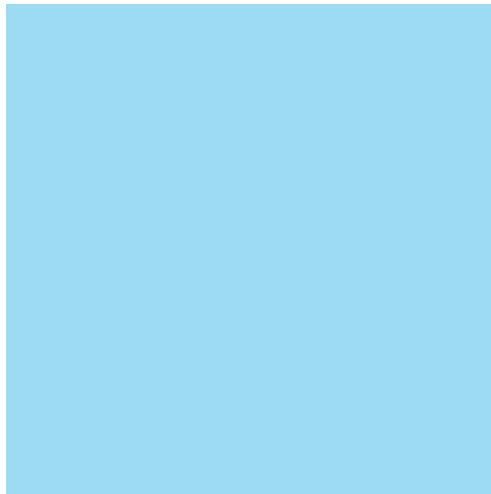




Annual Parking & Enforcement Report 2020/21



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Glossary

This glossary provides the full title to common acronyms and definitions of technical terms used through the document.

Annual Report	This is the abbreviated name for this document, the Annual Parking and Enforcement Report
CC	Charge certificate
CCTV	Closed-Circuit Television
CEO	Civil Enforcement Officer. Following the enactment of Part 6 of the Traffic Management Act 2004 on 31 March 2008 with respect to civil parking enforcement, 'Parking Attendants' are now referred to as CEOs
Contravention	This refers to a breach of parking regulations. This was formerly referred to as an 'offence' when regulations were enforced by the police
CPZ	Controlled Parking Zone. All public highways in the Southend-on-Sea Borough are covered by a CPZ
Enforcement	In this document 'enforcement' activity by the council covers that of parking controls and decriminalised traffic contraventions (enforcement of bus lanes and of moving traffic offences)
KPI	Key performance indicator
NTO	Notice to owner
Nuisance vehicles	This a term used for: persistent evaders, foreign registered vehicles, untaxed vehicles and abandoned vehicles
PCN	Penalty charge notice
Persistent evader	A persistent evader are motorists who continually park in contravention of parking restrictions and fail to address any penalty charge notices.
Recovery rate	The percentage of PCNs issued that have been paid. Non-payment of PCNs may arise due to those receiving the PCN or as a consequence of the council not being able to obtain the keeper details from the DVLA (Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency)
TEC	Transport and Environment Committee
TMA	Traffic Management Act 2004
TPT	Traffic Penalty Tribunal comprises individually appointed independent adjudicators who consider appeals against Penalty Charge Notices (PCNs) issued by councils in England and Wales (outside London) for parking contraventions.
TRO	Traffic Regulation Order. TRO is used as a generic term in this report to cover any traffic management or traffic regulation orders that are used to designate parking and traffic controls
VED	Vehicle exercise duty – the annual 'car tax'.

Foreword



The last twelve months have been challenging. Despite the difficulties and impact the pandemic has had on every aspect of our lives, the Council still had a responsibility to manage, adapt and deliver parking facilities/provisions across Southend-on-Sea and to ensure our residents, businesses, visitors were protected during long periods of lockdown

The start of the 2020/21 financial year was different to anything previously experienced.

The key worker status for many of our officers validated the importance of their role but which also carried the risk of compromising their own personal anxieties and health. The Council needed to ensure our officers were provided with suitable Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) so as to be able to adapt to ever evolving circumstances. Their duties including, but not limited to, delivering care packages to the most vulnerable, closing seafront car parks to discourage visitors during lockdown and devising and issuing free parking permits to key workers whom were on the front line and providing care to those most in need.

This report demonstrates the progress we've made during 2020/21 and showcases a number of our priorities for the coming year, some of which have already been delivered including the introduction of our unique parking offer, the Southend Pass.

The Council now needs to digest, review, consider and deliver on the likely changing needs of our residents, businesses and visitors that have been borne from the year that was primarily filled with a pandemic.

