

Annual Parking Report 2023 – 2024



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Foreword

The Parking Services team continues to develop the service in innovative ways which will have a positive impact on the safety of all road users, as well as improving air quality and reducing harmful emissions.

The management of parking is pivotal in supporting the highway network because it enables the Council to manage access to the kerbside effectively as well as balance the demand for on-street parking for businesses, residents, and visitors. We will continue to manage the supply and demand requirements for parking, maximising the turnover of available parking spaces for residents, shoppers, workers and visitors.

The services we deliver will continue to be aligned to our Parking Strategy and designed to improve road safety and traffic movement and to make parking available for the benefit of the local economy and community. This historically has not been the case and for many years the parking service has made a financial loss which has had to be covered from other service areas, an unsustainable situation. One of our goals is to ensure the cost of providing parking services is met from the income received from fees and charges, including permitting schemes for parking on street and the issue of Penalty Charge Notices.



About the service

2023 / 2024 is the fifth year that St Albans City and District Council has managed on-street civil parking enforcement. Please note the following when reading this report:

- the report covers the areas where we manage the on-street parking – such as St Albans City, London Colney, and Harpenden,
- we also operate twenty eight on-street and off-street car parks. Details relating to these car parks are included within this report.

We monitor Key Performance Indicators to ensure the service is delivered as a modern, efficient and customer focused parking service. Details on our expenditure and income can be found in the financial transparency section.

What is civil parking enforcement?

The Traffic Management Act 2004 'Part 6' 'Civil Enforcement of Traffic Contraventions' sets out the legislation under which civil parking enforcement needs to be undertaken. St Albans District Council can only take enforcement action by way of issuing a penalty charge notice to contraventions where existing parking restrictions are in place. These restrictions may be yellow lines, loading bays, taxi ranks, bus stops etc.

For areas where there are no parking restrictions, but a hazard is being caused, the police hold the powers to be able to respond. Some examples of parking that the District Council does not have the power to enforce include parking close to a junction where there are no yellow lines; restricted access roads; pavement parking where there are no adjacent yellow lines; parking in an advisory blue badge parking place. Statutory guidance for local authorities on enforcing parking restrictions (www.gov.uk/government/publications/traffic-management-act-2004-summary/traffic-management-act-2004-summary) states that each enforcement authority should design its parking policies with particular regard to managing the traffic network to ensure expeditious movement of traffic, (including pedestrians and cyclists), as required under the Traffic Management Act 2004: improving road safety; improving the local environment; improving the quality and accessibility of public transport; meeting the needs of people with disabilities, some of whom will be unable to use public transport and depend entirely on the use of a vehicle; managing and reconciling the competing demands for kerb space.

In 2004 the Traffic Management Act was drafted and came into force in England and Wales on 31 March 2008. It includes the following: parking offences to be classed as civil contraventions; parking wardens / attendants to be known as civil enforcement officers (CEOs); the power to require authority to apply for civil enforcement powers setting the level of penalty charges £70 for the most serious contraventions (discounted to £35 if paid within 14 days), £50 for other contraventions (discounted to £25 if paid within 14 days).



Partnership working

St Albans City and District Council works closely with a number of partners to deliver a modern, efficient and customer focused parking service. We work with different agencies to ensure we provide a full and joined up service for our residents, businesses and visitors. Below are the organisations that we work with that allow this to happen:



PayByPhone is the leader in mobile parking payments (www.paybyphone.co.uk)



Imperial is one of the UK's largest and most experienced providers of parking, environmental and traffic management systems (www.imperial.co.uk)



Digital Traffic Orders Management Parking App is digital, map-based solution that has transformed our traffic order creation. (www.appyway.com)



British Parking Association is a not-for-profit organisation that works to improve parking facilities as well as providing support to their communities. (www.britishparking.co.uk)



Hertfordshire County Council is the upper-tier local authority for the non-metropolitan county of Hertfordshire in England. (www.hertfordshire.gov.uk)

Key facts and information

Handheld devices, body worn video cameras, Civil Enforcement Officer abuse

Our Civil Enforcement Officers use handheld computers to issue Penalty Charge Notices. They use these to log the registration of any vehicle that is potentially contravening a parking restriction. This then allows the appropriate observation period before the officer can then continue to issue the Penalty Charge Notice. The devices also allow for photographs of the contravention to be taken, along with other written evidence which is collected by the officer at the time of the contravention.

