



# **2023-24 Annual Report**

North Essex Parking Partnership

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# Councillor Land

## Joint Parking Committee Chair

This year the North Essex Parking Partnership (NEPP) continues to be resilient in a time of increasing costs and other challenges, which are being felt within the sector.

2023 has continued to be a challenging year for our communities and ourselves as we continue to navigate the cost-of-living crisis and the impact of increasing costs across the board. Team NEPP has continued to work hard to find innovative ways to improve the way we work to ensure we continue to deliver parking services as efficiently as possible for North Essex.

Despite these challenges, this year's report details what has happened over the last financial year, along with an overview of the financials and highlights of the positive community impact our teams have on a day-to-day basis.

In 2023, we had a focus on recruitment of our Civil Enforcement Officers (CEOs) which is traditionally, a hard vacancy to fill due to the specialist skills required. We talked to our team members already in these roles to find out what they valued most about their job, which surprisingly wasn't pay, it was the flexibility of the shifts and being outside. This information helped us to re-write the job specification and showed us what to highlight when talking to people.

We worked with our communities to support the prestigious Royal visit to Colchester to mark its modern city status, helping to ensure the roads were clear and safe for His Royal Highness King Charles III and Queen Camilla to travel. Our officers also supported the RideLondon across Essex, helping the county to host another successful event.

Whilst external pressures will continue to be a challenge, I feel positive about the future and our ability to continue to improve our services for our partner authorities and customers. We will continue to make positive steps towards our vision: making parking fair and transparent by bringing together the parking operations for North Essex.

Thank you for taking the time to read the Annual Report, which we hope you find interesting.

**Councillor Daniel Land**  
Chair, North Essex Parking Partnership

# Service Overview

The North Essex Parking Partnership (NEPP) is a council-run organisation which brings together all street-based parking in North Essex on behalf of Braintree, Colchester, Epping Forest, Harlow, Tendring and Uttlesford Councils.

## **There for our communities**

We've held Days of Action, supported a Royal visit, helped to apprehend a police suspect and taken pride in our local area by clearing brambles. Read more in section 5.

## **Supporting our partners**

This year, we've supported our partner authorities to update tariff boards and upgrade pay and display machines. Read more in section 3.

## **Recruitment**

We've taken a new approach to recruiting our Civil Enforcement Officers (CEOs) this year. Read more in section 6.





# On-Street Parking

In February 2024, NEPP's Joint Parking Committee agreed in principle to introduce paid parking to manage some on-street locations in North Essex.

Often referred to as 'pay and display' spaces on a street or road, this paid-for parking is a proven effective tool for managing traffic flow and ensuring parking availability in busy areas, helping to keep roads clear, traffic flowing smoothly, and encourage the use of existing car parks.

This project is at a very early stage, and we are now working with authority partners to scope out possible locations in more detail. We have also committed to working with our communities on an informal consultation stage before any final decisions around locations are made.

## **New parking schemes delivered**

We have delivered 55 new parking schemes across North Essex this year. From waiting restrictions and loading bays, to junction protection and red double lines.

New schemes are introduced, in part, as a response to complaints about parking which cause difficulties for residents, issues with access for emergency services vehicles, pedestrian safety and traffic flow can all be contributing factors.



# Off-Street Parking

Besides managing the kerbside of our highway network, we also work with our partner authorities in Braintree, Colchester, Harlow, and Uttlesford Councils to operate their car parks; this section describes more about the work we carry out in car parks.

## Tariff board updates in Uttlesford

This year, we've been working with Uttlesford District Council to update their car park tariff board and welcome signage so that the boards have a cleaner design, are more customer friendly and highlight and encourage the use of MiPermit for payments.

## Tariff board updates in Colchester

We have been continuing to update the tariff boards in Colchester, ensuring the new convenience fee from MiPermit was easy to understand for our customers.

## Upgrading pay and display machines in Uttlesford

We have also been supporting Uttlesford District Council to upgrade its pay and display machines in car parks across the district, ensuring customers have access to card payments, alongside a good customer service experience.