Councillor Ron Woodley
Portfolio Holder

1. Introduction and context

Overview

The legislative framework for local authorities to carry out parking enforcement changed on 31 March 2008 when Part Six of the Traffic Management Act 2004 (TMA), replaced parts of the Road Traffic Act 1991. The Department for Transport (DfT) introduced the TMA to improve public perceptions of parking enforcement by providing greater consistency of nationwide parking regulations and providing a fairer and more transparent system.

The TMA required a number of changes to parking enforcement practice, which covered the terminology and documentation used, and the processing of Penalty Charge Notices (PCNs). It also placed additional responsibilities on authorities to publish information regarding parking enforcement, including an annual report.

The report demonstrates how the Council has continued to provide services for our residents, businesses and visitors to the borough whilst prioritising the safe movement of traffic as the town remains a vibrant seafront community attracting millions of people yearly, thereby placing significant demand on our transport and parking infrastructure.

Parking management is an important tool that contributes towards achieving the Council's wider transport, economic, planning, and environmental objectives.

The Council is committed to being open and transparent about its parking operation. The annual report gives an insight into the provides the details of activities within the previous financial year and provides and insight into the plans for the year ahead. Historical PCN reports can be found online at <https://www.southend.gov.uk/archiveparkingreports>.

Four broad areas are covered in the report:

- introduction and context
- what we did since our last Annual Report
- aspirations
- financial information

More information on parking in the Borough is available on our website at:

<https://www.southend.gov.uk/parking-travel-roads>

2. Purpose of parking regulations and why they are enforced

This annual report sets out the key facts and figures of the Council's parking and enforcement activity, but it is important also to bear in mind why the Council needs to manage parking in the first place.

Parking enforcement and controls play an important part in the Council's transport strategy by regulating the amount of traffic within the Borough and encouraging the use of public transport.

We believe that parking issues affect everyone who use our streets, businesses, seafront and not only car users.

Demand for parking in the Southend-on-Sea borough far outweighs the supply of kerb space available and we seek to maintain a balance between the different demands – from residents, businesses and visitors, whilst ensuring there is good access for pedestrians, cyclists, buses and other vehicles. Our general policy is to provide the maximum number of car parking spaces while allowing the satisfactory and safe movement of traffic and the maintenance of a good quality residential environment.

We constantly monitor and review our parking policies to ensure that they meet the needs of the local community and reflect our transport policy objectives.

3. Purpose of the report

The purpose of this report is to provide statistical and financial data for Parking Services within Southend-on-Sea Borough Council, in line with the requirements under s.55 of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984^{[footnote1](#)} as modified by regulation 25 of the Civil Enforcement of Parking Contraventions (England) General Regulations 2007^{[footnote2](#)} and paragraph 46 and 47 of the Local Government Transparency Code 2015^{[footnote3](#)}.

This report focuses on parking and parking enforcement issues and the new schemes and processes that we believe will offer a better service to our customers.

The Council is committed to being open and transparent about its parking operation. We aim to publish our parking and enforcement report each year to keep the local community and other interested parties abreast of any changes we have made and any we are considering for the future.

¹ [The Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 c.27](#)

² [The Civil Enforcement of Parking Contraventions \(England\) General Regulations 2007 No.3483](#)

³ [The Local Government Transparency Code 2015 ISBN: 978-1-4098-4484-6](#)

4. Parking in Southend

All roads in the Southend-on-Sea borough are part of a Civil Enforcement Area where civil parking enforcement of parking, waiting and loading contraventions are enforced by the Council (with exception of private roads and private car parking facilities)

On-street

On-street parking bays are reserved for use by certain users. We have approximately 2742 on-street parking bays, with the following types and numbers of bays specified below:

Accessible Permit Holder Bays - 4

Blue Badge Disabled Bays – 36

Car Club Bays - 2

Electric Vehicle Charging Bays – 4

Loading Spaces - 70

Police Spaces - 1

Residents' Permit Spaces - 2522

Taxi Spaces - 89

Visitor Solo Motorcycle Bays - 14

Off-street

Housing estate Resident Permit Bays - 195

Housing estate Disabled Permit Bays - 2

You can find information concerning parking and examples of road markings and signage in the Highway Code and in the Department for Transport's Know Your Traffic Signs booklet:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/know-your-traffic-signs> and in the Traffic Signs Regulations and General Directions 2016: <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/>. These publications and other useful information related to parking can be found on the Department for Transport's website www.dft.gov.uk.

