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## Foreword

In accordance with the requirements of *The Department for Transport Operational Guidance to Local Authorities, Parking Policy and Enforcement* (section 4.15/4.24) and the *Local Government Transparency Code 2014* (part 2.2), Maidstone Borough Council has a responsibility to publish an Annual Report detailing on-street and off-street parking statistics.

The aim of the report is to summarise what services the Parking Services department provides and give an overview as to why Civil Parking Enforcement is required within Maidstone, how we operate and how well we are performing.

Reporting is an important part of our accountability. The transparency given by regular and consistent reporting should help the public gain a better understanding of Civil Parking Enforcement.

Monitoring also provides the Council with management information for performance evaluation and helps to identify where improvements are needed. In addition, it also provides a framework for performance comparisons between other local authorities.

I hope that you will find the contents of this report helpful and informative.

**Councillor David Burton**

**Chair of Strategic Planning, Sustainability & Transportation Committee**



## Introduction

Maidstone is the county town of Kent, a town combining rural villages with a bustling town centre; located in Kent, and only 32 miles from London with excellent transport links.

Maidstone Borough Council are continually investing to ensure that Maidstone is a place where people want to live and businesses want to invest.

This report provides information on performance and initiatives taken in 2016/17 to the public, whilst also allowing Maidstone Borough Council to evaluate our performance against previous goals and identify areas for improvement.

## Contact Us

Any enquiries or comments can be submitted to Parking Services by emailing

[parkingservices@maidstone.gov.uk](mailto:parkingservices@maidstone.gov.uk)



## 1. Parking Services Goals

Maidstone Borough Council's Parking Services Team is committed to:

- Enforcing the Traffic Management Act 2004 fairly and in accordance with the regulations
- Using technology to streamline and simplify town centre and residential parking
- Improving accessibility to the town centre for all members of the public
- Reducing the impact of antisocial parking
- Reducing peak time congestion in Maidstone's Town Centre
- Reducing harmful emissions in Maidstone's Town Centre
- Reinvesting any surplus into service and infrastructure to improve user experience

## 2. Traffic Management Act 2004

The Traffic Management Act 2004 was introduced in 2008 decriminalising parking to reduce the strain on Police resources when enforcing against parking contraventions.

Several important changes came with this legislation including:

- ◇ Civil Enforcement Officers rather than 'Parking Attendants'
- ◇ Penalty Charge Notices (PCNs) issued at different charges dependent on the seriousness of the contravention
- ◇ A statutory process for members of the public to contest PCNs

An up-to-date version of the Traffic Management Act 2004 can be found [here](#).

For further information on the statutory appeals process please visit the following [link](#).

### 3. Civil Parking Enforcement

Parking restrictions are placed at key locations throughout the borough of Maidstone to specifically ensure the free flow of traffic and to maintain highway safety for both drivers and pedestrians.

Enforcement is carried out by APCOA Parking's Civil Enforcement Officers on behalf of Maidstone Borough Council.

CEOs enforce parking restrictions under Section 6 of the Traffic Management Act 2004, in accordance with the relevant Traffic Regulation Order.

All TROs can be viewed online at: <http://www.maidstone.gov.uk/residents/parking-and-streets/traffic-regulations-orders-tro>

