

London Borough of Brent
Parking Annual Report 2019-20

Foreword

It is my pleasure to welcome you to the 2019-2020 edition of the London Borough of Brent's Parking Annual Report. The report provides an overview of parking management, and parking and traffic enforcement, in Brent. It recognises the improvements we have made in our services, and highlights the effect both our parking policies and enforcement activity have had in achieving high levels of parking and traffic compliance.

It gave me particular pleasure to congratulate the team following the British Parking Association's award ceremony in March 2020, where Brent and Serco were awarded the prestigious Parking Team of the Year award.

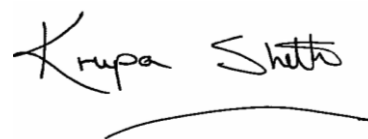
We aim to make Brent a safer borough, improve motoring standards, reduce traffic congestion, and contribute to reducing carbon emissions. Promoting sustainable modes of travel and improving air quality is of high concern to our residents. We are continually evaluating ways to reduce pollution as part of a wider effort across London, as well as continuing to work across the Council to tackle the climate change emergency in a concerted effort.

As part of our drive to environmental improvements, we have recently sourced and introduced biodegradable Penalty Charge Notice bags in Brent. The launch of this environmentally friendly product to replace the plastic envelope is a major step forward and hopefully all councils will follow suit.

In early 2019, we supported our parking contractor Serco in launching the Respect and Protect campaign for those delivering frontline services. Developed and agreed with colleagues, customers, trade unions and the Police, the 'Charter of Protection' addresses difficult encounters that may occur with members of the public. Together, we stand resolutely beside colleagues who find themselves subjected to unacceptable and unwarranted behaviour whilst carrying out their work. Our aim is to raise awareness and understanding of the challenges and reduce the number of incidents.

As in previous years, this report explains how surplus parking revenue was allocated to meet our wider transport objectives, in particular the provision of the Freedom Pass to older residents and disabled residents.

Thank you for taking the time to read the report. I hope you find it both interesting and informative.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Krupa Sheth". The signature is written in a cursive style with a horizontal line underneath the name.

Councillor Krupa Sheth,
Lead Member, Environment

Overview

Introduction

Brent Council is committed to providing a high quality parking service and a fair, easy, consistent and transparent approach to parking management and traffic enforcement.

The purpose of the Annual Report is to explain the aims and objectives of the Council's Parking service. The Report includes information on the regulations that we enforce, and the effectiveness of our policies. The Report's statistical analysis includes: information on the number of parking and traffic related Penalty Charge Notices (PCNs) issued for the period 01 April 2019 to 31 March 2020; the income and expenditure recorded in our Parking Account; and how the surplus on this account has been spent.

The Report also meets a key requirement set out in the 2015 Statutory Guidance, issued under the Traffic Management Act 2004. This requires local authorities to produce and publish an annual report on parking enforcement activities.

Why Manage Parking?

Excellent parking management is an important tool that contributes towards achieving the Council's wider transport, economic and planning policy objectives. Well thought-out parking policies and effective enforcement can influence travel patterns, sustain the local economy, balance competing demands for road space, relieve congestion and contribute to sustainable outcomes.

Conversely, parking which is not regulated properly can exacerbate congestion on the road network, reduce the reliability of public transport, impact adversely on the local economy and create road safety problems. Parking services are highly visible to residents, local businesses and visitors. In particular, enforcement needs to be seen as fair, effective and proportionate in order to retain public confidence.

Brent Context

The London Borough of Brent is an outer London borough, covering an area of almost 17 square miles. It is bordered by the London Boroughs of Barnet to the north-east, Harrow to the north-west and Ealing to the south-west. It has short boundaries with the central London Boroughs of Camden, Westminster, Hammersmith and Fulham, and Kensington and Chelsea, in the south-east.

In recent years, the Borough has seen several major town centre developments. In particular, the area around Wembley Stadium has been transformed, with the building of new homes, leisure facilities, retail space and restaurants.

As these areas continue to grow and attract new residents, they will inevitably lead to increased demand for movement to, from and within the borough. While the availability, frequency and reliability of public transport - and the existence of high quality facilities for walking and cycling - will influence the way people travel, there will nevertheless be an unavoidable impact on traffic and parking.