# Parking Enforcement by Numbers

## On-street Penalty Charge Notices (PCNs) issued



61,589

Higher Level  
PCNs issued



6,719

Lower Level  
PCNs issued



68,308

Total  
PCNs issued

PCNs paid	51,567
PCNs issued to driver/ attached to windscreen	60,427
PCNs issued by post	1,247
PCNs issued from Park Safe cameras	6,634

CONTRAVENTION CODE	REASON	TOTAL ISSUED
01	Parked in a restricted street during prescribed hours	16,103
12	Parked in a residents' or shared use parking place or zone without a valid virtual permit or clearly displaying a valid physical permit	13,882
02	Parked or loading / unloading in a restricted street where waiting and loading / unloading restrictions are in force	6,645
30	Parked for longer than permitted	4,880
40	Parked in a designated disabled person's parking place without displaying a valid disabled person's badge in the prescribed manner	4,629
23	Parked in a parking place or area not designated for that class of vehicle	4,207
47	Stopped on a restricted bus stop or stand	4,259
46	Stopped where prohibited (on a red route or clearway)	3,991
25	Parked in a loading place or bay during restricted hours without loading	1,394
45	Stopped on a taxi rank	848



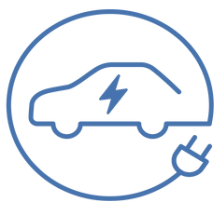
# Parking Enforcement by Numbers



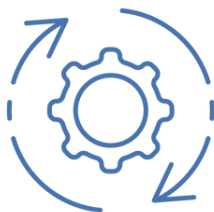
15.88% of overall PCNs were challenged at the informal stage



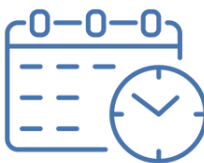
84.67% of PCN challenges and representations were done online



13 electric vehicles in operation



55 new parking schemes delivered



6 Days of Action held

On-Street Permits issued	70,869
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Digital Resident Permits issued	9,033
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Digital Visitor Permits activated	50,307
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Digital Parking Dispensations issued	449

# Parking Education

## Road Safety Week

We supported Road Safety Week, which took place 19-25 November, by highlighting ways in which we are actively working to improve road safety, including outside school gates with our Park Safe Schools and 3PR schemes.

## Days of Action

In September 2023, our Civil Enforcement Officers (CEOs), in partnership with Essex Police, carried out a successful Day of Action in Colchester to tackle persistent offenders who regularly park illegally in the city centre.

Our officers stopped several vehicles on the High Street and received full payment for nine Warrants of Control for unpaid Penalty Charge Notices (PCNs), totalling £915.75. We also issued 35 PCNs to drivers flouting parking restrictions and engaged with the public, who expressed safety concerns about food delivery couriers parking on the High Street.

## Park Safe Schools Update

Our Park Safe Schools scheme aims to improve dangerous and inconsiderate parking outside schools continues to be effective. We continue to work with local schools, motorists and parents to educate and affect both behavioural and perception changes surrounding safe school parking.

This year, we operated our Park Safe School cameras at three new locations – Holy Family Catholic Primary in Witham, Passmores Academy and William Martin C of E Infant & Nursery, both in Harlow.

We will continue to monitor the scheme's effectiveness and consider the next steps for this scheme.

## Supported a Royal visit

We had the pleasure to support the visit of His Royal Highness King Charles III and Queen Camilla to Colchester in April 2023 to celebrate its modern city status. We worked with Essex Police and Colchester City Council teams to ensure that the highways remained clear and obstruction free, towing any vehicles parked along the route to a safe area. We also spoke to residents to explain what was happening and why and answer any parking or access questions that they had.

### There for our communities

In November 2023, two of our officers supported the local Colchester community to clear an area of road where mud and debris were covering double yellow lines, which had made the restrictions unenforceable. Whilst there, they also cut back brambles and overgrown trees, making the area look tidier for residents.

Also in November, one of our CEOs performed an outstanding act of bravery by assisting Essex Police in the apprehension of a suspect trying to evade police whilst he was out on patrol in Tendring. The Police stated that without the CEO's help the suspect would have escaped! This is just one of many examples that show the positive impact our parking officers have on local communities.