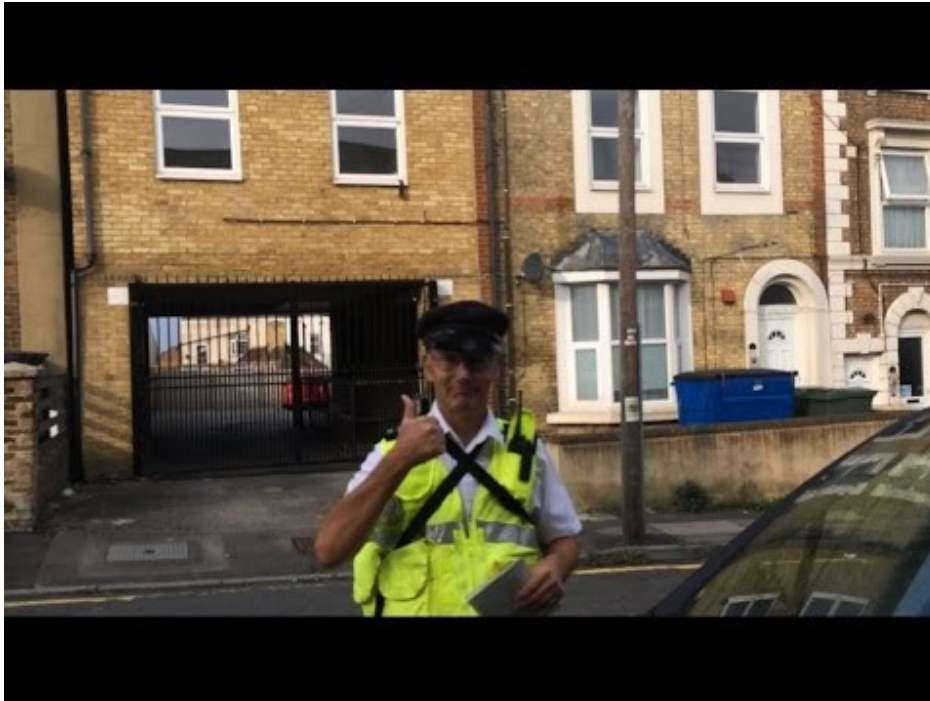


## 4. Civil Enforcement Officers

Maidstone's civil enforcement team patrol the borough on a daily basis to improve driver compliance.

Officers have the power to issue PCNs to any vehicles observed parked in contravention of an active parking restriction.

All Officers also act as the eyes and the ears of the Borough, reporting any faulty street furniture and greeting visitors to the Borough who require information or directions.



### Parking Myths

The role of a Civil Enforcement Officer can often be a difficult and unpopular one and is often the subject of many 'myths' and stereotypes.

Unfortunately, the common misconceptions about the role can influence the public's view of Officers. The information below may help to dispel some of the most common parking myths.

- ◆ All Officers are salaried and receive no commission
- ◆ Money generated by Officers is used to cover the cost of enforcement with any surplus being reinvested into key services by the Council
- ◆ Officers are not 'incentivised' to issue PCNs; charge notices can only be issued where a vehicle is observed parked in contravention
- ◆ Officers routinely carry out late or early shifts to enforce 24-hour restrictions
- ◆ Our Officers are here to help and often assist visitors to the Borough by providing information and directions
- ◆ All Officers wear hi-visibility uniform to ensure they are visible to the public (winter coats are issued for the colder months!)
- ◆ Officers don't wait in car parks; in fact over 70% of enforcement is carried out on-street

## 5. Body-Worn Cameras

In 2016 APCOA, in partnership with Maidstone Borough Council, introduced body-worn cameras for all CEOs to.

Body-worn cameras ensure the Health and Safety of the officers by acting as a deterrent to verbally and physically abusive members of the public, as well as providing sufficient evidence to prosecute when required.

They also allow Officers to detect and identify crime and antisocial behaviour.

Since their introduction, the cameras have led to two successful prosecutions.

The cameras record for a full shift (all deployed hours) in 720p HD image quality with full colour and audio recording. All cameras are tamperproof by the officer.

Cameras also allow Parking Service to investigate complaints made by members of the public, providing an impartial ‘third witness’.

However, footage cannot be used as supporting evidence when challenging a Penalty Charge Notice.





## 6. Contravention Codes

Penalty Charge Notices are issued to vehicles observed parked in contravention; the tables below show the contravention codes used on both on-street and off-street by Maidstone Borough Council.

