

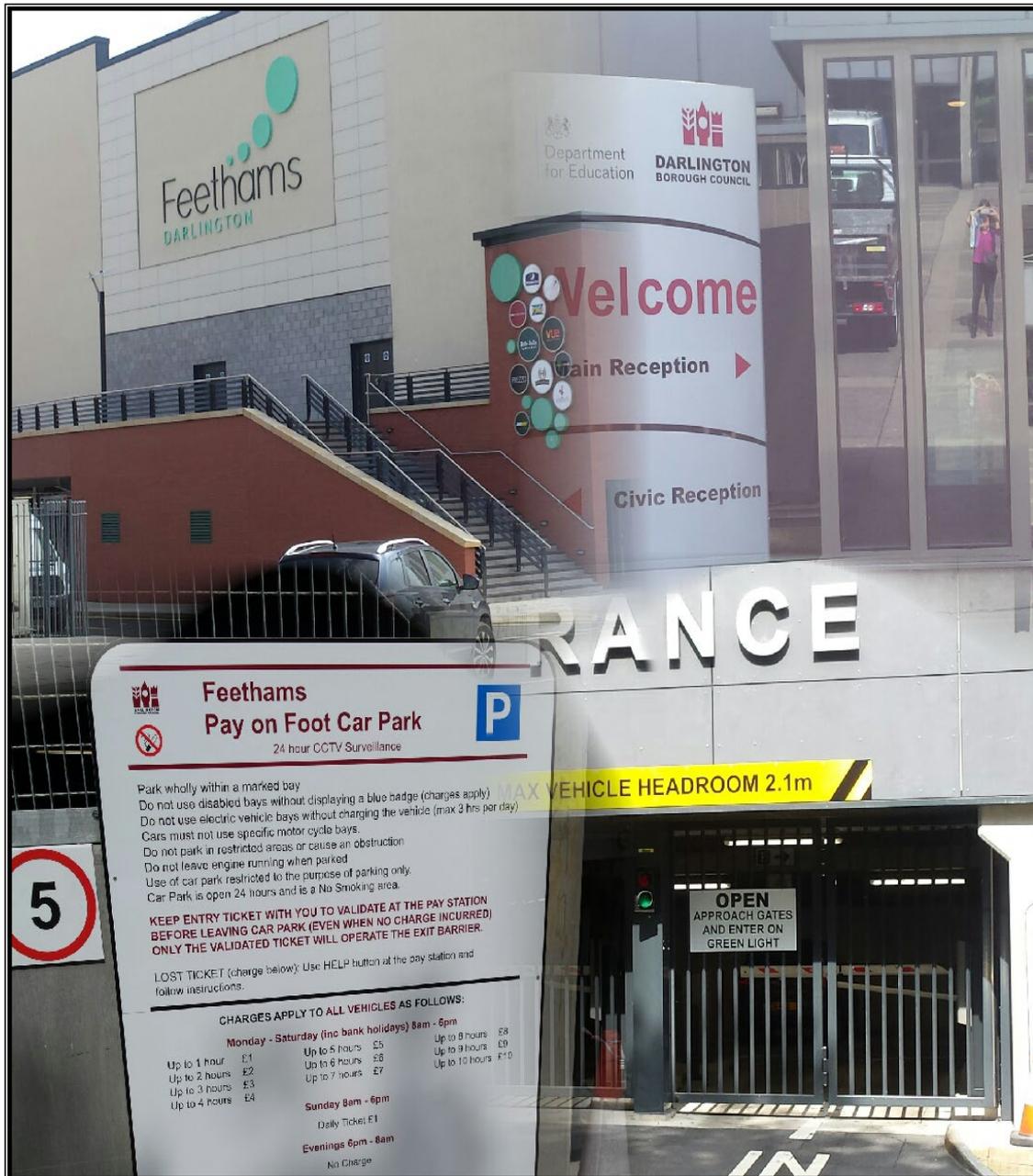


DARLINGTON

Borough Council

Civil Parking Enforcement Annual Report

April 2023 to March 2024



Introduction

1. Welcome to Darlington Borough Council's annual report on Civil Parking Enforcement (CPE) for the year 2023/2024
2. The Council understands that different groups and individuals have different parking needs and expectations, and that parking facilities must be best managed to meet those needs. Civil Parking Enforcement is a key part of the Council's approach to managing parking facilities. This report provides information about how Darlington Borough Council delivers Civil Parking Enforcement within the borough. It sets out resources, activities and performance for the year April 2023 to March 2024 including finance (income and expenditure).