Body worn video cameras are worn by each of our officers, these are for the safety of the officers and for members of the public. They are switched on when they encounter a member of the public. Footage is then securely stored for 3 months unless it is marked as evidential for enquiries and then it can be held for up to 6 years.

We do not tolerate abusive behaviour towards our Civil Enforcement Officers. They are undertaking the duties of their role and should be able to do so without fear. Whilst for the most part people are courteous towards our Civil Enforcement Officers, we will not hesitate to report any serious or threatening incidents to the Police for their investigation.

Warning / Advisory Notices

Warning/Advisory notices have a wide variety of applications, though they are predominantly used to warn motorists of poor or inconsiderate parking in the first instance. They also have a role to play when new parking restrictions are introduced to an area as a way of alerting drivers to the change. If the driver does not modify their behaviour and continues to park in this manner, a Penalty Charge Notice may be issued.

Pavement / Footway Parking

When vehicles are parked on the footway (pavement) where no parking restrictions are present, advisory notes may be left to inform the driver that whilst no civil enforcement action has been taken, action may still be taken by the police in the future if the vehicle is reported to be in a dangerous or obstructive position.

Parking on the footway, whilst not currently enforceable outside of London, can cause many issues for pedestrians particularly for those using wheelchairs, mobility scooters or with pushchairs due to the narrowing of the footway width. This can result in vulnerable pedestrians using the road to navigate around poorly parked vehicles. It can also cause significant damage to the footway, as the materials commonly used to construct them are not designed to bear the weight of motor vehicles. Repairing damage to the footway caused by vehicles is a costly and resource intensive process. Damage to the footway surface can also have a negative impact on infrastructure underneath, such as electricity, gas, and communication networks, which inconveniences the local community.

All motorists should think carefully about whether parking is absolutely necessary at the location before doing so and consider the potential impact that their vehicle may have on other road and footway users when parking. In addition, if a vehicle is parked on a public footway but is also adjacent to existing parking restrictions (such as single or double yellow lines) then a Penalty Charge Notice can be issued, as many areas of footway are considered to be part of the public highway, where restrictions can still be enforced.

Top reasons for a PCN being issued

Contravention code 01: Parking in a restricted street during prescribed hours.

This code is used when vehicles are parking on single yellow lines, double yellow lines, in pedestrian zones or controlled zones. A controlled (or restricted) zone is an area where waiting / loading restrictions apply throughout the zone even though there are sometimes no yellow lines visible. These zones are highlighted with upright signs at the entrance and exit point of the zone. The Civil Enforcement Officers allow five minutes observation time to see if there is loading/unloading activity taking place.

Contravention code 12: Parked in a residents' or shared use parking place without either clearly displaying a valid permit or voucher or pay and display ticket issued for that place, or without payment of the parking charge.

Resident parking schemes control parking in residential areas where there is a high level of non-resident parking that prevents residents from being able to park within a reasonable distance from their home. Five minutes observation time is required before a PCN is issued to check if the owner of the vehicle is nearby. A permit is not required to be displayed in areas where there is a virtual permit system in place.

Contravention code 83: Parked in a pay and display car park without clearly displaying a valid pay and display ticket or having a valid cashless parking event.

A PCN may be issued when a vehicle has no valid pay and display ticket clearly on display that would allow it to be parked in that particular parking place or without a valid cashless parking session booked.

Contravention code 30: Parked for longer than permitted.

Limited waiting bays are usually installed near shops and in town centres to allow short-term parking to visit shops or businesses. They are important to manage the demand for parking as people abide by the time restrictions moving on before expiry and, thereby, freeing up parking for other users.

Contravention code 40: Parked in a designated disabled person's parking place without displaying a valid disabled person's badge in the prescribed manner.