**Fig 6.1 Contravention descriptions—on-street**

Contravention Code	Contravention Description—on-street	Penalty Charge
01	Parked in a restricted street during prescribed hours	£70
02	Parked or loading/unloading in a restricted street where waiting and loading/unloading restrictions are in force	£70
05	Parked after the expiry of paid for time	£50
06	Parked without clearly displaying a valid pay & display ticket or voucher	£50
07	Parked with payment made to extend the stay beyond the initial time	£50
11	Parked without payment of the parking charge	£50
12	Parked in a residents' or shared use parking place without clearly displaying either a permit or voucher or pay and display ticket issued for that place	£70
16	Parked in a permit space without displaying a valid permit	£70
19	Parked in a residents' or shared use parking place or zone either displaying an invalid permit or voucher or pay & display ticket, or after the expiry of paid for time	£50
24	Not parked correctly within the markings of the bay or space	£50
25	Parked in a loading place during restricted hours without loading	£70
30	Parked for longer than permitted	£50
40	Parked in a designated disabled person's parking place without clearly displaying a valid disabled person's badge	£70
45	Parked on a taxi rank	£70
47	Parked on a restricted bus stop or stand	£70
48	Stopped in a restricted area outside a school	£70
99	Stopped on a pedestrian crossing and/or crossing area marked by zigzags	£70

**Fig 6.2 Contravention descriptions—off-street**

Contravention Code	Contravention description—off-street	Penalty Charge
80	Parked for longer than permitted	£50
81	Parked in a restricted area in a car park	£70
82	Parked after the expiry of paid for time	£50
83	Parked in a car park without clearly displaying a valid pay & display ticket or voucher or parking clock	£50
86	Not parked correctly within the markings of a bay or space	£50
87	Parked in a disabled person's parking space without clearly displaying a valid disabled person's badge	£70

## 7. Penalty Charge Notices (PCNs)

Following the introduction of the Traffic Management Act 2004 PCNs can now be issued at two levels depending on the severity of the contravention being committed.

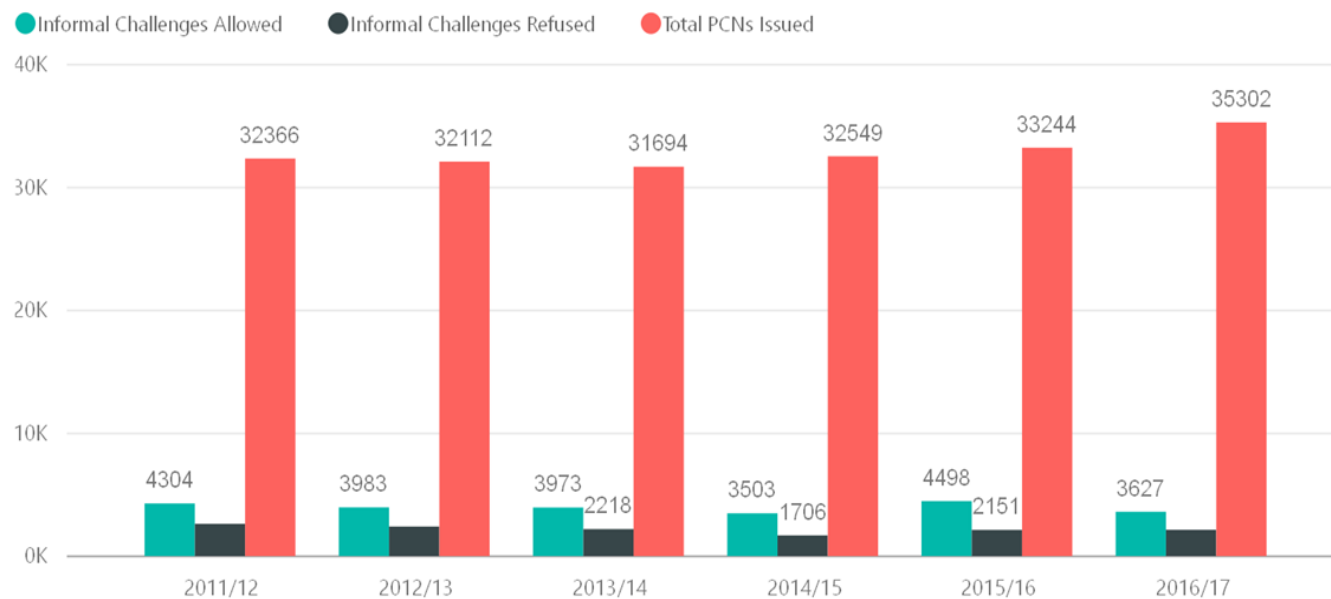
However, there is a nationwide appeals process for motorists who feel they have valid mitigation for parking in contravention.