Civil Parking Enforcement in Darlington

3. The objectives for CPE are linked to council Transport Plan and Parking Strategy, these documents are published on the council website and can be viewed at: <https://www.darlington.gov.uk/consultations/current-consultations/?id=32>
4. CPE is a key component of effective traffic management and improving traffic flow. The integration of enforcement and parking policy provides more effective parking management, and parking provision is made more responsive to the public's needs.
5. CPE activity not only ensures the proper use of parking facilities but also addresses poor, dangerous, and obstructive parking which can pose a danger to pedestrians by blocking pavements and forcing them onto the roads, reducing visibility for other motorists and impeding traffic flow. Through CPE all residents, visitors, schools and businesses benefit from well-managed parking facilities and the control of inconsiderate and dangerous on-street parking.
6. When PCNS are issued differential charge levels (which are set nationally) are applied. A higher level of £70.00 (reduced to £35.00 if paid within 14 days) is levied for more serious parking contraventions such as no waiting/loading areas, bus stop clearways etc. A lower level of £50.00 (reduced to £25.00 if paid within 14 days) is levied for lesser contraventions such as parked after ticket expired, not displaying a valid ticket etc.
7. Income from PCNs is used to finance the enforcement and adjudication systems. Any on-street surpluses (including ticket sales) are used only for the purposes set out in Section 55 (as amended) of the Road Traffic Regulations Act 1984. The Council is required to keep separate accounts of parking income from on-street and off street parking bays.

Any surplus from off street ticket sales can be used for investment in the Council's transport and environmental policies and to promote Local Transport Plan objectives.

Parking Initiatives, projects and Improvements

8. The following initiatives, projects and improvements have either been started/completed/removed or ongoing from the previous year:
 - Duke Street redevelopment (cycle and walking routes)
 - Skerne Bridge car park (Hopetown railway attraction)
 - Pay by Phone Parking introduced July 23 within On Street pay locations
 - 2hr free parking funded by Darlington Borough Council ended 02/07/23

Delivery Of Civil Parking Enforcement

9. The Civic Enforcement are responsible for enforcing a wide range of duties which includes but not limited to parking enforcement, fly tipping, littering, dog fouling, stray dogs and nuisance behavior.
10. Our Civic Enforcement Officers (CEO's) work within a stringent set of guidelines governed by the Traffic Management Act. CEOs will at the time of issuing a Penalty Charge Notice (PCN) make notes and take photographic evidence to substantiate the reason for the issue. Photographic evidence is available to both the motorist and the Council to help to determine challenges to penalties. CEOs can also wear body cameras on their person to record live footage. These cameras contribute to the CEOs health and safety wellbeing when on patrol, the footage may also be viewed by the appeal processing team in respect of representations against PCNs.
10. The CEOs will patrol and may issue penalty charge notices (PCNs). They are also deliberately placed in a separate team to the appeal processing section whose role is to objectively assess all appeals in accordance with published procedures.
11. The Council do not set targets for PCN issue for the CEO's nor do they receive any financial gain based on the number of PCNs issued.
12. Members of both teams are trained in their roles and operate to a published framework which provides guidance so that each representation is considered on its own merits. These procedures are published on the Council website and can be viewed at

<https://www.darlington.gov.uk/transport-and-streets/car-parking/>

Locations and Spaces

13. During the year the council operated and regulated 19 pay and display off-street car parks. Car Park spaces and locations can be viewed at

<https://www.darlington.gov.uk/transport-and-streets/car-parking/car-parking-information/>

14. There are 299 on-street pay and display spaces which are restricted to a maximum stay of 2 hours with no return within an hour (with the exception of Grange Road & Northumberland Street which are 3 hours no return within an hour). These time limits are in place to create turnover to assist businesses located in and around the area. On-street pay and display areas are listed in **Appendix 1**.

15. The Council provides five permit holder contract car parks.

- Beaumont Street West located on Beaumont Street
- Four Riggs located off Bondgate
- Silver Place car park located at Central Park
- Feethams Multi Storey located on Beaumont Street
- Morton Palms located at Morton Palms Business Park

Beaumont Street West and Four Riggs are dedicated to local businesses to serve operation parking needs. Silver Place & Morton Palms are rented solely to specific businesses. Feethams Multi Storey is a public car park with limited contract parking availability.