Disabled parking bays are provided in residential streets and near shops to help people who are struggling to walk long distances to park near their destination. The majority of these bays are advisory, and not legally enforceable. The enforceable bays are marked with an upright sign. Parking in a legally enforceable disabled bay without displaying a valid Blue Badge can result in a PCN instantly.



Higher and Lower level PCNs

Higher level £70

A higher charge is made for more serious parking contraventions that cause disruption and danger to pedestrians and other road users and/or have a direct impact on traffic flow or road safety.

Top 3 contraventions:

- 01 – Parking in a restricted street (on single or double yellow lines)
- 40 – Parked in a disabled persons parking place
- 02 – Loading in a restricted street (stopping where loading ban applies)

Lower level £50

A lower charge is made for less serious parking contraventions, such as overstaying.

Top 3 contraventions:

- 83 – Parked in a car park without clearly displaying a valid pay & display ticket or voucher or parking clock
- 30 – Parked for longer than permitted
- 19 – Parked in a residents' or shared use parking place or zone with an invalid virtual permit or displaying an invalid physical permit or voucher or pay and display ticket, or after the expiry of paid for time

Parking enforcement by numbers

PCNs issued in 2023 / 2024

All PCNs issued	PCNs issued by post	Warning notices
22,769	54	65

Incidents	No. of PCNs issued
Attached to windscreen	22,357
Handed to driver	239
Prevented from issuing	4
Spoiled	54
Vehicle driven away	50
Warning notice	65



PCNs by contravention code 2023/2024

Contravention code and reason On-street	No. of PCNs issued
01 Parked in a restricted street	5,961
02 Loading in a restricted street	547
05 Parked after payment expired	87
11 Parked without payment	417
12 Parked in residents' place	4,786
14 Parked in an electric place	9
16 No valid permit	34
19 Parked in residents' place	449
21 Parked in a suspended bay	824
22 Re-parked in the same place	3
23 Wrong class of vehicle	898
24 Not parked correctly	10
25 Parked in a loading place	160
26 Double parking in a Special Enforcement Area	8
27 Dropped footway in a Special Enforcement Area	142
28 Raised footway in a Special Enforcement Area	18
30 Parked longer than permitted	1,032
40 Disabled person's parking place	908
45 Taxi rank	335

Contravention code and reason On-street	No. of PCNs issued
47 Restricted bus stop or stand	124
48 Restricted school area	24
61 Commercial footpath parking	2
62 Verge / footpath parking	57
99 Pedestrian crossing	148

Contravention code and reason Off-street	No. of PCNs issued
73 Parked without payment	236
80 Parked longer than permitted	45
81 Parked in a restricted area	279
82 Parked after expiry time	349
83 Parked without clear displaying a valid P&D ticket	3,532
85 Parked in a permit bay	680
86 Parked beyond the bay markings	210
87 Disabled person's parking	291
91 Wrong class of vehicle	3

Received appeals 2023/2024

- Total: 4315
- Total accepted: 1182
- Total rejected 3133
- Informal challenges 3967 PCN's where an informal challenge was made
- Formal representations 348 PCNs where a formal representation was made
- Appeals to the Traffic Penalty Tribunal (TPT)
- Total submitted 18
- Appeals allowed in drivers favour 6

Resident permit parking schemes

There are 43 resident parking zones within St Albans City and District. These schemes were set up to assist householders who have properties with little or no off-street parking in areas which are usually close to schools or shopping areas.

To be eligible for a Resident's Parking Permit a property must be included in a legally enforceable Traffic Regulation Order (TRO). Each resident parking zone is identified by an upright sign and, in most cases, marked out bays on the road surface.

Since July 2023 St Albans City and District Council has operated a digital parking permit scheme, where eligible residents can register and purchase a resident parking permit through PermiSmarti, using the internet and through a mobile phone. During the 2023 / 2024 year 11,194 virtual parking permits were purchased across the District.

The digital permit system offers the following functional benefits:

- allows easier management of permits through the website
- gives residents full access to their own permits; they can purchase or renew their permits and change vehicle registration numbers at any time of the day or night
- supports the processing of permits instantly with no waiting time or delay
- supports the activation of visitor permits instantly, at any time, online
- removes the need to queue in a council office
- has a lower carbon footprint as it has reduced the use of paper and travel to renew.

