

ANNUAL PARKING SERVICE REPORT

2014/15



**BOROUGH OF
BROXBOURNE**
www.broxbourne.gov.uk

Overview

Welcome to the Broxbourne Borough Council Annual Parking report for the period April 2014 to March 2015. The aim of the report is to present financial and statistical data as well as our objectives, achievements and plans for the future.

The principal aim of the parking service is to discourage inconsiderate and obstructive parking throughout the Borough and to enforce the parking regulations fairly and consistently, bearing in mind the needs of drivers, residents, businesses, visitors, commuters and blue badge holders. We deliver this through a team of trained and qualified Civil Enforcement Officers (CEOs), supported by a small team of notice processing officers.

During the last year, to improve and develop the service and to reduce costs, the Council moved to a shared Parking Services Manager with Hertsmere Borough Council and will continue to look for further efficiencies/developments from this shared service. We also implemented a Parking Management Strategy to sit alongside our Parking Enforcement Policy. Both these documents are available on the Council's website.

I hope you find this report to be helpful and informative, but would welcome any constructive comments to improve the service. If you do then please contact the Parking Control team on 01992 785501 or email parkingcontrol@broxbourne.gov.uk

Councillor Tim Hutchings
Cabinet Member for Public and Environmental Protection
Broxbourne Council



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Introduction

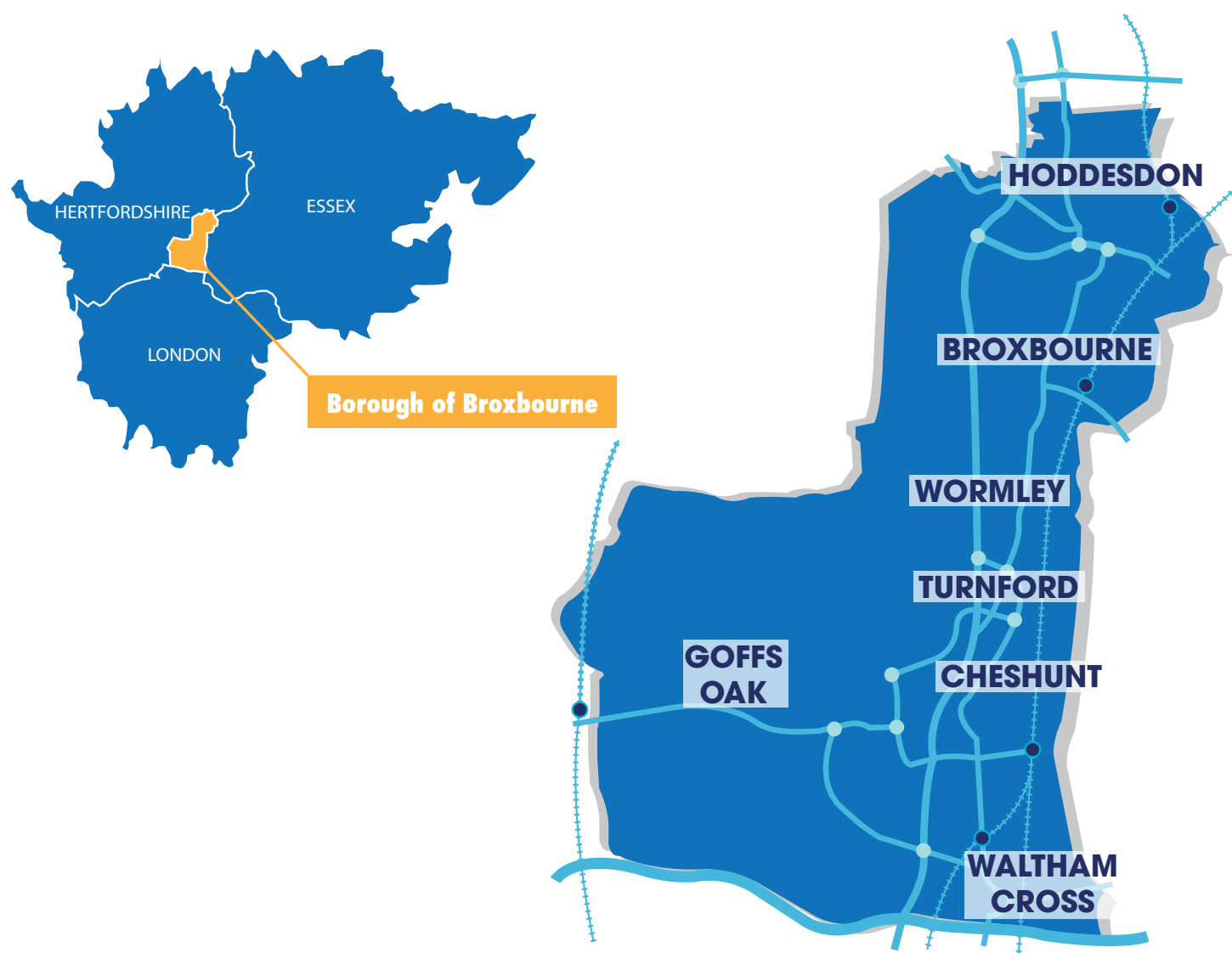
The Borough of Broxbourne lies in south east Hertfordshire, adjoining London and the M25 to the south. It has an area of approximately 20 square miles and a population of around 96,500. The Borough is bisected by the A10 and the London-to-Cambridge railway line. The towns of Waltham Cross, Cheshunt and Hoddesdon lie along this north-south corridor in a near continuous urban area. To the west are Hammond Street and Goffs Oak. The rest of the Borough is mostly rural with large areas of wooded Green Belt countryside. There are good road and rail links into London, as well as to Stansted Airport, and many residents commute to work on a daily basis.

