

Off Street Parking Report 2020



Introduction

The Traffic Management Act 2004 introduced a requirement for Enforcement Authorities to report on their parking enforcement activities on an annual basis. Runnymede Borough Council, under an agency agreement, carries out 'On Street' parking enforcement on behalf of the Highways Authority, Surrey County Council.

For these 'On Street' activities Surrey County Council is the Enforcement Authority and they are responsible for reporting, on behalf of the of the various Boroughs, carrying out enforcement on their behalf..

The purpose of this report is to give information about the Borough car parks and the Enforcement activity carried out in those facilities.

Runnymede Borough Council operates 13 'Off Street' car parks most of which are operated under a 'Pay and Display' charging system. Enforcement Activity is undertaken in these car parks by directly employed Civil Enforcement Officers. The same officers carry out the enforcement of the 'on street' restrictions.

Borough pay and display car parks

Car Park	No of Spaces
Wasp Farm, Station Road, Egham	119
Hummer Road, Egham	128
Victoria Street, Englefield Green	34
St. Jude's Road (Cemetery), Englefield Green	39
Memorial Gardens, Virginia Water	90
British Legion, Virginia Water	19
Bemonds, Heriot Road, Chertsey	55
Chertsey Library, Heriot Road, Chertsey	174
Gogmore Farm Park, Chertsey	53
Pooley Green	35
Woodlands	102
Homewood (Leisure)	70
Runnymede Pleasure Grounds, Windsor Road, Egham (Leisure)	352

Homewood Park and Runnymede Pleasure Grounds are Leisure car parks which are supervised by the Parking Service department on behalf of the Boroughs Open Spaces department.

Previously the pay and display facilities have been awarded the 'Park Mark', safer parking award operated by the British Parking Association. Although the Council has withdrawn from this scheme, due to the cost of maintaining membership, the Parking Services team does maintain the facilities to the standards required by that scheme.

All of the Council's town and village car parks are covered by CCTV operated 24 hours per day from the Safer Runnymede Control room.

The main objective of making charges in the car parks is to cover the costs of their maintenance, infrastructure and management, ensuring that the people using the facilities pay for them.

The secondary objective is to ensure that parking is available for people using the facilities in the town and villages by ensuring a turnover of spaces in the car parks. This is particularly important in the car parks supporting the shops in the town centres where most car parks are 'short stay' facilities.

The level of charges in the car parks is reviewed annually by the Council's Environment and Sustainability Committee. The Committee balances the charges at a level that maximises the income, without deterring visitors, which could affect the viability and vitality of the town and villages in the Borough. A comparison with charges from comparable car parks in adjoining Boroughs is always made as part of this process.

The Environment and Sustainability Committee decided to raise all of the charges for car parking at its meeting in November 2018. Permit prices were also increased. At its meeting in November 2019 the Committee decided not to change prices again for this year.

Towards the end of the last financial year the effects of the Covid 19 Pandemic caused a significant reduction in car park use over the Borough. Facilities near to the railway stations had few users.



Parking Charges

Two levels of charges operate in the Borough. One for Town Centres and one for the Villages and sites away from the main town centres. The current charges are shown below.



Town Centre Charges

1 hour	£1.30
1-2 hours	£2.50
2-3 hours	£3.50
3-4 hours	£4.00
4-5 hours	£4.50
All day	£7.00

Out of Town charges

1 hour	60p
1-2 hours	£1.20
2-3 hours	£2.00
3-4 hours	£3.00
4-5 hours	£3.50
All day	£5.50

Pay By Phone

In February 2016 the Council changed its pay by phone provider to RingGo. This is an increasingly popular method of paying for parking charges. Applications are available for i-phone and Android devices. Once registered it is possible to book parking sessions, in any RingGo car park, with ease. Payment by this method now accounts for thirty one percent of all transactions and eighty one percent of all day stays.



Enforcement activities

The Borough employs uniformed Civil Enforcement Officers (CEO) to patrol and enforce on and off street parking matters throughout the Borough. As well as ensuring the charging regime in the car parks is complied with, the staff members also help to ensure that any defects, or other issues affecting the car parks, are reported and rectified. The Officers are all trained to nationally recognised standards and receive refresher training when necessary. The Officers are equipped with body worn CCTV facilities to enhance their safety and provide an accurate recording, to an evidential standard, of incidents they are involved in.