The following statistics show how many PCNs have been issued across the Borough this year, how many have been appealed and of those how many have been successful.

Every appeal is exceptional and has no bearing on the outcome of any other cases. Appeals are only judged in accordance with the mitigation submitted as part of the legal process.

**Fig 7.1 Appeals Received out of Total PCNs Issued**

Informal Challenges Allowed, Informal Challenges Refused and Total PCNs Issued by Year

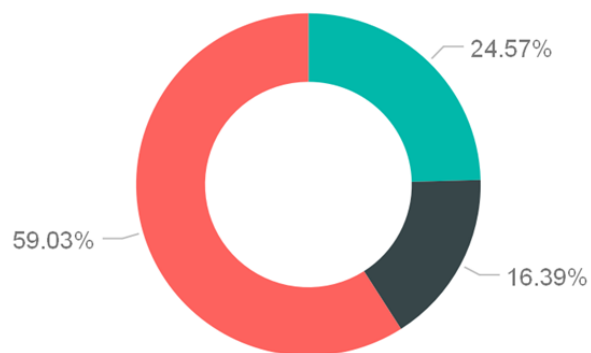


**16% Of Customers  
Appealed PCNs. Of  
those appeals 10%  
were successful**

**Fig 7.2 PCNs Issued, Paid and Appealed**

No Action Taken, PCNs Appealed and PCNs Paid

● No Action Taken ● PCNs Appealed ● PCNs Paid



**Fig 7.5 Traffic Penalty Tribunal (TPT) Summary**

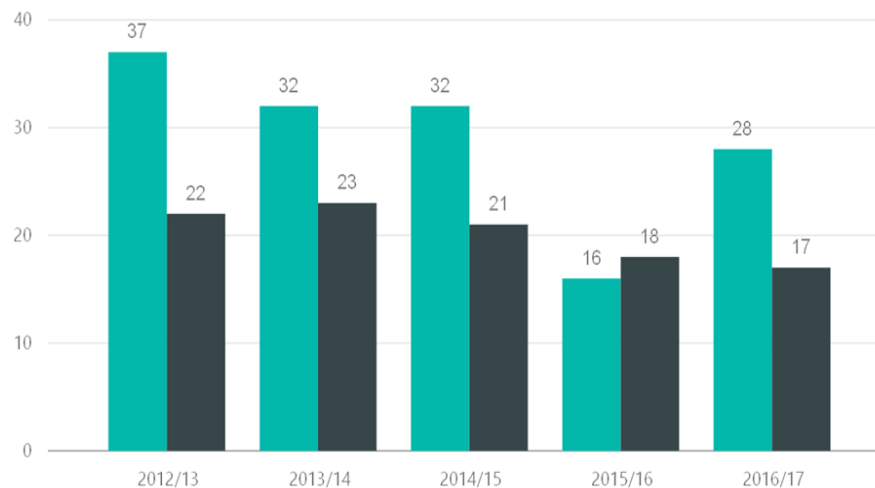
Cases appealed through the nationwide legal process can be referred to the Traffic Penalty Tribunal in instances where the Local Authority and the Appellant fail to reach an agreed outcome.

Fig 6.4 shows all cases escalated to TPT over the past financial year and their subsequent outcomes.

**Fig 7.6 Traffic Penalty Tribunal (TPT) Case Breakdown**

Total Cases Lost and Total Cases Won (MBC) by Year

● Total Cases Lost ● Total Cases Won (MBC)



Total Cases Won (MBC) and Total Cases Lost

● Total Cases Won (MBC) ● Total Cases Lost



## 8. Car Parks (Off-Street Parking)

Maidstone Borough Council operate seven short-stay car parks and ten long-stay car parks.

All car parks are pay and display with Season Tickets being available for all long-stay car parks and additionally Mote Road short-stay car park.