The geography and demographics of the Borough present many challenges when it comes to setting a parking policy, and attempting to balance the often competing requirements of different groups of stakeholders, including residents, businesses, commuters, visitors, schools and Blue Badge holders.

There are three main town centres (Waltham Cross, Cheshunt and Hoddesdon) and many smaller local shopping parades throughout the Borough.

The Council endeavours to support local businesses by providing sufficient free or low-priced short-stay parking so as to achieve a good level of turnover of these spaces and to encourage shoppers/visitors.

Overall, car ownership is above average, with more than 80% of households having one or more cars. This results in a high demand for on-street spaces in many residential areas. In common with the rest of the country, the proportion of older residents is projected to continue to increase over the coming years, as is the number of blue badge holders.



Background

In 2005 Broxbourne Borough Council became responsible for enforcing the parking restrictions which were previously enforced by Hertfordshire Constabulary. The introduction of the Road Traffic Act 1991 decriminalised parking enforcement which gave local authorities the option to take on the civil enforcement of parking contraventions. This meant that the Council could enforce on street parking contraventions on yellow lines and disabled parking bays and not just the Council's pay and display car parks.

In March 2008 the legal framework of Part 6 of the Traffic Management Act 2004 was introduced which would provide greater consistency across England in relation to the enforcement of parking restrictions.



One of the key elements of the Traffic Management Act was that local authorities must set two levels of penalty charges with the higher level applying to the more serious contraventions. Enforcement Officers were no longer to be called Parking Attendants (PA) and were to be referred to as Civil Enforcement Officers (CEO).

The Traffic Management Act 2004 operational Guidance advises enforcement authorities that they should provide an annual report on their activities for each financial year. In reporting on data and statistics it can help with clarity and understanding of the Council's perspective in regards to enforcement and its parking strategy. This Annual Report is also available via the Council's website www.broxbourne.gov.uk.



(i) Parking Management Strategy

In February 2015, the Council approved a new Parking Management Strategy. It draws together a range of approaches to different aspects of parking provision developed since the Council took responsibility for parking in 2005. It outlines a significant change in the Council's approach to parking, with emphasis on the provision of permit parking in both town centres and residential areas.