16. For all contract parking enquires contact Carolyn Pistellato, Parking Processing and Appeals Co-Ordinator 01325 405977 or email carparks@darlington.gov.uk

Crime

17. **Appendix 2** shows the recorded levels of car crime within Darlington car parks for 2016 to 2023. Whilst there has been a slight increase compared to 22/23 figures remain exceptionally low compared to the numbers of vehicles parked which was just under 1.2 million

18. All council car parks except East Street Multi Storey were accredited with two national parking standards 1) National Safer Parking Scheme "Park Mark" 2) Disabled Parking Accreditation as they met the specific criteria required to achieve the status which includes:

CCTV, lightening, levels, cleanliness, signage, provision of spaces, accessibility, and clear enforcement of disabled bays.

Disabled Parking

19. The Council provides designated disabled spaces within 90% our car parks. Pay and display charges do apply to disabled badge holders within our car parks, badge holders however can transfer pay and display tickets between all car parks.

There are **63 FREE** disabled on street parking spaces within the town centre. Badge holders can also park for FREE and without time limit within on street pay and display bays.

Residents Parking

20. There are 16 Resident Permit Zones within the Borough of Darlington. Parking is restricted to permit holders 8am to 6pm Monday to Sunday. Out of the 16 zones, 12 require payment for a residents permit and 4 are designated free zones after the construction of the college and football stadium created parking congestion. Permit charges are as follows:

12 Months £40, 6 Months £24 and 3 month (temporary permit) £12

21. Trader permits: charges for permits are 12 months £150, 6 Months £90 and £50 13 week permit (for long term jobs on a single property). The permit enables tradesmen to park in some restricted parking areas when carrying out work i.e. resident permit bays. In 2023/2024 we issued 53 permits.
22. Tradesmen can also purchase 24hr parking waivers if they need to park in a restricted area, the charge is £5 per 24hrs.

Performance

23. Between 1st April 2023 and 31st March 2024 Civic Enforcement Officers issued **6936 Penalty Charge notices.**
24. **Appendix 3** shows the number of penalty charge notices issued and appeals received between 1st April 2023 and 31st March 2024. This has been broken down into appeals which were allowed (cancelled, no payment) rejected (payment required) cases at TPT (Traffic Penalty Tribunal) (drivers have the option to have their appeal heard by an independent adjudicator) and penalty notices referred to a bailiff. The previous year's information is also provided as a comparison.
25. **Appendix 4** shows the income received from penalty charge notices between 1st April 2023 and 31st March 2024 and the previous year.
26. The Traffic Management Act 2004 (part 6) requires that all income from Civil Parking Enforcement (CPE) (including Resident Permit Zones) should not exceed the cost of running the service. **Appendix 5** shows the breakdown of the Council's total expenditure on Civil Parking. **Appendix 6** shows income received. In both appendices data is provided for 2023/24 and the previous year.

Improving the Service

27. We continue to learn from customer feedback, listening to local businesses and from the outcome of appeals from the Traffic Penalty Tribunal (TPT). Where the TPT has ruled against us we apply this learning to future cases e.g. where a TPT decision noted that our signage was confusing and inadequate this information was forwarded onto our transport policy team to investigate and resolve.

Next Year: April 2024 to March 2025

28. Income and ticket sales will be monitored with regards to the removal of the 2hr free offer.
29. A programme to upgrade the councils existing stock of 28x On Street payment machines, payment methods will be coin and contactless payments.

All report enquires contact:

Carolyn Pistellato, Parking Processing Co-Ordinator

Email: carolyn.pistellato@darlington.gov.uk Tel: 01325 405977

Appendix 1 – Council On Street Spaces

On Street	Spaces	On Street	Spaces
Beaumont Street	10	Raby Street	2
Grange Road	38	Primrose St	5
East Raby Street	13	Powlett St	12
Northumberland St	14	Larchfield St	10
South Arden St	4	West Powlett St	2
Winston Street	25	Gladstone St	37
Barnard Street	7	North Lodge Tce	6
Duke Street	27	Victoria Embank	9
Napier Street	8	Victoria Road North Back	7
Kendrew Street	7	Swan Street	5
Park Place	24	Market	14
Hargreave Terrace	13	Total	299

Appendix 2 – Recorded Car Crime Levels

Car Park	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Abbotts Yard	0	3	1	2	2	1	0	0
Archer Street	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
Barnard Street	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	0
Beaumont Street (Feethams MSCP from 2016)	3	7	2	8	1	3	6	10
Commercial Street	1	4	0		2	2	1	1
Crown Street	0	0	0	2	0	1	1	0
East Street	0	9	0	1	1	1	0	1
Garden Street	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Kendrew/Gladstone Street	1	2	1	0	0	0	1	0
Market Place	2	0	0	3	1	0	1	0
Park Place	1	3	0	2	0	2	1	1
St Hildas	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Town Hall	3	2	0	0	0	0	0	2
Total	11	32	4	18	8	10	11	16