Unlike income generated on-street by civil parking enforcement, any available pay and display surplus is reinvested into Maidstone Borough Council and used to defray the costs of core council services.

This year saw the introduction of several new car parks in Maidstone located at Cobtree and Mote Park.

The revenue generated from the car parks contributes to the maintenance of these award winning parks and will also help fund future projects to make the park a more enjoyable place for everyone.

**Less than 30% of all enforcement takes place in off-street car parks.**

## 9. Cashless Parking

Maidstone operate a cashless alternative to pay for parking, allowing users to pay via telephone, SMS or using a smartphone app.

The PhoneandPay service is operated by Bemrose Mobile and continues to see steady growth.

We hope that service use continues to increase and we monitor PhoneandPay performance to further improve the quality of service offered to the public.

Fig 9.1 shows the level of growth from when the service went live in 2014 until now.

Important to note is that data for 2014 is only reflective of October-December 2014, similarly 2017's data only shows January–March in accordance with the end of financial year.

Data for both 2015 and 2016 cover January–December for both years.

**Fig 9.1 Annual Cashless Parking Growth**

Transactions by Year



## 10. Resident Parking Scheme

Due to the huge increase on vehicle ownership in the past two decades as well as the effects of commuter parking on local residents situated close to Maidstone Town Centre we operate a Resident Parking Scheme.

The scheme aims to reduce the effects of antisocial and commuter parking on residents as well as maintaining the free flow of traffic on the public highway.

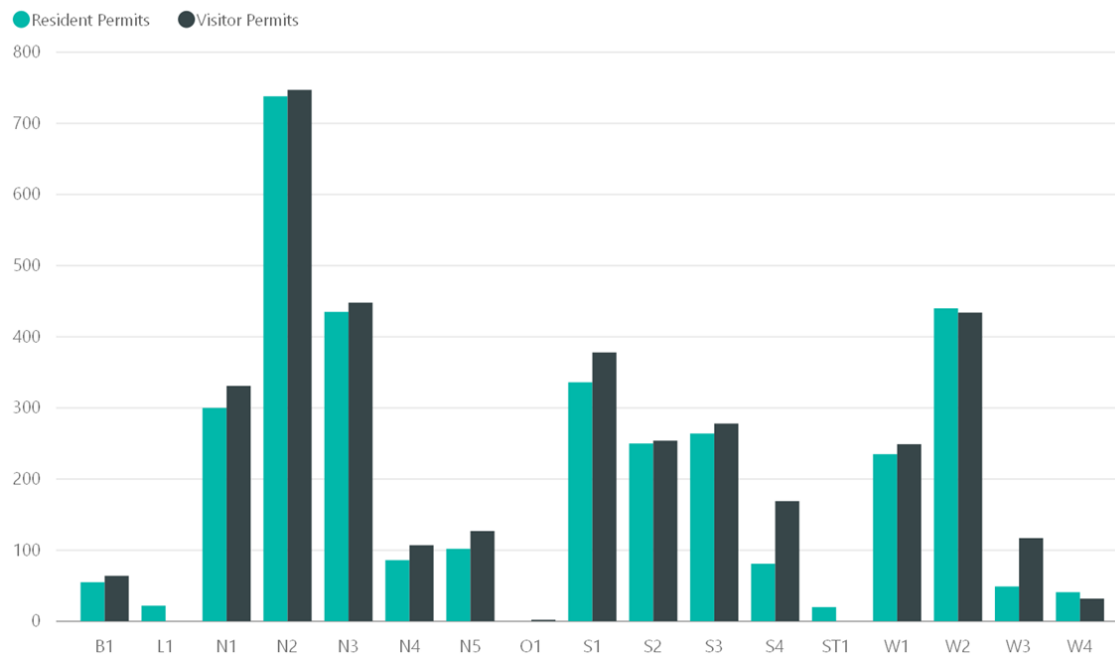
Maidstone use runs of bays, as opposed to individual marked bays; individual bays must adhere to sizing restrictions which would reduce the amount of available on-street parking.