This includes the provision of controlled parking zones in residential areas, particularly near to railway stations, as well as being more responsive to the parking needs of the workforce of local businesses. In addition, the Council has introduced a new procedure for dealing with and prioritising requests for parking controls.

A copy of the Parking Management Strategy is available to view on the Council's website.

Key objectives of the Strategy:

The Council's key objectives, in terms of meeting parking demand are:

- being able to park safely and conveniently, whilst ensuring the free flow of the highway;
- providing appropriate parking to support our town centres, balancing the needs of both local businesses and shoppers/visitors;
- seeking to minimise the impact of commuter parking on local residents; and
- encouraging local motorists to park safely and considerately.

A set of guiding principles about delivering these objectives are also detailed in the strategy.

Developing a new approach

The strategy sets out a range of future priorities, including both existing policies and several new suggestions. These include:

- **Residential controlled parking zone schemes**

The Council will look at the feasibility of establishing controlled parking zones, supported by a resident parking permit scheme, to help tackle the issues of commuter parking near the Borough's railway stations.

- **Business parking permits**

The Council will seek to respond to the needs of local businesses, particularly in town centre areas by providing discounted parking permits for staff working at local businesses.

- **'Special Parking Permits' and 'Parking Dispensation Permits'**

The Council will also provide for purchase both 'Special Parking Permits' in those situations where a resident needs regular visits by a health visitor, doctor, care worker and there are parking restrictions in force, and 'Parking Dispensation Permits' for those cases where a temporary exemption from parking restrictions is sought by a tradesman to carry out non-emergency works to residential or commercial premises.

- **Alternative payment options for on and off street parking**

With the increased emphasis on cashless payment arrangements, the Council will investigate the potential benefits of introducing alternative payment options.



New Parking Restrictions 2014/15

In order to address safety concerns arising at a number of road junctions and congestion occurring in residential roads, caused by obstructive or inappropriate parking, waiting restrictions were introduced in the following areas and roads following a consultation process with local residents:

No waiting at anytime

Area	Road name
Hoddesdon	part of Lampits
Broxbourne	part of Nursery Road
Cheshunt	part of Pear Tree Walk part of Beechwood Close part of Longfield Lane part of Debenham Road
Waltham Cross	part of Queens Way



No waiting between 9am and 10am Monday to Friday

Area	Road name
Hoddesdon	part of Woodstock Road part of Sutton Close Badminton Place part of Park Lane Grenville Avenue Salwey Crescent Bassingbourne Close part of Mandeville Close
Cheshunt	Palmers Way



Car Parks

The Council currently operates 12 pay and display car parks across the Borough. These car parks provide a total of 1,244 parking spaces. The Council's parking charges are regularly benchmarked against the charges made in neighbouring boroughs and are subject to annual review. The current charges can be viewed at www.broxbourne.gov.uk/resident-environment-parking/car-parks.

All these car parks are maintained by the Council and all are currently accredited with the 'Park Mark', with many of these car parks benefitting from CCTV coverage. The Council will continue to maintain the security of users of these facilities to encourage greater utilisation by all visitors.

Location	Ordinary Spaces	Disabled Badge Holders Bays	Motorcycle	Leased/Reserved	Taxi	Total
Cheshunt:						
Newham Parade	70	3		17		90
Community Hospital	39	4	1	1		45
Windmill Lane/ Laura Trott Centre	220	13	3			236
Wycliffe Close	54	2		2		58
Waltham Cross:						
Eleanor Cross Road	88	4	3	2	2	99
High Street	150	10	2	11		173
Playing Fields	76	4		16		96
Hoddesdon:						
Burford Street	45	3				48
Taverners Way North	41	3				44
Taverners Way South	35	2	2			39
Goffs Oak:						
Valley View	27	3	1	17		48
Broxbourne:						
Lido (Riverside)	240	4	2			246

Season Tickets

Customers can also purchase a season ticket to park in most of our car parks:

- 13 weeks £175
- Annual £500

On Street

The Council provides a number of different parking provisions and enforces various restrictions. Below are examples of both.