Demand for parking in the London Borough of Brent is high, as it is across London. The Council seeks to manage this demand through parking controls and traffic regulations. These aim to:

- improve road safety, the local environment and the quality and accessibility of public transport;
- ensure that traffic is able to flow through the borough freely;
- ensure parking in town centres is convenient, safe and secure, including appropriate provision for motorcycles and deliveries;
- meet the needs of people with disabilities, ensuring that the public highway can be used by all; and
- ensure that available parking space is shared fairly through regulation and pricing

These aims sit alongside wider Council objectives which include sustainability; the promotion of alternative modes of transport such as walking, cycling and the use of public transport; reducing carbon emissions; and improving air quality.

Brent Council's Parking Service

The Brent Parking team is committed to providing a high quality service, delivering a fair, consistent and transparent approach to parking and traffic enforcement.

The team is responsible for:

- Parking strategy, policy and overall management
- Management of the parking contract, including parking enforcement, Penalty Charge Notice (PCN) processing, permit administration, and cashless parking
- Management of car parks and on-street parking infrastructure
- Managing the parking appeals and representations process
- Handling Member enquiries, complaints and FOI requests relating to parking
- Debt recovery

The Parking Contract

In July 2013 Serco were appointed as the council's parking management and enforcement contractor for a period of five years with an option to extend. The Council subsequently agreed to award Serco a contract extension from July 2018 until March 2023. Serco manages the provision of parking services. These include:

- Civil Enforcement Officers (CEOs)
- CCTV enforcement
- Pay & Display machines
- Vehicle removal operations and the car pound
- Cashless parking & electronic payments
- Serco also has key responsibilities for PCN processing services, including the provision of scanning, indexing, software systems and permit administration

The extended contract facilitated the provision of new equipment, new computer hardware and software systems, more efficient working methods, and enhancements to the customer experience.

Most notably, the contract extension was agreed with a commitment from the Council and Serco to increase the salaries of all staff employed on the contract to at least the level of the London Living Wage. This commitment has already had an impact, supporting recruitment & retention, and providing better and more rewarding jobs for local people.

Over 85% of the people employed by Serco on the Brent contract live and work in the Borough.

Awards

Brent Parking Service and Serco won the prestigious '*Team of the Year*' prize at the 2020 British Parking Association (BPA) awards ceremony. The BPA is the largest professional association in Europe representing organisations working in the field of parking and traffic management

Other recent accomplishments have included:

- 2018 British Parking Awards: Finalist for Parking Team of the Year
- 2016 British Parking Awards: Winner of Parking Team of the Year
- 2014 British Parking Awards: Winners of the Parking Partnership Award, West London Alliance

Air Quality

The Council is committed to supporting the Mayor of London's Environmental Strategy, which aims for London to have the best air quality of any major world city by 2050. We are seeking to play our part in reducing pollution levels. The Council has agreed an Air Quality Action Plan to reduce air pollution from all sources, including transport. In this context, the Service is looking to put policies in place that incentivise more sustainable transport options and the use of less polluting vehicles.

Following a borough-wide consultation in the summer of 2018, the Council's Cabinet considered the issue of a proposed diesel surcharge in depth, reviewing the evidence on the environmental and health impacts of pollutants emitted by diesel vehicles. Cabinet agreed to introduce a surcharge from 6 June 2019 to persuade vehicle owners in Controlled Parking Zones to consider a switch to less-polluting vehicles.

Initiatives

Serco recently sourced and introduced biodegradable PCN bags for use in Brent, following a trial period conducted under a variety of weather conditions. This bag complies with EN13432, which stipulates a minimum of 90% biological degradation within 6 months and a minimum of 90% physical degradation within 12 weeks.

With over 12 million parking PCNs issued every year in the UK (over 120,000 in Brent), the majority of which utilise single use plastic envelopes, the launch of a more environmentally friendly product to replace the plastic envelope is a major step forward.

Serco launched their Respect and Protect campaign in early 2019 for their staff delivering frontline services across its UK business – including all parking enforcement and call-handling staff delivering the Brent contract.

Developed and agreed with colleagues, customers, trade unions and the Police, the 'Charter of Protection' addresses difficult encounters that may occur with members of the public. This can be face-to-face or when interacting through the customer contact centre, clarifying how we expect colleagues to be treated as they go about their duties; reinforcing our commitment to safeguarding them from unacceptable behaviour and ensuring everyone goes home safely.

Respect and Protect provides a framework for identifying, preventing and managing these risks, fostering a culture of zero tolerance. Brent has signed up to Serco's 'Charter of Protection' commitments.