Resident Parking

There has been pressure on parking in Southend-on-Sea for many years. The CPZ covers very little of the Borough; however, there are continuing requests to increase CPZ's as parking pressures and kerb side space become more and more valuable

Disabled Parking

Disabled parking bays are provided at on-street parking places and also within Council managed car parks across the borough. In addition, Southend Borough Council allow blue badge holders to park in resident permit bays, without time limit and also in our on-street pay & display bays. We put a

percentage of disabled parking bays in all new car parks and disabled parking bays can also be installed following an application from a resident, though not personalised they are to accommodate the parking needs where necessary.

Car Clubs

We are enthusiastic supporters of car clubs and believe they offer great potential to help achieve our long-term policy objectives of reducing traffic congestion and on-street parking pressures. Car clubs provide an alternative to private car ownership and allow members access to vehicles on a pay-as-you-go basis. It is an intention of the Council to consider the benefits of these in the future.

Motorcycle Parking

There are specific motorcycle bays in some of our Council managed car parks in addition to permitting them to park in any paid for, including resident parking bays at no charge.

Cycle Parking

The provision of secure cycle parking is important in encouraging greater cycle use. We have an established programme of providing cycle parking at main attractions, shopping areas and in response to individual requests. Additional secure cycle parking has been installed as part of the Victoria Circus and London Road redevelopment scheme.

Electric Vehicles

We have provided more electric vehicle chargers in the Borough. We are continuing to add to our charging structure by installing more charging posts as a priority action of the Green City Action Plan. More information about the plan can be found here: <https://www.southend.gov.uk/news/article/2276/>

Further information about Electric Vehicles and Charging Posts can be found here: <https://www.southend.gov.uk/parking-travel-roads/electric-vehicles-charging-posts>

5. Parking enforcement

The Council uses Civil Enforcement Officers (CEOs), to enforce all parking restrictions.

When carrying out their enforcement duties, CEOs will be robust but fair in their activity. The Council has a zero-tolerance approach to malpractices in relation to the issue of PCNs. All of our CEOs wear body worn cameras which are recording while they carry out their duties. It is not appropriate to give CEOs high levels of discretion with regard to the issuing of PCNs, as this increases the potential for intimidation and corruption and increases the likelihood of allegations of inconsistent enforcement. PCNs are issued after following legislative guidelines in relation to both observation times and evidence. Our CEOs take photographs of all vehicles issued with a PCN. If they realise that they have made a mistake whilst in the process of issuing a PCN then it will be logged as required so in the event of appeal, there is a valid audit trail in place. The CEO will also record details of any extenuating circumstances that they become aware of during the period of observation and issuing the PCN.

The Council sets a number of procedural and behavioural standards, which CEOs are required to follow when carrying out their duties. The main ones are given below. CEOs are required to:

- be polite and well presented at all times
- give information and advice about the parking regulations when asked
- be easily recognisable (they wear a uniform which displays the name of their company, and their individual identification number)
- take photographs of each parking contravention for evidential purposes when issuing a PCN, unless prevented from doing so

In accordance with observation times, a CEO may be able to give motorists, whose vehicles are parked in contravention of the regulations, the opportunity to move before a PCN is issued.

Please bear in mind that when a CEO sees a vehicle parked in contravention of the regulations, they have no way of knowing the circumstances which led to the driver parking it there. Unless the situation is apparent to the CEO, and exempts the vehicle from the regulations (eg, the vehicle is obviously broken down) the CEO is required to issue a PCN.