- over 320 on-street parking bays, principally in the Borough's town centres and at local shopping parades (in some places free parking for 30 minutes, in others for an hour).
- Blue Badge holder bay – allows badge holders to park when displaying a valid badge.
- Single yellow lines – restricting parking during prescribed times
- Double yellow lines - are implemented for safety reasons and can be found at junctions or busy roads.

When implementing restrictions the Council will follow a statutory legal consultation process with all the relevant parties.



Disabled Parking Provisions

Blue badges are issued in the Borough by Hertfordshire County Council to allow cars carrying people who are registered blind or people who have severe walking difficulties to be parked near their homes, shops, stations and other facilities.

All the Council's pay and display car parks have designated disabled bays. Blue Badge holders may park free of charge in these car parks whilst displaying a valid Blue Badge. However, Blue Badge holders cannot park in reserved/permit bays or bays dedicated to other vehicles, such as motorcycles or parent and child bays. Blue badge holders may also park on single or double yellow lines for up to three hours provided they are displaying a valid Blue Badge, but not where there are restrictions on loading or unloading.

There are currently in excess of 450 'on street' disabled parking bays in the Borough, with the number increasing each year. These are provided free of charge at locations where there is a high demand for on-street parking spaces.

Maintenance of signs and lines

It is the Council's responsibility to ensure that lines and signs are well maintained and compliant with the regulations. This helps provide clear instruction to motorists that a restriction is in place.

Enforcement of Parking Restrictions

The Council employs a small number of CEOs who patrol every day of the week to provide coverage of all parking restrictions throughout the Borough, although priority is given to those areas where the most parking problems are experienced such as town centres and outside schools. In addition, early morning and late evening patrols may be carried out to enforce commercial vehicle restrictions, double yellow lines and misuse of bus stops and taxi ranks.

CEOs use hand-held computers to record the details of all Penalty Charge Notices (PCNs) issued, and use digital cameras to provide supporting evidence of parking contraventions. This enables the Council to take an objective and consistent approach to the assessment of challenges against the issue of PCNs. Body cameras are also used by the CEOs. This is to deter aggressive behaviour towards them, to provide evidence of any criminal behaviour and to support penalty charges issued. The Council's enforcement policy also helps outline the criteria governing the issuing of Penalty Charge Notices (PCNs) and the challenge process and can be viewed on the Council's website.

Enforcement within the Borough of Broxbourne aims to:

- Maintain and, where possible, improve the flow of traffic.
- Take into account the need to improve safety and environmental conditions.
- Discourage indiscriminate parking causing obstruction and hindering the free flow of traffic, thereby ensuring a safe environment for highway users and maximum turnover of parking spaces.
- A greater focus on school patrols, resulting in an enforcement presence at one or more schools on three days out of every four and the implementation of broader initiatives to address issues at the most problematic schools.

Dropped kerb enforcement

- The Council are able to issue Penalty Charge Notices to drivers who park on the carriageway adjacent to a dropped kerb. A dropped kerb is defined as a kerb which has been lowered to assist pedestrians crossing the carriageway or vehicles entering or leaving the carriageway.
- This enforcement benefits those members of the public who have their driveways blocked and ensures that minimum inconvenience is caused to pedestrians, wheelchair and motability scooter users and those pushing prams and pushchairs on footways.
- The Council will only be able to take action and enforce against an offending vehicle if a vehicle is blocking a drive without the consent of the resident. Residents reporting the issue are required to give their name, address, contact number and a description of the vehicle and the registration number if possible.



Dealing with Challenges and Appeals against Penalty Charge Notices



Penalty Charge Notice processing is carried out by the Council's notice processing team. The officers are trained to provide a consistent, fair and accurate approach when dealing with PCNs.