Parking Enforcement Overview

The Council enforces parking and traffic regulations through its contractor, Serco, using a combination of Civil Enforcement Officers (CEOs) who patrol the streets and the use of CCTV camera technology. CEOs also use mopeds and cars, which enable rapid deployment to attend to urgent enforcement requests.

Illegally parked vehicles and moving traffic contraventions create problems for all road users. We enforce regulations by issuing Penalty Charge Notices (PCNs) with the aim of improving motorists' compliance.

What we enforce

As well as managing and enforcing Controlled Parking Zones (CPZs), local parking schemes and pay and display parking, the Council also enforces other traffic and parking regulations. These include:

School Keep Clear Enforcement

School Keep Clear markings (yellow zig-zag lines outside of school entrances) are monitored by the Council using a combination of CEOs, mobile CCTV enforcement vehicles and re-mountable CCTV cameras. Our aim is to maintain and improve road safety outside schools. In 2019-20, over 250 enforcement hours were deployed, patrolling outside schools each month during the peak drop-off and pick-up times.

Yellow Line Enforcement

The majority of yellow-line waiting restrictions in Brent are on strategic and distributor roads, and have been introduced to promote safety, assist buses and aid effective movement of traffic. 29,512 PCN's were issued to vehicles parked illegally on yellow lines in 2019-20.

Single yellow lines are located on parts of the highway where there would be a safety hazard if parking was permitted, especially when there is high volume of traffic. Parking is therefore prohibited at certain times of day. Several restrictions are enforced from 8.00 or 8.30am to 6.30pm, and these times are displayed on signs.

Double yellow lines indicate a 24-hour parking prohibition. All double yellow lines within Brent operate seven days a week, including bank holidays. It is no longer a requirement for signs to accompany double yellow restrictions.

Red-line waiting restrictions on the Transport for London Road Network (TLRN) are the responsibility of Transport for London (TfL), but aim to meet similar objectives on London's busiest roads.

Footway Enforcement

CEOs take enforcement action where motorists inconsiderately park on the footway. This causes particular problems for visually impaired people, wheelchair users, and people with prams or buggies. Unless the footway has been reinforced to permit parking, then the paving is likely to crack and cause a trip hazard for pedestrians.

11,994 PCN's were issued to vehicles parked illegally on the footway in 2019-20.

There are some footways where parking is permitted on residential streets that are too narrow for parking fully on the road. In such cases, footway parking may be permitted either fully (four wheels) or partially (two wheels) on the pavement. Where parking is permitted on a permanent basis, bay markings and signage are installed.

Bus Lanes

Bus lane and bus stop parking are enforced through the use of CCTV cameras. As the Council encourages more sustainable forms of transport, this plays an important role in ensuring the free movement of buses along the borough's road network in order to secure faster journey times for bus users, and reduce potential traffic accidents.

Moving Traffic Contraventions.

Blocking yellow box junctions, making prohibited turns, ignoring no-entry signs, illegal U turns, and driving the wrong way in a one-way road, are all examples of moving traffic violations actively enforced by CCTV. Such restrictions are in place to ease congestion on the borough's roads, and improve road safety.

Yellow box junctions are highly visible to motorists, and have crossed diagonal lines painted on the road. Motorists must not enter the box until the lane ahead is clear, this includes turning left over a yellow box junction. However, you may enter the box and wait when you want to turn right, and are only stopped from doing so by oncoming traffic, or by other vehicles waiting to turn right.

Tackling Blue Badge Fraud

The council has been working effectively to tackle Blue Badge misuse across the borough. Fraudulent use of Blue Badges prevents people in genuine need from accessing parking where and when they need it most.

CEOs have been active in carrying out Blue Badge inspections to identify:

- Abuse of Badges. This includes using a counterfeit Badge, using a lost or stolen Badge and using the Badge of a deceased person.
- Misuse of Badges the fraudulent use of Blue Badges when the holder is not present.

CEOs have been using the Government Blue Badge database to identify misuse of Badges and reporting any suspicious usage. Joint operations have been carried out accompanied by the police around stations, shopping centres, entertainment venues, and other areas where parking is in high demand and a Blue Badge is of maximum value to someone who may misuse it.

Through our partnership, the Council has secured several successful convictions.

Enforcement Statistics

Civil Enforcement Officers (CEOs)

CEOs have the power to issue Penalty Charge Notices (PCNs) to vehicles parked in contravention of restrictions.