6. Suspensions

We appreciate that suspending parking bays can be inconvenient to residents, particularly in areas where parking demand is high, but the Council are obliged to suspend bays for a variety of reasons including building works, furniture removals, utility and highways works and special events. Charges are incurred which include an administration fee and the agreed price per bay, per day applied (in accordance with Council's fees & charges).

We provide an online facility to check for parking suspensions in any road in the Borough

<https://www.southend.gov.uk/>

7. The appeals process

When a PCN is issued the registered keeper of the vehicle is legally obliged to pay the penalty charge. However, should the registered keeper feel that there are grounds of mitigation which may lead to the cancellation of the PCN then there is an appeals process which should be followed. All representations need to be made in accordance with the legislative process and are explained here;

<https://www.southend.gov.uk/parking-travel-roads/information-parking-fines>

Vehicle owners may dispute the issuing of a PCN at three stages:

- they can make an informal 'challenge' or 'representation' before the Council issues a Notice to Owner (NtO). This applies to PCNs issued to stationary vehicles on-street. The owner of a vehicle that has been issued with a PCN via the CCTV system for a moving traffic offence will be advised by a letter sent by the postal system, which also serves as an NtO.
- once an NtO has been served, they can make a formal representation against the NtO (this can still be done if an informal challenge has previously been made and rejected). The legislation sets out specific grounds for formal representations against the NtO. However, whether or not those grounds apply, representations may also be made on the basis that, in the particular circumstances of the case, there are mitigating reasons for the cancellation of the PCN.
- we will issue a Notice of Rejection if the formal representation is rejected. The owner then has the right to appeal within 28 days to an adjudicator of the Traffic Penalty Tribunal. The adjudicators have a judicial status: they are appointed with the agreement of the Lord Chancellor and they are wholly independent and their decisions are final.

For further information you can review the Parking Policy <https://www.southend.gov.uk/parking-policy>

After this, no further challenges can be made, other than on a point of law through an application to the High Court for Judicial Review.

Full details of the adjudication service and of the appeals process can be found on their website

<https://www.trafficpenaltytribunal.gov.uk/>

8. What we did since our last Annual Report

Response to COVID19

In March 2020, the Government introduced Lockdown measures to manage the COVID19 Pandemic. The parking service responded by;

- CEO's assisted with delivering care packages to the vulnerable
- closing seafront car parks to discourage visitors to the borough during period of full lockdown
- testing facilities set up in Council managed car parks,
- CEO's being considered as key workers were front line and visible throughout the pandemic
- adapting to ever evolving circumstances as required.
- all officers acted as Council ambassadors and provided assistance where necessary
- introduced a key worker permit to assist those providing care with free parking.

Reducing cash transactions

One of our goals is to reduce the number of cash transactions for parking. The pandemic has altered customer behaviours and reduces the risk of infection. To achieve this, all of our pay and display machines have contactless card payment functionality. Similarly, there is the option to pay via our cashless provider, Mobon

Paying to park by phone offers a number of added benefits, including the ability to have a free SMS or email reminder when nearing the expiry of paid-for time and the ability to top-up parking time without going back to the car.

Motorists simply need to download the Mobon app, which is available on the App Store and Google Play, and follow the instruction on the tariff board at all parking locations. There is a simple registration process at the time of first use. Further information can be found at <http://www.gomobon.com>.

Abandoned Vehicles

Abandoned vehicles are those that are untaxed and are in a state of general disrepair with debris on and around the vehicle which indicates it has not been moved in a considerable time. Further information including our Vehicle Removal Policy can be found online at this link:

<https://www.southend.gov.uk/vehicleremovalpolicy>

Many vehicles reported are not abandoned with only a small fraction of those reported being removed. While it can be annoying for vehicles to be parked, the highway is available for anyone to use (subject to any parking controls) and if a vehicle holds a valid tax it is legally entitled to be parked.

In total, 300 vehicles were reported as abandoned in 2020/21. Of these, only 101 were considered potentially abandoned out of which 21 were subsequently removed.