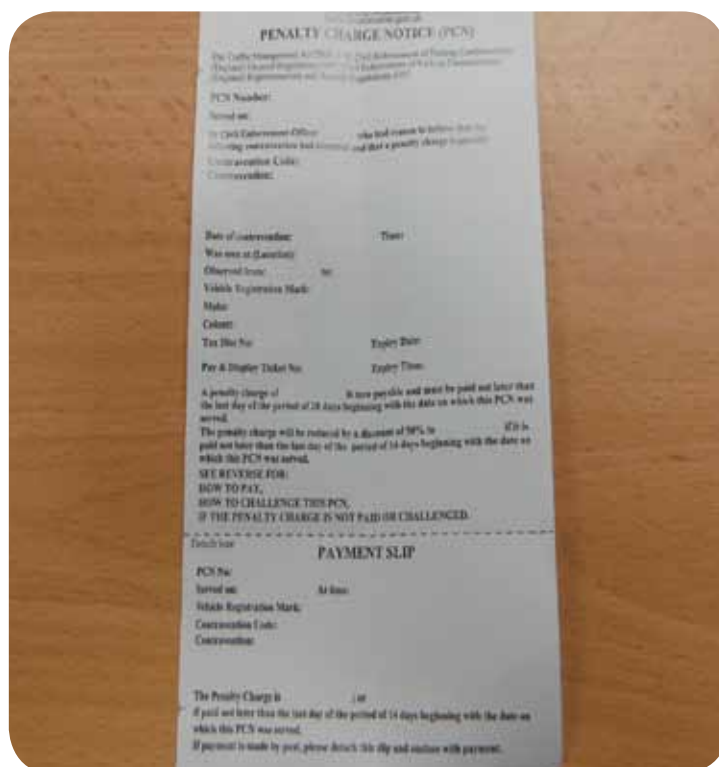
Vehicle owners may choose to dispute a penalty charge notice that has been issued to their vehicle if they feel that it has been incorrectly issued or there are mitigating circumstances that they would like to be considered.

If the PCN remains unpaid, inclusive of any representations and appeals made which were subsequently rejected, the Council may register it as a debt at the Traffic Enforcement Centre (TEC) at the County Court, to recover the outstanding amount.

There are three stages to this process:

- Informal Challenge – should be made in writing within the first 28 days after the PCN has been issued. The case will be placed on hold and a response is normally sent within 14 days. If your challenge was received within 14 days of the date the PCN was issued, the Council will normally reinstate the discount for a further period of 14 days if your challenge is rejected. Only one informal challenge will be considered for each PCN.

- Formal Representation - A Notice to Owner (NTO) will be served after 28 days either from the date of the issue of the PCN if it is not paid; or from the date of a rejection of the informal challenge. The NTO provides details on how to make a formal representation. The Council will consider the representation and will respond within 56 days of receipt of the representation. The case will be placed on hold whilst it is being considered.
- Appeal to the Traffic Penalty Tribunal (TPT) - If the representation is rejected, you have the right to appeal to an independent adjudicator at the TPT. The TPT ensures that unresolved disputes between the motorist and the Council can be heard at a formal tribunal hearing and whose decision regarding the PCN is final. TPT is independent of the Council and details of how to make an appeal are enclosed with the rejection of representation.



Issue of Penalty Charge Notices (PCNs)

The table below details the number of penalty charge notices issued:

	2012/13	%	2013/14	%	2014/15	%
PCNs Issued @ higher level	6,116	46	5,114	41	5,605	44
PCNs Issued @ lower level	7,277	54	7,438	59	7,081	56
Total number of PCN's issued	13,393		12,552		12,686	