A PCN may be issued at the scene by being fixed to the vehicle windscreen, or handed to the person appearing to be in charge of it, or issued by post in the following cases: enforcement is by camera; or the CEO was prevented by someone from serving it at the scene; or the CEO had begun to prepare a PCN but the vehicle was driven away before it was finished and issued.

CEOs issued 124,345 PCNs for parking offenses in 2019-20; an increase of 7% compared to the same period last year. This has been facilitated by recruitment and retention of skilled staff, supported by payment of the London Living Wage, and better management of deployment to focus on areas of higher contraventions, introduction of night-time enforcement at key locations, particularly at weekends, supported by feedback and requests from local residents and businesses.

Closed-Circuit Television (CCTV) Enforcement

CCTV is used to enforce bus lane and moving traffic restrictions, and parking restrictions at bus stops and on School Keep Clear zig zag markings. Camera enforcement signs are displayed to alert motorists to active CCTV enforcement and to encourage compliance with local restrictions.

Number of Penalty Charge Notices issued by CCTV for traffic and bus lane offences

Bus Lane 11,166

Moving Traffic 57,495

The issuance of PCNs for moving traffic contraventions continued to decrease for the fourth consecutive year, with 57,495 PCNs issued in 2019-20 compared to 62,890 issued in 2018-19. This reflects continuing improvements in compliance by motorists. The majority of cameras installed have quickly had a major impact on motoring standards, reducing traffic congestion and improving road safety.

Additional sites for camera enforcement were identified following a survey in 2019 of 34 priority bus lane locations across the borough. This was done to understand non-compliance and the impact on bus reliability and speed, which has a significant bearing on bus route efficiency. It is important to prioritise the fast and reliable movement of buses. This supports the objective of encouraging sustainable travel as set out in the Council's Long Term Transport Strategy

This will lead to the installation of further unattended camera systems in 2020 to provide consistent and reliable enforcement at key locations.

Mobile Enforcement

Serco deploys a number of CEOs on mopeds and cars, which enables more effective enforcement across the borough. Officers can be rapidly deployed to attend to urgent issues such as obstruction of residential driveways.

Vehicle Removals and the Car Pound

The Council can remove vehicles parked in contravention. The service also relocates vehicles that remain parked in a section of road that has been temporarily suspended and which therefore obstruct highway resurfacing or maintenance works. 240 vehicles were relocated in 2019-20.

In 2019-20, a total of 1,779 vehicles parked in contravention were impounded. This is a decrease on the 1,955 impounded in 2018-19, demonstrating a continued focus on the removal of vehicles for serious parking contraventions.

All vehicles that have been removed within Brent are taken to the Brent Car Pound which is located at: Unit 20-22, Whitby Avenue, Park Royal, NW10 7SF.

PCN Appeals and Representations

The Council seeks to provide a transparent and fair parking enforcement service. Motorists who feel that they have been unfairly issued with a Penalty Charge Notice may contest the charge. All representations must be made in writing.

The Council has a dedicated, qualified and experienced team who consider each case based upon its own merits. All formal correspondence is handled within the statutory time periods allowed for response.

All Appeals Officers undertake training to NVQ Level 3 standard in Notice Processing. Training is also provided in statutory processes, telephone skills as well as team leader and supervisor training. Continually improving the standards of the service provided in Brent is a priority towards which we constantly strive.

The council's web-based service allows customers to view specific details about PCNs they have received, submit a challenge or representation, monitor the progress of the representation, view photos of the incident, and make payments. This provides access to sufficient information to enable motorists to make an informed decision about whether or not to appeal the PCN.

Should a motorist remain unhappy with our final decision, they may make an appeal to the independent appeals service, the Environment and Traffic Adjudicators, who will make an impartial decision based upon the merits of the case in question.

Environment and Traffic Adjudicators Data

The figures published by the Environment and Traffic Adjudicators (ETA) for 2019-20 represent an improvement in the council's record at independent appeal tribunals.

Total PCNs issued by LB Brent 193,006
Total PCN appeals heard by PATAS/ETA 741
% of PCNs issued heard by PATAS/ETA 0.38%
No. of appeals allowed or not contested 333
Of which, number of appeals not contested 192

Of the 193,006 PCNs issued, 741 cases were referred to ETA. A total of 333 appeals were allowed or not contested, a significant decrease in the number of appeals that were upheld by ETA compared to the previous year.

