1.25%	0.39%	2.02%	4.24%	2.02%	0.02%	0.00%	2.20%	
Number of PCNs paid at another rate (e.g. negotiated with bailiff, etc).		15	16	12	3	16	16	10	0	6	0	
Percentage of PCNs paid		76.47%	76.83%	76.39%	76.72%	76.83%	69.00%	76.77%	68.19%	77.09%	70.54%	
Percentage of PCNs paid at discount rate		55.63%	67.83%	51.20%	68.50%	67.83%	64.61%	67.77%	63.57%	68.00%	66.56%	

- The two payment bands represent the more serious and less serious contraventions.
- The number of PCNs paid has increased in line with the number issued, with more paid at the lower band.

- The proportion of PCNs paid at discount rate has increased by 12%. This effectively means lower *income per PCN issued* for the partnership.
- This indicates either a good quality of PCN, or the discount is attractive.

- Around the same proportion of PCNs had been paid by the end of the year. There is a time window of one year to pay, so the newest cases may not have passed that point.

Table 3
PCNs CHALLENGED

Description	Total PCNs 2010/11	Total PCNs 2011/12	Total PCNs 2012/13 without Epping Forest	On Street	Off Street	Total PCNs 2012/13 without Epping Forest	Total PCNs 2012/13 inc Epping Forest	On Street 2012	On Street 2012 - EFDC	Off Street 2012	Off Street 2012 - EFDC	CCTV (included in columns to the left)
Number of PCNs cancelled as a result of an informal or a formal representation		2,833	3,071			3,071						
Number of PCNs against which an informal or formal representation was made		12,220	10,359			10,359	11,336	10,359	977			
Number of PCNs where informal representations are made		10,621	8,266			8,266	9,243	8,266	977			
Number of informal rep dismissals that proceed to NTO stage		973	958			958	958	958	0			
No of NTOs issued		9,286	11,842			11,842	11,842	11,842				
Percentage of PCNs cancelled at any stage.		5.89%	12.39%			12.39%	12.39%	12.39%				
Number of PCNs written off for other reasons (e.g. CEO error or driver untraceable)		2,189	2,741	1801	388	2,741	2,741	2,212		529		
Number of vehicles immobilised		0	0			0	0					
Number of vehicles removed.		0	0			0	0					
Percentage of PCNs written off for other reasons (e.g. CEO error or driver untraceable)		4.67%	5.19%	4.97%	3.26%	5.19%	9.50%	5.65%		3.85%		
Number of cases where no further action was taken		41,303	47,520			47,520	0					

- Roughly the same proportion of cases were cancelled as previous years.

- Fewer formal representations were made, and proportionately this is significant.

- More Notices to Owners (NTO) were issued representing a slight proportional increase year-on-year.

Table 4

APPEALS TO THE TRAFFIC PENALTY TRIBUNAL

Description	Total PCNs 2010/11 Total PCNs 2010/11	Total PCNs 2011/12 Total PCNs 2011/12	Total PCNs 2012/13 without Epping Forest	On Street On Street	Off Street Off Street	Total PCNs 2012/13 without Epping Forest	Total PCNs 2012/13 inc Epping Forest	On Street 2012	On Street 2012 - EFDC	CCTV (included in columns to the left)
Number of appeals to adjudicators		27	23			23	25			
Number of appeals refused		12	6			6	6			
Number of appeals non-contested		8	10			10	12			
Percentage of formal representations that go to appeal		0.01%	0.01%			0.01%	0.01%			
Percentage of appeals allowed in favour of the appellant		33.33%	24.00%			24.00%	n/a			
Percentage of appeals dismissed		48.15%	28.00%			28.00%	n/a			
Percentage of appeals to Traffic Penalty Tribunal that are not contested and reasons for this		29.63%	48.00%			48.00%	n/a			

- Slightly fewer formal Appeals were made than previous years, and the number remains very low indeed. Proportionately this is quite a decrease.
- The number of formal Appeals where the Appellant was successful decreased slightly but remains at around one in every four cases at Appeal.
- The number of formal Appeals is still less than 0.1% of all cases.
- The number of cases which were not contested is not significant in comparison with the total number of PCNs issued.

Table 5

OTHER

Description	Total PCNs 2010/11	Total PCNs 2011/12	Total PCNs 2012/13	On Street	Off Street	CCTV (included in columns to the left)	Total PCNs 2012/13
Percentage of PCNs taken to Court Order	9.98%	3.54%	11.90%				11.90%
Number of CEOs employed	63	63	72				72
Average number of appeals per officer		42.9%	34.2%				34.2%

- A small backlog of cases was taken to Court Order representing an increase on previous year's percentages.
- The number of CEOs employed increased with the merger of Epping Forest's operation
- Average appeals per officer decreased – the calculation reflecting due to the number employed.

Financial

Parking Income and Expenditure Account for The North Essex Parking Partnership.