Total virtual parking permits issued	11,194
Resident Parking Permits issued	4,402
Visitor Parking Permits issued*	2,265
Car Park Permits issued	1,330

*Visitor Parking Permits allow the permit holder to book parking sessions for their visitors

For further information on the digital resident parking permit scheme or to apply, please see: www.stalbans.gov.uk/parking-permits-and-suspensions.

Parking bay suspensions

Parking bay suspensions are implemented to temporarily stop parking in an area where it is normally allowed. This can be for the purpose of reserving the bay for a specific vehicle, or to keep the area clear for another reason, for example if works need to be undertaken close to the bay and a vehicle parked in it would be inconvenient or obstructive. Parking bays can also be suspended to support road closures for a variety of reasons, including events that require the road to be free of vehicles.

Number of suspensions granted

577 suspensions were granted in 2023 / 2024.

The suspension of a parking bay allows the Council to issue Penalty Charge Notices to any unauthorised vehicles that have parked in the bay after the suspension has begun. For a suspension to take place, the Council should be notified at least 10 days before the intended date of implementation. Parking suspensions are communicated through the use of yellow signs (stating the date, time, duration and nature of restriction).

For further information on the parking suspensions or to apply, please see: www.stalbans.gov.uk/parking-suspension-permit.

New parking controls

Why the Council regulates parking and traffic schemes

The parking team helps to maintain a safe and efficient traffic flow across the District, ensuring safe and fair parking for all road users.

Traffic Regulation Orders (TROs) are legal documents which, once 'made,' control or restrict the use of the highway permanently.

Permanent TROs are used to make changes such as introducing parking places or yellow lines, or removing or amending them where they are no longer appropriate.

Last year we introduced a work plan for assessing and prioritising requests for new and amended TROs. The factors considered include safety access; congestion and traffic flow; local conditions such as nearby shops, schools, or hospitals; demand from residents, local elected members, and businesses; the nature of the issue; and frequency of reports received

Access Protection Markings (H bars) and Blue Badge parking places

We provide parking places for Blue Badge holders who are regularly unable to park near their property and do not have the benefit of access to their own off-street parking. Where possible we always install the parking place in the optimum location to help these individuals.

For further information on parking for people with disabilities please see: www.stalbans.gov.uk/parking-people-disabilities-blue-badge-parking.

An Access Protection Marking (APM or H bar) is a white line painted in front of a kerb which has been lowered to allow vehicle access, for example driveways. APMs are not legally enforceable but can help deter inconsiderate parking which restricts or blocks access.

For further information on Driveways and Access Markings please see: www.stalbans.gov.uk/driveways-and-access-markings.

For further information on Traffic Regulation Orders please visit: www.stalbans.gov.uk/TROS.

Transparency in finance

Year - 01/04/23 to 31/03/24

On-street	£
Pay & Display / meters	289,196
Penalty charges (PCN's)	735,760
Parking permits	798,973
Other income	4,886
Total income	1,828,816
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Employee costs	1,068,216
Customer Delivery Team	233,114
Supplies & services	169,845
Equipment maintenance / renewal	10,870
Signs and lines maintenance	28,007
Traffic Penalties Tribunal	6,157
Debt registration fees	24,000
Public consultation	3,339
Supplies (postage, printing, telephones, etc)	58,037
Clothing & equipment	26,885
Leased vehicles	14,654
Other costs	24,961
Non-direct costs* & depreciation	386,389
Total Expenditure	2,054,474
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Surplus/(Deficit)	(225,658)

* Non-direct costs are an allocation of the costs associated with the Councils support services attributable to On-street Parking and include Financial Services, Procurement, Human Resources, Information Technology and Systems, Legal, Internal Audit, Communications and Policy.

Parking Services

St Albans City & District Council
Civic Centre
St Albans
AL1 3JE

Telephone: 01727866100

Contact form: stalbans.my.site.com/guest/s/contact-us

Website: www.stalbans.gov.uk/parking-roads-and-transport