The reduction in the number of appeals referred to ETA demonstrates increasing motorist confidence in the quality of appeal decisions made by the Council's own Notice Processing team. In addition, the reduction in the number of appeals upheld

by ETA demonstrates the impact that our recently created post of ETA Liaison Officer is having.

The Parking team is addressing issues of quality, and ensuring that independent appeals are provided with comprehensive evidence from the council. The council is now represented at specific tribunal hearings where key appeals are being heard.

London Tribunals Reports

The previous annual reports by the Chief Parking Adjudicator: 'Parking and Traffic Adjudicators' annual report' and appeal figures for all London Authorities: 'Parking and Traffic Appeal Statistics'; can be found on the London Tribunals website.

Debt recovery

Of the 193,006 PCNs issued in 2019-2020, 63% were paid by July 2020. The proportion of PCNs issued in 2019/20 that are paid by March 2021 is expected to rise to at least 71%, with no more than 12% still unresolved.

Resolution of a PCN can take anything up to three years, though the great majority are either paid or appealed within the first 12 months following the issuance of the PCN. A proportion of PCNs will not be collected, most of which successful PCN appeals. Some of these are not resolved until the independent tribunal stage.

In recent years, there have been improvements in the quality of PCNs issued and in the collection of outstanding debt. This is due to a better standard of evidence collected to support PCNs, improvements in PCN processing, and a closer relationship with the council's Civil Enforcement Agents (bailiffs) following the appointment of a dedicated Debt Recovery Officer. In 2019/20 our Enforcement Agents, Newlyn and Marston's, recovered £1.258m of registered debt owed for PCNs. This is the highest ever amount of registered PCN debt recovered in a single year. Effective debt recovery enhances the credibility of deterrence and forms a vital element of the enforcement process.

Parking Services

Parking Provision

Over the years, the Council has introduced a number of measures to manage the high demand for kerbside parking space. Parking in most of the south-eastern part of the borough, and Wembley town centre, is managed through Controlled Parking Zones. Some other parts of the borough also have residential parking controls; these typically

cover areas near high street locations and/or tube and railway stations (where there may be a demand for parking from commuters).

The Council manages 40 Controlled Parking Zones (CPZs) across the borough, serving 56,000 households with over 33,000 on-street parking spaces. Specific times of operation vary but the majority are in operation throughout the day, from Monday to either Friday or Saturday. Current shopping and business opening hours mean that in some areas there can be similar, and sometimes higher levels of parking on Sundays and Bank Holidays than on normal weekdays or Saturdays. For this reason, parking controls apply on Sundays in a small number of locations.

Information on parking restrictions, the Wembley event day zone, a full size map of Brent's Controlled Parking Zones, and a post code search facility to determine whether or not you are located within a controlled parking zone, are all available on the council's parking pages: www.brent.gov.uk/parking.

Revenue from all permit issued in 2019-20 was £4.54m

Resident Permits

Resident permits are available to all residents who live in CPZs. Permit options are available for 24-month, 12-month, 6-month or 3-month periods. Permits are priced according to the vehicle's carbon emission levels and the number of permits issued to each household, up to a maximum of three. Resident permits are all now virtual. Recent growth in permit issuance has in part been driven by a higher proportion of 6- or 3-month permits being issued, rather than by growth in the number of permits in use.

Number of Resident Permits issued 35,800

Visitor Parking

Residents are able to purchase a single visitor household parking permit, which is non-vehicle specific, to be displayed in a visitor's vehicle's windscreen. Residents can also purchase visitor parking credits which are virtual and can be purchased either via telephone, by SMS, or online.

Visitor parking charges in all CPZs are available in increments of: a £1.50 charge for up to 2 hrs, £3 charge for up to 4 hrs, and a £4.50 charge for 'all-day' of stays over 4 hrs.

The cost of visitor parking vouchers is linked to bus fares. The aim is to encourage people to consider switching to more sustainable modes of transport. The current cost set by TfL of a single bus fare is £1.50, a return fare by bus is £3.00, and the daily cap on bus fares is £4.50.

Number of Visitor Parking Credits 240,000
Number of Visitor Household Permits 3,034

Households not located in a CPZ, but which fall within the Wembley Event Day Protective Parking Scheme, are able to purchase Event Day Visitor permits. A total of 6,740 Event Day Resident, Business, Visitor and Place of Worship permits were issued in 2019/20.