Appendix 3 – Penalty Charge Notices Appeals, Tribunal and Bailiff

Month	Apr 23	May 23	Jun 23	Jul 23	Aug 23	Sep 23	Oct 23	Nov 23	Dec 23	Jan 24	Feb 24	Mar 24	Total 23/24
PCNs Issued	631	708	473	415	475	579	602	561	455	628	709	700	6936
Appeals Received	108	159	131	101	119	132	134	136	118	172	158	137	1605
Appeals Allowed	72	81	79	48	61	82	84	60	57	115	96	68	903 (56%)
Appeals Rejected	36	78	52	53	58	50	50	76	61	57	62	69	702 (43%)
Successful TPT Cases			1				1						2 (0.1%)
Unsuccessful TPT Cases													

Month	Apr 22	May 22	Jun 22	Jul 22	Aug 22	Sep 22	Oct 22	Nov 22	Dec 22	Jan 23	Feb 23	Mar 23	Total 22/23
PCNs Issued	354	421	436	345	386	315	616	331	704	558	492	502	5460
Appeals Received	79	92	89	59	78	54	118	69	144	101	75	101	1059
Appeals Allowed	47	64	66	36	48	36	76	31	108	74	52	66	704 (66%)
Appeals Rejected	32	28	23	23	30	18	42	37	36	27	23	35	354 (34%)
Successful TPT Cases		1				1				1			(0.3%)
Unsuccessful TPT Cases	1											1	(0.1%)

Appendix 4 PCN Income Levels – 2023/24 and Previous Year Totals

Month	Income
Apr 23	£13,043
May 23	£22,572
Jun 23	£16,756
Jul 23	£12,751
Aug 23	£14,178
Sep 23	£15,765
Oct 23	£17,100
Nov 23	£18,457
Dec 23	£13,666
Jan 24	£16,420
Feb 24	£20,380
Mar 24	£21,379
Total	£202,467

Month	Income
Apr 22	£11,657
May 22	£12,807
Jun 22	£12,314
Jul 22	£10,236
Aug 22	£12,404
Sep 22	£9,029
Oct 22	£15,717
Nov 22	£12,215
Dec 22	£16,751
Jan 23	£17,542
Feb 23	£16,474
Mar 23	£18,431
Total	£165,486

Appendix 5 Expenditure – 2023/24 and Previous Year Totals

Description	2023/2024	2022/2023
Car Parks Repairs/Maintenance, Highway Maintenance, Road Lighting Maintenance, Traffic Management, Bridge Maintenance	£6,123,967	£6,676,409
Salaries & other officer costs - Parking Enforcement, Parking Processing & Transport Policy (including overhead costs)	£180,073	£197,969
Legal Fees – Publications (including Traffic Regulation Orders)	£12,071	£22,346
Civil Parking Enforcement – prudential borrowing	£38,934	£39,402
Feethams Multi Storey Car Park Running Costs, Building, Rates, Principal Repayments	£638,158	£687,223
Other Supplies & Services e.g. telephone costs/printing/clothing machine collections / machine maintenance/equipment/stationary subscriptions/advertising & business car park operational costs & principal repayments	£106,998	£387,993
Appeal Processing Costs (DVLA, PATROL & HMCTS)	£28,665	£15,350
ICT Hardware, Software & Training, Maintenance, Equipment	£63,797	£46,149
Support Services from other departments	£46,314	£66,757
Building Costs & Security	£9,132	£9,658
Other (Provision for Bad Debt/Capital Charges, court costs recovered)	£764,425	£361,682
Total	£8,012,534	£8,510,615

Appendix 6 Income – 2023/24 and Previous Year Totals

Description	2023/2024	2022/2023
Penalty Notice Payments	£202,467	£165,486
Resident Permit Payments	£61,845	£60,688
Income from Off street car parks	£2,189,359 (A)	£2,354,646
Income from On Street pay and display areas	£262,735 (A)	£267,789
Income from Contract Parking and Staff Permits	£163,370	£122,416
Daily/Weekly Parking Waivers for Tradesman	£6,017	£5,955
Parking Permits for Tradesman i.e. 12/6/3 months	£7,030	£7,700
PCN debt recovered by bailiff enforcement	£15,454	£12,734
Total	£2,908,277	£2,929,272

A) Figures include 2hr free parking offer funded 1st April to 3rd July by Darlington Borough Council