PCN's issued by contravention 2014 - 2015

PCN Description	Code	Number
On Street		
Parked in a restricted street during prohibited hours	01	2,861
(Un) Loading during prohibited hours	02	951
Parked after expiry of paid for time	05	402
Parked without displaying a valid ticket	06	972
Reparked within a specific time	22	16
Parked in a place not designated for that class of vehicle	23	217
Not parked correctly within parking bay	24	511
In a loading place but not loading	25	100
Parked adjacent to dropped footway	27	329
Parked for longer than permitted in 'free' parking bay	30	829
In a disabled bay without a badge	40	521
Parked on a taxi rank	45	182
Parked on a restricted bus stop	47	60
Stopped on a restricted area outside a school	48	22
Commercial vehicle overnight waiting ban	55	10
Commercial vehicle waiting restriction	56	4
Off Street		
Parked for the maximum period permitted	80	14
Parked in restricted area of car park	81	104
Parked after expiry in pay & display car park	82	963
Without displaying a valid ticket in a car park	83	3,131
Parked in a permit bay without a permit	85	74
Beyond bay markings in a car park	86	139
In a disabled bay without a badge in a car park	87	226
Parked in an area not for that class of vehicle	91	18
Stopped on a pedestrian crossing	99	30
Total		12,686

Number of PCNs where informal or formal representations were made

Below shows the number of PCNs issued and the number informally and formally challenged. It also shows the percentages of each against the total of PCNs issued.

Year	2012/13		2013/14		2014/15	
	PCNs	%	PCNs	%	PCNs	%
Valid PCNs issued	13,393		12,552		12,686	
No of PCNs informally challenged	3,567	26.6	3,198	25.5	3,018	23.8
No of PCNs formal representations	670	5	534	4.3	566	4.5
Total number of challenges received	4,237		3,732		3,584	

Number of PCNs cancelled following an informal or formal representations made

Below shows the number of PCNs cancelled as a result of informally and formal challenges. It also shows the percentages of each against the total of PCNs issued

Year	2012/13		2013/14		2014/15	
	PCNs	%	PCNs	%	PCNs	%
Total number received	4,237		3,732		3,584	
Informal challenges	2,240	53	2,044	55	2,008	56
Formal representations	572	17	436	12	512	20
Total cancelled	2,812		2,480		2,520	

Table below shows the reasons and the number of PCNs cancelled for 2014/15

Cancellation Reason	Number Cancelled
Pay and display ticket produced	115
Valid permit produced	534
Blue badge produced	430
CEO Error	133
Mitigating circumstances	685
Loading/unloading	19
Vehicle broken down	38
Pay and display machine breakdown	1
Representation accepted	207
Error in ticket details	358

Appeals to adjudicator

The table below shows the total number of appeals lodged and heard by the Traffic Penalty Tribunal (independent adjudicator) and their outcomes.

	2013/12		2013/14		2014/15	
	PCNs	%	PCNs	%	PCNs	%
Received	25		23		32	
Allowed	7	28	7	30	13	41
Rejected	18	72	16	70	19	59

Year	2012/13		2013/14		2014/15	
	PCNs	%	PCNs	%	PCNs	%
PCNs Issued	13,393		12,552		12,686	
PCNs paid @discounted amount	7,490	55.9	7,533	60	8,144	64.2
PCNs paid @full amount	1,193	8.9	1,083	8.6	1,161	9.2

Financial Summary of 2014/15

The income and expenditure of the Council in connection with its on-street charging and all of its enforcement activity, both on-street and off-street, is governed by Section 55 of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 as amended. This requires that any surplus is used for specified purposes, namely the provision or maintenance of car parking facilities, public transport, road improvement projects or environmental improvements.

In the year 2014/15 the Council made a loss of £118,062 on its enforcement activities and on-street parking. Generally it is only those authorities with a significant amount of on-street parking income who generate a surplus under Section 55. In Broxbourne the vast majority of on-street parking is free. In accordance with the provisions of the legislation, this deficit was funded from the Council's General Fund.

2014/15 Parking Control Account under S55 RTA 1984 as amended	£
Employee related costs	304,447
Direct operating costs	58,537
Internal support charges	106,520
Total Expenditure	469,504
Parking income	(16,627)
PCN income	(334,815)
Total Income	(351,442)
Deficit	118,062

The Council's car parks generated a surplus of £334,506 as follows:	£
Employee related costs	16,023
Direct operating costs	228,837
Internal support charges	118,490
Total Expenditure	363,350
Parking income	(697,856)
Surplus	(334,506)

This surplus was used to fund additional on-street parking bays and to provide highway improvements and new or extended parking restrictions.