Business Permits

Business permits are available to businesses that have premises within a CPZ. Permits are priced at a flat rate. Business are permitted to purchase up to three permits, with an option to purchase an annual, 6 month or 3-month permit. Schools also have the option to purchase up to three business permits.

Business permit volumes for 2019-20 include school staff permits, and permits issued for the Business-only CPZ in the Lower Place Industrial Estate.

Number of Business Permits issued 618

Other Permits

The council offers a number of other permits. These include permits for disabled persons, Doctors, Places of Worship, temporary, courtesy, replacement and special permits. There is also an Essential Users Permit; this permit enables individual employees, who work for certain public sector and charitable organisations that perform a statutory service on behalf of the council, to park a vehicle in a controlled parking zone, as part of carrying out official duties. This includes the provision of residential or community care, health care, social housing management and highway maintenance works

Suspensions and Dispensations

Parking bay suspensions and dispensations are available for a fee. These facilitate large deliveries to residential properties, allowing residents to move home with as little inconvenience as possible. Suspensions are also arranged for a fee to allow for road or utility works to take place on the highway or during construction works.

The Council will also consider special requests made by residents, places of worship or funeral directors, regarding parking arrangements for funerals or weddings. There is a limit to the permitted number of vehicles allowed but no charge is made.

The temporary suspension of a parking bay reserves a specific bay or bays for use on a specified day, or part of a day, by a specified vehicle. If granted, the council will post notices in advance alerting motorists of when the bays will be suspended.

A dispensation temporarily allows parking in a location that is ordinarily not possible, for a maximum dispensation of four hours in every 24-hour period. These include dispensations on Single or Double Yellow lines for a maximum period of 4 hours. If granted, the council will issue a permit that must be displayed in the windscreen on the authorised vehicle.

Details of the applicable fees and the application process for a parking suspension or dispensation are available online.

Revenue from parking suspensions and dispensations in 2019-20 was £2.12m

On-Street Parking

The council provides on-street pay and display parking bays to facilitate parking for visitors to town centres and other destinations, helping to support economic activity.

Pay and display machines are located across the borough near shops and businesses, allowing residents and visitors to park during operational hours. The general principle underpinning on-street pay and display parking is to provide a quick turn-over of spaces, allowing easy access for motorists who wish to make short visits to shop or conduct business; and therefore park near to their destination.

Pricing policy seeks to ensure that there is a regular turnover of parking spaces. Motorists pay a uniform set of charges across the borough: 20p for up to 15 minutes; and then £1 for 30 minutes, £2 for one hour, £4 for 2 hours, £6 for 3 hours, and £8 for 4 hours.

Revenue from on-street parking in 2019-20 was £4.513m

Paying to park by mobile phone and smart devices

The option to pay for parking sessions using mobile technology and a debit/credit card has been available in Brent since 2009. The service is provided by a specialist company, RingGo, and is available in all of the council's car parks and on-street pay and display bays.

Parking via RingGo in Brent is 50p cheaper than making a cash payment, reflecting savings passed to motorists from the reduced cost of cash collections, ticket printing

and machine maintenance. In addition, the option for text reminders when parking sessions are due to expire enables the motorist to extend parking time, wherever they are, by making a simple phone call or using the RingGo application on their device.

Demand for pay to park by mobile technology continues to grow strongly year on year. In 2019-20 this accounted for 75% of on-street parking space sales and 71% of our off-street sales, compared to 71% and 64% respectively in 2018-19.

On-Street Sales (Pay & Display Machines)

Percentage Revenue in cash 25%

Percentage Revenue cashless 75%

Off-Street Sales (Car Parks)

Percentage Revenue in cash 29%

Percentage Revenue cashless 71%

Off-Street Parking

The Council currently operates 10 public car parks across the borough, providing a total of 614 spaces. This is comprised of 554 car parking spaces, 14 disabled motorist spaces, 10 motorcycle spaces, 26 business spaces, 4 parent & child spaces and 6 spaces for electric vehicle charging. Revenue from off-street parking in 2019-20 was £530,000.

Most of our car parks operate from Monday to Saturday with no charges made on Sunday. Preston Road and Disraeli Road car parks offer free parking for the first hour and Northwick Park offers free parking for the first three hours. The majority of the remaining car parks follow the same charging principles in which motorists pay a uniform set of charges across the borough; £1 for one hour, £3 for two hours, £4.50 for three hours and £7.50 all day.