Penalty Charge Notices



Vehicles appearing to be parked in contravention of the Off Street Parking Order can be issued with a Penalty Charge Notice (PCN) which is normally attached to the vehicle or handed to the driver by the CEO. The level of the charges, set by central government, is currently £50 for a lower level contravention, and £70 for a higher level contravention. The charges can be settled at a reduced charge of £25, or £35, respectively if paid within 14 days of issue.

The level of the charge is designed to reflect the severity of the contravention. For example if someone was to remain in the car park for a longer period than they had

paid for then they would receive a lower level charge. Those who park in a disabled person's bay, when not holding the appropriate badge, which is considered to be a more serious contravention, would receive a higher level charge.

Once a PCN has been issued, the driver can challenge the issue of the notice with the Council. Trained members of the Parking Services Team will consider the circumstances and any mitigation given by the driver. While the challenge is being considered the case will be placed on hold so that, even if the challenge is rejected, the motorist can still settle the matter at the reduced charge.

When a challenge is made and rejected, or no payment made, the owner of the vehicle is sent a 'Notice to Owner'. This is the owner's opportunity to make formal representations against the issue of the Penalty Charge Notice. Consideration of these representations is carried out by the Parking Services Manager. Should the representations be rejected a driver then has an opportunity to appeal against that decision to the Traffic Penalty Tribunal. This is an independent body where Adjudicators will consider the case and whose decision is binding on both the Council and the Motorist.

The Council is a participant in the Fast On-Line Appeal Management system which allows for the paperless submission of appeals to the Tribunal. This system is considerably faster than the old formal system and will reduce postage and copying charges significantly.

Reasons for the issue of PCNs in car parks

2913 Penalty Charge Notices were issued in car parks over the last financial year. The reasons that Penalty Charge Notices were issued are shown below

Contravention	Number
Lower level penalty charge	
80- Parked for longer than maximum permitted period	75
82- Parked after expiry of paid for time	433
83- Parked without displaying pay and display ticket	2201
86- Parked beyond bay markings	147
90 -Re parked within prescribed time period	4
Higher level penalty charge	
85- Parked in permit bay without permit	15
87- Parked in disabled bay	38

Customer Survey

During the summer of 2019 a customer survey was undertaken in the car parks. This involved the distribution of questionnaires to vehicle in the Borough car parks. Of those who responded to the survey:

50% thought the car park charges were reasonable or acceptable.

76% thought security was good or acceptable

79% thought lighting was very good or acceptable

76% thought cleanliness was good or acceptable

87% thought disabled access was good or acceptable

Penalty Charge Notice Statistics

The Traffic Management Act requires the provision of certain statistics in relation to Penalty Charge Notices

OFF STREET PARKING

Total Number of PCNs issued	2913
Number of CEOs employed	1.5
Number of higher level PCNs issued	53
Number of lower level PCNs issued	2860
Number paid at discount	1952
Number paid at full (or above)	301
Total Number of PCNs paid	2253
Number of PCNs against which formal or informal reps made	637

Number of PCNS cancelled as a result of formal or informal reps	359
Number of PCNs cancelled for other reasons	66
Number of PCNs written off	60
Number of Vehicles immobilised	0
Number of vehicles removed.	0

Financial

The expenditure in relation to the car parks covers their physical upkeep, equipment, disposables, staffing in relation to the Parking Services Department and the Enforcement activities.

Most income is from parking charges and permits. Any surplus is used to support other Council services.

Gross Expenditure £401,107

Gross Income £973,416

Net Surplus £572,309

The net total we receive from supplying car parking services firstly helps to fund car park improvement projects then secondly helps to pay for other Council Services including:

	Net cost 2019/20
Recycling and environmental initiatives	1,201,554
Refuse collection	810,086
Street cleansing	943,088
Public conveniences	22,788

This concludes the Off Street Parking report. For further information please contact the Parking Services Team at parking@runnymede.gov.uk

Or telephone 01932 838383

Mervyn Robins, Parking Services Manager, Runnymede Borough Council

25th October 2020