# People & Performance

Our focus for the way we work is; “Innovation, Efficiency, Education and Communication”.

Richard Walker, our Head of Parking, is President in waiting of the British Parking Association, meaning NEPP has a place at the forefront of parking in the UK.

## INNOVATION

We successfully took a new approach to recruiting CEOs, which has always been a hard to fill role, but has become more challenging over the last few years.

We decided to go to people, not wait for them to come to us and focused on having a presence at job centres, being on hand to talk to potential candidates, and worked in partnership with Reed to hold information sessions for those interested in the role. Our officers also attended local job fairs and worked in partnership with our local authority partners on employment events they were attending.

The overall outcome meant that we are now at full capacity for CEO roles. We will continue to work in this new way to ensure we can recruit to any vacancies as they arise.

We worked in partnership with Colchester City Council and Let's Employ Refugees, a campaign ran by East of England Local Government Association, to discuss how we can break down barriers to recruitment of refugees. As a result, we have pledged to interview any applicants they put forward for a parking role and to provide thorough feedback. East of England Local Government Association recognised our work with them at its Talent Pipeline event.



## EFFICIENCY

Our Joint Committee agreed our budget and business plan for the new financial year. To future proof our organisation and to protect the vital services it provides, the action plan outlines steps to put us on a more stable financial footing. We will achieve this through a mix of transformation, income generation and savings, and this year has seen us reshape our staffing structure at all levels.

We took delivery of eight new electric vehicles for our Data-Led Operations and Technical teams this year. This continues our steps to deliver our commitment to have a full electric fleet by 2030.

## EDUCATION

We're committed to supporting and developing our staff to enable us to deliver a forward-thinking, professional and high-quality service for all our customers. At the moment we are supporting three of our staff to gain qualifications.

In February, we celebrated National Apprenticeship Week and shared the experience of one of our officers undertaking training, on our LinkedIn page.

To support our staff through the cost-of-living crisis, we worked with Colchester City Council to roll out Wagestream during Financial Wellbeing Week 2024. This new system will help our staff to better manage everyday money problems and build up financial resilience, helping to support their wellbeing and overall effectiveness at work.

## COMMUNICATION

In September, we attended Colchester's Eco Festival where we shared our sustainability achievements and goals and engaged with the community about the future of local electric vehicle charging provision.

In July, we carried out a thorough review of all our social media channels, taking into consideration multiple factors such as engagement, content, relevancy, audiences etc. Following this, the decision was made to hibernate our Twitter/X account and focus our social media efforts on our LinkedIn and YouTube channels, which seems to be working well for both us and our customers.

In the autumn, we also reviewed our internal comms in light of our increased hybrid working and as a result centralised our internal comms to a 'Between the Lines' channel on Microsoft Teams, rather than a bi-monthly staff e-newsletter. This enables internal messages to be delivered to staff organisation-wide in a more timely manner and encourages engagement and dialogue with these messages.

After our budget and new Business Plan was agreed at our Joint Parking Committee meeting in February, we carried out a staff consultation about our proposed organisational restructure of staff to deliver this transformation.

# Work Programme

Our future aims will help shape our work for the coming financial year. Here is a taster of the projects that we will be focussing on.

## **Tackling aggressive behaviour**

Over the next year, we will be looking to run a communications and marketing campaign that focuses on tackling violent and aggressive behaviour towards parking frontline staff. This is an area of work we have wanted to focus on for a while now, and it seems the perfect time to pilot campaign ideas and monitor the impact.

## **Looking for a new West base**

Following feedback from staff, who have said they find our West base hard to get to, as it's not easily accessible by public transport, we are looking for a new base in this area. It's important for staff recruitment and retention that we can provide a suitable location for our staff to work from. We look forward to sharing more details on this with you next year.





# How We Invest & Develop

## Transformation

We are coming to the end of our transformation programme, to ensure that our organisation has a more stable financial future. We are committed to completing the delivery of these savings and increasing our efficiency in the coming months.