On Street

Outturn	Excl Epping	Epping	2011/2012	NEPP	Epping Q1/2	2012/2013
Expenditure						
Management	103,854			87,728		87,728
CEO's & Supervision	797,434			965,608	210,454	1,176,062
Back Office (incl TRO staff)	244,874			302,429	65,820	368,249
Central Support	44,465			197,139	1,433	198,572
Transport	47,667			66,775		66,775
Accommodation	162,116			86,089		86,089
IT	150,584			92,775		92,775
Other	86,759			184,343	5,352	189,695
Total Expenditure	1,637,755	585,874	-	1,982,885	283,059	2,265,944
Income						
Penalty Charges (PCN's)	1,214,728			1,285,547	196,891	1,482,438
Parking Permits/Season Tickets	344,035			368,113	19,214	387,327
Parking Charges (P&D etc)		-		85,029	68,007	153,035
Other income				14,122		
Total Income	1,558,763	605,808	-	1,752,811	284,111	2,036,922
(Deficit) / Surplus	(78,991)	19,934	(59,057)	(230,074)	1,052	(229,022)

The deficit is supported by the County Council in years 1 and 2.

The Partnership is to break-even by the end of the third year (2013/14).

Off Street

£ ,000	2011/1 2 Actual s £	2012/1 3 Actual s £	Comments
FUNDING			
Braintree District Council	136	139	
Colchester Borough Council	477	629	
Harlow District Council	76	65	
Uttlesford District Council	142	145	
Epping Forest District Council	-	129	
Other income	-	55	
Total Income	830	1,162	
EXPENDITURE			
Management	143	22	Included cash collection etc. costs in 11/12
CEOs & Supervision	274	395	
Back Office	78	96	
Car Parks staff	332	359	
Transport	-	43	
IT	-	26	
Other	2	105	Includes cash collection etc. costs 12/13
Central Support (recharges from host authority)	-	80	
Accommodation	-	30	
Payments to ECC	-		
Other	-		
Total Expenditure	830	1,155	
SURPLUS/(DEFICIT) FOR THE YEAR	0	(7)	

More information

Correspondence and the Business Unit

The Partnership processed 15,962 items of correspondence including 5,365 web challenges, 2,268 paper challenges, 168 web reps, 1,359 scanned representations (this includes those for where the registered keeper was not the owner of the vehicle at the time of the contravention, lease companies replying, etc).

There were 27,535 items of correspondence sent out relating to PCNs including 4,937 Charge Certificates, 7,834 Notices to Owners, 4,350 Orders for Recovery and 871 Postal PCNs.

Traffic Penalty Tribunal “Appeal” statistics

The table below describes the 25 cases which were taken to Appeal (in front of an Independent Parking Adjudicator) and the outcomes of the cases. Just 0.02% of all PCNs issued (25 out of 59,517) ended up at formal Appeal.

Authority	Total to Appeal	Allowed	No Contest	Dismissed	Order by Consent	Pending
Braintree	5	3	2	0	0	0
Colchester	7	0	2	4	1	0
Harlow	4	1	2	1	0	0
Tendring	4	1	2	1	0	0
Uttlesford	3	1	2	0	0	0
Epping	2	0	2	0	0	0
Totals	25	6	12	6	1	0

Totals

for motorist	18	for council	7
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Statistical information for Bus Lane and Moving Traffic PCNs

It is not required to report on these since this organisation does not undertake any of the enforcement described.

Other Relevant References

Documents

Department for Transport: Guidance on the inspection and enforcement of blue badges for police, traffic wardens, local authority parking attendants, civil enforcement officers and issuing local authorities.

Code of Practice for Traffic Enforcement Centre, Northampton; CCTV user group; and so on.

Special Report: Parking Enforcement by Local Authorities.

Advice and Guidance from the Local Government Ombudsmen. December 2004.

A Review of Decriminalised Parking Enforcement for the British Parking Association by Richard Childs, June 2005.

Glossary

BPA	British Parking Association
CPE	Civil Parking Enforcement
CEO	Civil Enforcement Officer
NEPP	North Essex Parking Partnership
Off Street	Car Parks (District Council)
OG	Operational Guidance
On Street	County Highway (roadside parking)
PEP	Parking Enforcement Policy
POP	Parking Service Operational Protocols
PCN	Penalty Charge Notice
SG	Statutory Guidance

RTA1991 Road Traffic Act 1991 – superseded by TMA2004 on 31/03/2008

RTRA1984 Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984

TMA2004 Traffic Management Act 2004

Web Site

www.parkingpartnership.org

The North Essex Parking Partnership's host authority and its client authorities are members of the British Parking Association



End Notes and Sources

ⁱ 'The Secretary of State's Statutory Guidance to Local Authorities on the Civil Enforcement of Parking Contraventions', DfT, February 2008. This guidance is issued under section 87 of the TMA. Under section 87, local authorities must have regard to the information contained in the guidance.

ⁱⁱ 'Operational Guidance to Local Authorities: Parking Policy and Enforcement', DfT, March 2008 (Second impression with minor amendments - May 2008).