Our car parks continue to offer a safe and reliable place to park. Five car parks have secured the *Park Mark* Award. *Park Mark* aims to reduce crime and the fear of crime within parking facilities through the achievement of high standards in lighting, signage, cleanliness and surveillance. The introduction of season tickets; and the addition of pre-booked parking sessions on Wembley Event days; encourages better use of the council's off-street parking provisions and assists in alleviating pressure for on-street parking spaces.

Wembley Event Day Parking

Between 8am and midnight, parking restrictions operate on Event days within the Wembley Stadium Event Day Protective Parking Scheme area. The best way to visit Wembley Stadium is to plan your journey by public transport. For those who wish to drive and park their vehicle, the council has introduced pre-booked parking sessions on Wembley Event days in Lonsdale Road and Preston Road car parks.

Brent Car Park Season Tickets

Annual season tickets are available in three of our car parks: Preston Road, by Preston Road Tube Station (Metropolitan line); Northwick Park, close to South Kenton Station (Bakerloo and Overground) and Northwick Park Hospital; and Disraeli Road.

These car parks were selected for their close proximity to hospitals, businesses and/or tube stations, offering a safe and convenient place to park.

Financial Information

An important purpose of the Annual Report is to meet a key requirement set out in the 2015 Statutory Guidance issued under the Traffic Management Act 2004. This is to provide financial information relating to all aspects of parking enforcement operations including the number of PCNs issued, the number of PCNs paid, the income and expenditure related to the enforcement activities recorded in the Parking Account, and how the surplus on the Account has been, or will be spent.

Parking Account Surplus

The use of any surplus in the parking account is governed by Section 55 of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984. The legislation specifies how the surplus may be used. The Council has designated the surplus to meet the cost of public passenger transport services.

The whole £13.127m net surplus on the parking account in 2019-20 has been allocated to assist in meeting the cost of concessionary fares: The London 'Freedom Pass'.

The surplus generated does not cover the full expenditure that the Council incurred on concessionary fares. The total cost to the council, for this service to residents, in 2019-20 was £15,898m. The Parking Account surplus contributed almost 83% towards this cost, more than in any previous year.

Customer care

Customer Satisfaction

Customer satisfaction is key to the delivery of parking services. With a growing move to online and self-service parking account management services, we continue to make enhancements to the online booking system and to online PCN representations. More information is now available on the Parking pages of the Council's website, about on-street and off-street parking provisions, products, services and general information, than was previously available. Careful care and attention has also been taken to ensure navigation around the site is simple and intuitive.

Customer Complaints

Complaints about Parking declined in 2019-20 with 119 stage 1 complaints registered, compared to 193 in 2018-19. Last year saw an increase mainly due to technical issues arising from the change in the enforcement software system during the summer of 2018. One issue resulted in duplicate letters being sent to motorists, prompting an increase in complaints during the period. These issues have now all been resolved.

Of the 119 complaints received, 112 were responded to within the Council's customer care deadline. 95% of complaints were also resolved at the first stage, investigated and resolved by the Parking service itself.

Customers who remain dissatisfied after their complaint has been considered by the Parking service can request a final review on behalf of the Council's Chief Executive. Of the 119 complaints received, only six complaints were escalated to final review.

Brent Council's customer care policy includes commitments to: acknowledge written enquires within five working days; respond to written enquiries within 10 working days; respond to all stage 1 complaints within 20 working days; and respond to all stage 2 complaints within 30 working days.

Covid-19 Response

In the final week of March 2020, an unprecedented lock down was introduced by Central Government to mitigate the threat of the coronavirus pandemic. Motoring activity was reduced to significantly less than half its normal level, with a corresponding significant reduction in parking income.

Brent Parking responded quickly and effectively to this challenge. All staff in the client team and Serco back-office staff were immediately enabled to work from home with no significant loss of service.

We were also able to move quickly to provide NHS, social care, Police and Jobcentre staff with parking concessions to help them provide essential services safely.

In respect of Civil Enforcement Officers, staff were moved to 3-day per week working. This allowed priority enforcement to continue every day, albeit at reduced staffing levels. With most vehicles static within residential areas, parking contraventions declined to less than 15% of normal levels. Enforcement activity therefore concentrated on higher level contraventions where traffic was blocked, safety compromised, or access by essential services to residents' homes jeopardised.