## Councillor E-Brief newsletter

We want the elected members, across all our authority partners, to feel well informed about the work that we do. We are committed to refreshing our Councillor newsletter over the next few months to make sure it continues to be a relevant and timely update.

## Recognising our staff

This year we introduced a new staff recognition scheme for our Operations Team, to highlight a 'Star of the Month'. Officers are nominated by their colleagues for doing a good job or going the extra mile. This has been so successful with our teams that we are planning to roll it out across all of Team NEPP next year.



# Accounts

Movement on NEPP Reserve		
	£000's	
Opening Balance 01/03/23 (B/Fwd.)	160	Deficit
Budgeted Contribution 2023/24	0	
Outturn (2023/24)	121	
Balance 31/03/24 (Outturn)	39	Deficit
Opening Balance 01/03/24 (B/Fwd.)	39	Deficit
Budgeted Contribution 2024/25	106	
Balance 31/03/25	66	Surplus

2023 / 2024 Outturn	2023/24			2024/25
	Budget (Full Year)	Actual Spending (Full Year)	Variance (Full Year)	Budget (Committee 01/02/24)
	£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's
<b>Expenditure</b>				
<b>Employee Costs (Direct)</b>				
Management	202	153	49	133
CEOs & Supervision	1,408	1,273	135	1,724
Back Office	419	410	9	389
Business Development	132	107	25	-
Data Led Services	342	355	13	-
TRO's	180	177	3	282
<b>Other Costs (Direct)</b>				
Premises / TRO Maintenance costs	143	109	34	68
Transport costs (running costs)	29	91	62	48
Supplies & Services	506	443	63	452
Third Party Payments	38	36	2	30
Bad Debts	-	178	178	70
	<b>3,398</b>	<b>3,332</b>	<b>66</b>	<b>3,198</b>
<b>Income</b>				
Penalty Charges (PCNs)	2,258	2,350	92	2,100
Fines (Blue Badge / Permits)	25	-	25	-
Parking Permits / Season Tickets	943	1,027	84	1,037
Parking Charges (P&D etc)	584	445	139	536
Other income	43	85	42	62
	<b>3,853</b>	<b>3,907</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>3,734</b>
<b>DIRECT COSTS (NET)</b>	<b>454</b>	<b>575</b>	<b>121</b>	<b>536</b>
CORPORATE OVERHEADS (INDIRECT)*	455	455	0	430
<b>TOTAL COSTS</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>121</b>	<b>121</b>	<b>106</b>



# Annual Report Summary

The North Essex Parking Partnership is a council-run organisation which brings together all street-based parking in North Essex on behalf of Essex County Council, with Braintree, Colchester, Epping Forest, Harlow, Tendring and Uttlesford Councils.

## **Creating Efficiencies**

As an organisation, we always look for ways to be innovative and improve our services and this has been particularly important this year due to the current financial situation which we are all facing. Not only have we looked for and implemented ways to deliver our services more through our transformation programme, but when making decisions, we have also had to be mindful of the financial pressures our customers face.

## **EV Fleet**

We remain committed to reducing our environmental impact as much as possible and operating more electric vehicles has helped us move forward towards our commitment to operating with a fully electric fleet by 2030.

## **Supporting our partners**

Supporting our seven partners and delivering high-quality parking services for them and their communities is at the heart of what we do. This year we've delivered Colchester City Council's and Uttlesford District Council's new and improved off-street (car parks) signage, carried out community engagement at events like Colchester Eco Festival, and delivered new Traffic Regulation Orders across all partnership areas.

## **School Parking**

Improving road safety outside schools is a big priority of ours and this year our Park Safe Schools continues to be successful with parking and waiting contraventions significantly reducing. We've also introduced the cameras at three other local schools.

## **Recruitment**

We have continued to focus on recruitment this year, by taking a new approach to filling our CEO vacancies, working with job centres and job fairs, and not waiting for the right candidate to come to us. We have also been recognised for the work we have done around recruiting refugees.



[north.parkingpartnership.org](http://north.parkingpartnership.org)