Our aim is to keep the borough clear of all nuisance vehicles making sure parking is available for responsible motorists.

Untaxed Vehicles

The borough acts as an agent for the DVLA, and with our parking contractor, we remove untaxed vehicles from the highway. DVLA also have an additional contractor who works in the borough and together we try to ensure all vehicles parked on the highway have valid road tax.

In total, 182 vehicles were reported as untaxed in 2020/21. Of these, 42 were removed upon investigations to ascertain the vehicles were untaxed. Due to COVID19 the DVLA gave an instruction that untaxed vehicles could not be removed between March and December of 2020 and had an effect on the overall number of removed vehicles for 2020/21.

Persistent Evaders

These are motorists who continually park in contravention of parking restrictions and fail to address any penalty charge notices. If we identify a vehicle parked in contravention of parking restrictions and belonging to a persistent evader, the vehicle is removed and can only be recovered after payment of a the PCN, the removal fee and any daily storage charges. Proof of address is also required so as to pursue the outstanding debts.

This applies to any vehicle connected to a persistent evader and continues be until the debt is cleared.

Deterring Nuisance Vehicles

We increased the activities we undertake to deter nuisance vehicles by removing these vehicles from the streets.

Foreign Registered Vehicles

Historically, foreign registered vehicle debt was difficult to pursue but Southend Borough Council take such non-compliance seriously and will not tolerate deviance from non-payment of PCN's and are able to pursue the debt through a specialist contractor.

9. Statistical information

Issuance and progression of PCNs

The table shows different statistics relating to the PCNs issued in the last 3 financial years.

Description	2020/21 Total	2019/20 Total	2018/19 Total
Higher level PCNs (£70) issued	19,385	27,246	26,774
Lower level PCNs (£50) issued	17,811	25,929	20,490
Total number of PCNs issued	37,196	53,175	45,166

PCN payments

Payment for PCNs are offered at a 50% discounted rate if paid within 14 days of issue, after which they will need to be paid at the full charge. The PCN increases by 50% at the Charge Certificate stage and increase again by £8 if an Order for Recovery is issued.

Description	2020/21 Total	2019/20 Total	2018/19 Total
Paid at discount	26,323	29,983	27,971
Paid at full rate	3,627	6,112	N/A
Paid at Charge Certificate amount	1,261	1,084	N/A
Paid at Order for Recovery stage	852	720	N/A

*not all statistics will reconcile due to date of issue of PCN's and payments received.

Informal Challenges and Representation

Description	2020/21 Total	2019/20 Total	2018/19 Total
PCNs where a representation was made	15,397	20,297	17,020
PCNs cancelled as a result of representation	1,238	7,293	4,289
PCNs cancelled for other reasons	250	197	1,305

Appeals and Adjudication

Description	2020/21	2019/20	2018/19
Number of appeals to adjudicator	87	88	107
Number of appeals not contested	11	17	13
Number of appeals allowed (motorist successful)	29	19	53
Consent Order	2	2	1
Number of appeals dismissed	36	50	40
Awaiting Adjudicators decision	5	0	0
Awaiting evidence	3	0	0
Duplicate Case	1	0	0

10. Financial information

Parking income and PCN payments contribute to the running costs of the service with excess income being directed to other important (highway) services. The tables below show the income and payments received, the costs of the service and where excess funds are allocated.

Income (£sterling)

Parking management	2020/21	2019/20	2018/19
Paid On-street	1,567	2,657	2,871
Paid Off-street	1,767	3,322	3,267
Multi-storey	16	57	137
Resident Permits	136	163	176
Season Tickets	323	374	323
Parking Suspensions	42	119	77
Other	463	185	255
PCN	847	1,973	1,261
Total Income	5,161	8,850	8,367

Expenditure (£Sterling)