Fig 10.1 Permits Issued by Zone

Year	Zone	Permits
2016/17	O1	2
2016/17	B1	119
2016/17	L1	22
2016/17	ST1	20
2016/17	N1	631
2016/17	N2	1485
2016/17	N3	883
2016/17	N4	193
2016/17	N5	229
2016/17	S1	714
2016/17	S2	504
2016/17	S3	542
2016/17	S4	250
2016/17	W1	484
2016/17	W2	874
2016/17	W3	166
2016/17	W4	73

Fig 10.2 Breakdown of Permits by Zone 2016/17

Resident Permits and Visitor Permits by Zone



## 11. Disabled Parking

Due to the pedestrian zone and commercial concessions in Maidstone Town Centre to help boost the local economy, there are limited on-street disabled bays.

All on-street disabled bays are regularly patrolled to ensure they are not being misused and improve availability for valid blue badge holders.

Maidstone Borough Council allow blue badge holders to park free of charge in all Council-operated car parks.

Fig 11.1 PCNs issued for no valid blue badge

Year	PCNs On-Street	PCNs Off-Street
2010/11	625	355
2011/12	1034	362
2012/13	982	314
2013/14	990	240
2014/15	1181	225
2015/16	1375	235
2016/17	1661	375



## 12. Park and Ride

Maidstone's Park and Ride service provides an alternative to car park-parking for motorists commuting into Maidstone.

Maidstone operated 3 services from sites located at Willington Street, London Road and Sittingbourne Road.

Due to operational costs, Maidstone Borough Council were unable to renew the lease for the Sittingbourne Road site; subsequently, the service ceased operation in February 2016.

Despite this, the contract was extended by a year to allow a full review of the service to:

- Identify potential improvements in efficiency
- Identify areas for Service Improvement
- Improve long-term viability of the service

Maidstone Borough Council will be liaising with local residents and businesses, working together to help design an attractive and efficient service.

## 13. Parking Finance

Maidstone Borough Council is required under section 55 of the Road Traffic Regulations Act 1984 to keep an account of income and expenditure relating to on-street parking places; as well as income from and expenditure relating to our functions as enforcement authority. This includes all income and expenditure related to the issue of and income from Penalty Charge Notices in respect of off-street parking places, but not income from ordinary car park charges nor any other expenditure in car parks.

Section 55(4) outlines the purposes for which any surplus in the parking account can be used. It also provides for the making good of any deficit in the parking account from the general fund, and for surpluses to be used to repay the general fund for any charges to that fund in the previous four years, or may be carried forward.

**Fig 13.1 On-Street Parking Revenue**

On-Street		Full Yr Budget	Yr End Actual	Variance
RC10	On street parking	-£77,440	-£198,804	£121,364
RC11	Residents parking	-£17,310	-£74,799	£57,489
RC22	Off street parking enforcement	-£91,980	-£64,842	-£27,138
RC24	Mote park enforcement	£23,940	£21,918	£2,022
		<b>-£162,790</b>	<b>-£316,527</b>	<b>£153,737</b>

Local authorities may under the powers of section 35 of the Road Traffic Regulations Act 1984, impose charges for parking in car parks provided under section 32 or 33(4) of that Act; and under sections 45 and 46 of the 1984 Act, charge for parking at on-street parking places.

**Fig 13.2 Off-Street Parking Revenue**

Off-Street		Full Yr Budget	Yr End Actual	Variance
RC20	P&D car parks	-£1,132,440	-£1,518,674	£386,234
RC21	Non paying car parks	£19,540	£18,129	£1,411
RC23	Mote park P&D	-£143,120	-£81,365	-£61,755
RC25	Sandling Road car park	£0	£82	-£82
SL10	Parking Services section (misc)	-£970	£1	-£971
		<b>-£1,256,990</b>	<b>-£1,581,827</b>	<b>£324,837</b>

**Fig 13.3 Transport Revenue**

Transport		Full Yr Budget	Yr End Actual	Variance
RE10	Park & Ride	£243,660	£241,775	£1,885
RE11	Socially Desirable Busses	£65,310	£61,185	£4,125
		<b>£308,970</b>	<b>£302,960</b>	<b>£6,010</b>