Parking management	2020/21	2019/20	2018/19
Staff costs	328	237	155
Premises related costs	1,456	1,364	1,302
Transport related costs	1	1	3
Central and Departmental support	54	154	275
Other agencies	394	511	476
Parking enforcement contracted services	1,255	1,344	1,129
Total Expenditure	3,488	3,611	3,340
Highway Investment Surplus	1,673	5,239	5,027

Application of Surplus on Parking Account

Application of parking surplus	2020/21	2019/20	2018/19
Highways Investment Surplus	-1,673	-5,239	-5,027
Highways Maintenance		1,463	1,280
Traffic Signals		307	336
Concessionary Fares	1,673	3,050	3,108
Traffic Signs and carriageway markings		200	303
Coach Parking Provision		219	
Remaining Revenues Surplus	0	0	0

11. Aspirations for 2021/22

Parking Services plan to deliver a new strategy to refresh our aims and ambitions to match the aspirations of the Council's vision for 2050 that focuses on a number of themes designed to make Southend on Sea the place to live, work and visit.

The core aim of Parking Services is to maintain the efficient flow of traffic along the highway and to improve its operational efficiencies. This will involve taking a holistic approach as to how the service is delivered and making improvements to operations that enhance the customer experience making Southend on Sea a benchmark for other local authorities operating outside of London.

1. We are aiming to move the service into the future by taking full advantage of digital technology and as one of the council's 2050 visions, we want the service to be Connected and Smart for ease of accessibility.

2. Now we have our borough zoned we will be embarking on reviewing all signage to make it easier for customers to locate parking near to where they are planning or park a short walk away and benefit from reduced charges.
3. We will work to make it far easier to find available parking spaces which will help ensure motorists spend less time in traffic and more time enjoying the huge array of shopping, working, leisure and fun attractions we have to offer here in Southend-on-Sea.
4. We will continue to review and simplify all parking permit types available and consolidate the changes with agreed fees & charges
5. The next two years will be very exciting, our residents, customers and other stakeholders will have input into the new strategy to continually develop the parking experience in the town, including:
 - enhanced parking information through digital platforms and variable signage
 - new parking initiatives and permit categories to support the local economy
 - introducing measures to prevent unauthorised parking and damaging of verges
 - Introduce measures to improve non-compliance at banned turns/no-entry/bus stop locations
 - improvements and maximisation of parking spaces in car parks
 - consolidating and reviewing parking charges across the borough to make them easier to identify and understand
 - collaborative working with colleagues to introduce safety schemes in and around our schools where parking can seriously impact safety
6. We will increase enforcement activities to remove nuisance vehicles from our roads, including for debt related to foreign registered vehicles.
7. We will utilise the use of map-based Traffic Orders to simplify the processes involved for public consultation and for introducing or updating restrictions on our roads.
8. We will upgrade our permit system to start issuing virtual permits which will mean customers will no longer have to display permit discs in their windscreen - this is similar to how road tax has operated for a few years and will dispense with the need for paper permits to be provided and that can be self-managed by permit holders. The detail of the vehicle for which a permit has been issued is updated electronically on the parking officer's equipment who will be able to check if a car has a valid permit.

More information on our ambitious and exciting plans can be found at

<https://www.southend.gov.uk/southend-2050-7>.

12. Useful information

Car Park information: General information on our car parks can be found at

<https://www.southend.gov.uk/car-parks-1>

You can view your PCN, make a challenge or make a payment online using this link:

<https://www.southend.gov.uk/viewpcn>

Information for all parking permit and season tickets are available online at this link:

<https://www.southend.gov.uk/homepage/456/parking-permits-and-season-tickets>. From the link, you will be able to make appropriate application and payment via MySouthend hub through which you can access many council services.

Applying for parking dispensations and suspensions <https://www.southend.gov.uk/parkingdispensation>

We provide a lot of information on statistics for PCN's and these can be found at

<https://www.southend.gov.uk/archiveparkingreports>.

For further information:

W: [southend.gov.uk/parking](https://www.southend.gov.uk/parking)

E: parking@southend.gov.uk

T: 01702 215003

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