

Annual Parking Report

Under the terms of the statutory guidance issued by the Secretary of State for the Department for Transport under Part 6 of the Traffic Management Act 2004 the parking enforcement authority should produce an annual report detailing its enforcement activities. This is to promote openness and a better understanding of enforcement and why it is carried out. The Traffic Management Act 2008 came into effect on the 31 March 2008. This report covers the periods 2008 to 2011.

Within the St Albans City and District we act as the Enforcement Authority for our off-street car parks. Under an Agency Agreement with Hertfordshire County Council we also act as the Enforcement Authority for on-street restrictions across the District.

Background

The District Council has been undertaking Decriminalised Parking Enforcement since October 2004. Our powers to undertake such duties coincided with the signing of a 10 year contract with NCP Limited to provide a number of parking related services to the District Council.

The services provided are;

- Investment, maintenance and management of 11 car parks across the District
- Provision of a Parking Shop
- Maintenance and cash collection from pay and display machines
- Administration of the St Albans District permit scheme
- Provision of parking related IT services
- Parking Enforcement Services across the District

Full details of the car parks can be found on the Council's website

<http://www.stalbans.gov.uk/transport-and-streets/parking/>

Car parks need to be safe, clean and well maintained and be attractive to motorists. All car parks managed by NCP have received the Park Mark Safer Parking Award.

The multi storey car park has received the benefit of extensive investment in CCTV technology.

Effect of the Traffic Management Act 2004

The Traffic Management Act 2004, replaced the Road Traffic Act 1991 under which the District has enforced since October 2004. The Council through its contractor NCP Limited employs Civil Enforcement Officers (parking) (previously known as parking attendants) to enforce all yellow lines and other parking restrictions throughout the District This includes St Albans, Harpenden, London Colney, Wheathamsted and surrounding areas. This includes all off-street car parks managed by NCP on behalf of the District Borough Council.

The two main differences that affect motorists who park in contravention of the regulations under the Traffic Management Act are:

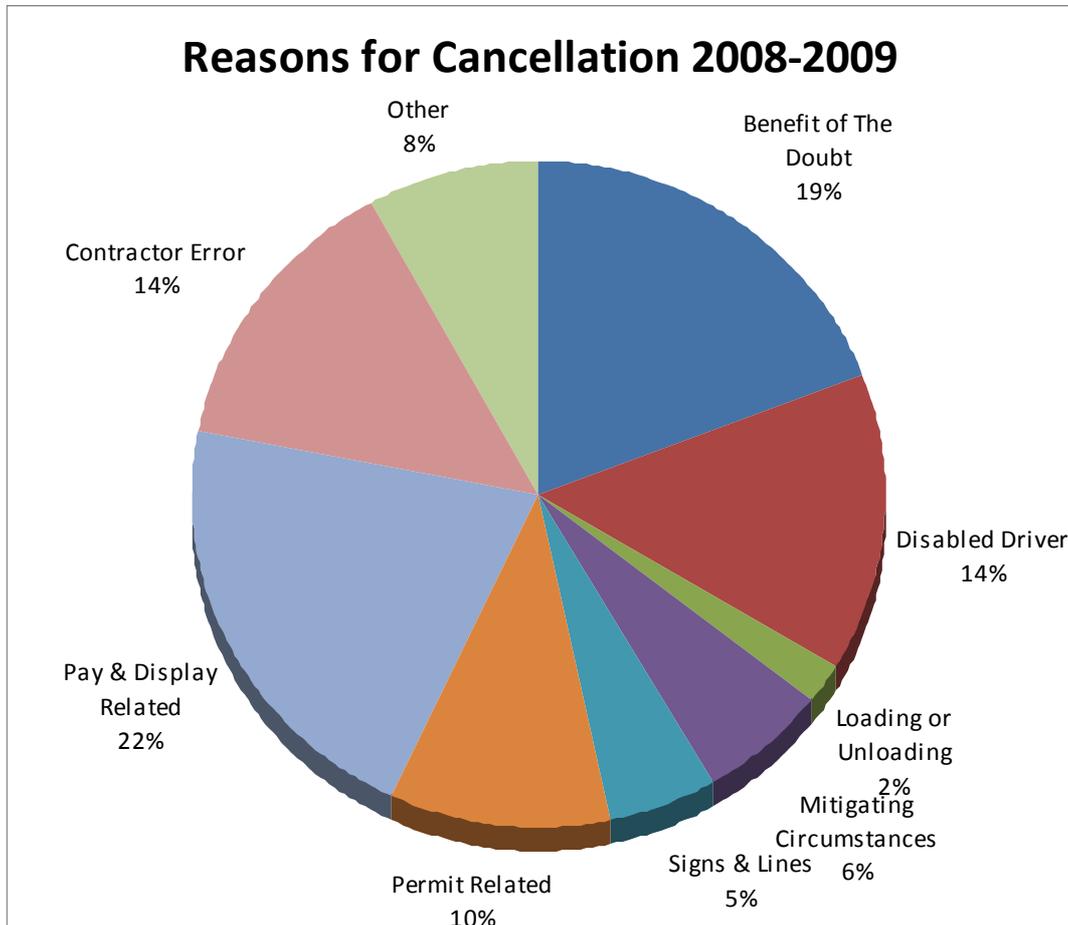
1. Many Penalty Charge Notices (PCN) reduced. There are now two different levels of PCN (known as differential charging), for example a vehicle parked on a yellow line restriction will be issued a PCN at the higher rate of £70 (£35 if paid within 14 days) whilst a vehicle parked over time on an off street car park is not deemed to be as serious a contravention and would therefore be issued with a PCN at the lower rate of £50 (£25 if paid within 14 days).
2. The other difference between the 1991 Road Traffic Act and the Traffic Management Act 2004 is that currently if a motorist returns to their vehicle and drives away before the PCN is fixed to the vehicle or handed to the driver, this PCN is not deemed to be issued. However, under the Traffic Management Act, from 31st March 2008, a PCN may be issued through the post if the driver prevents it being served.

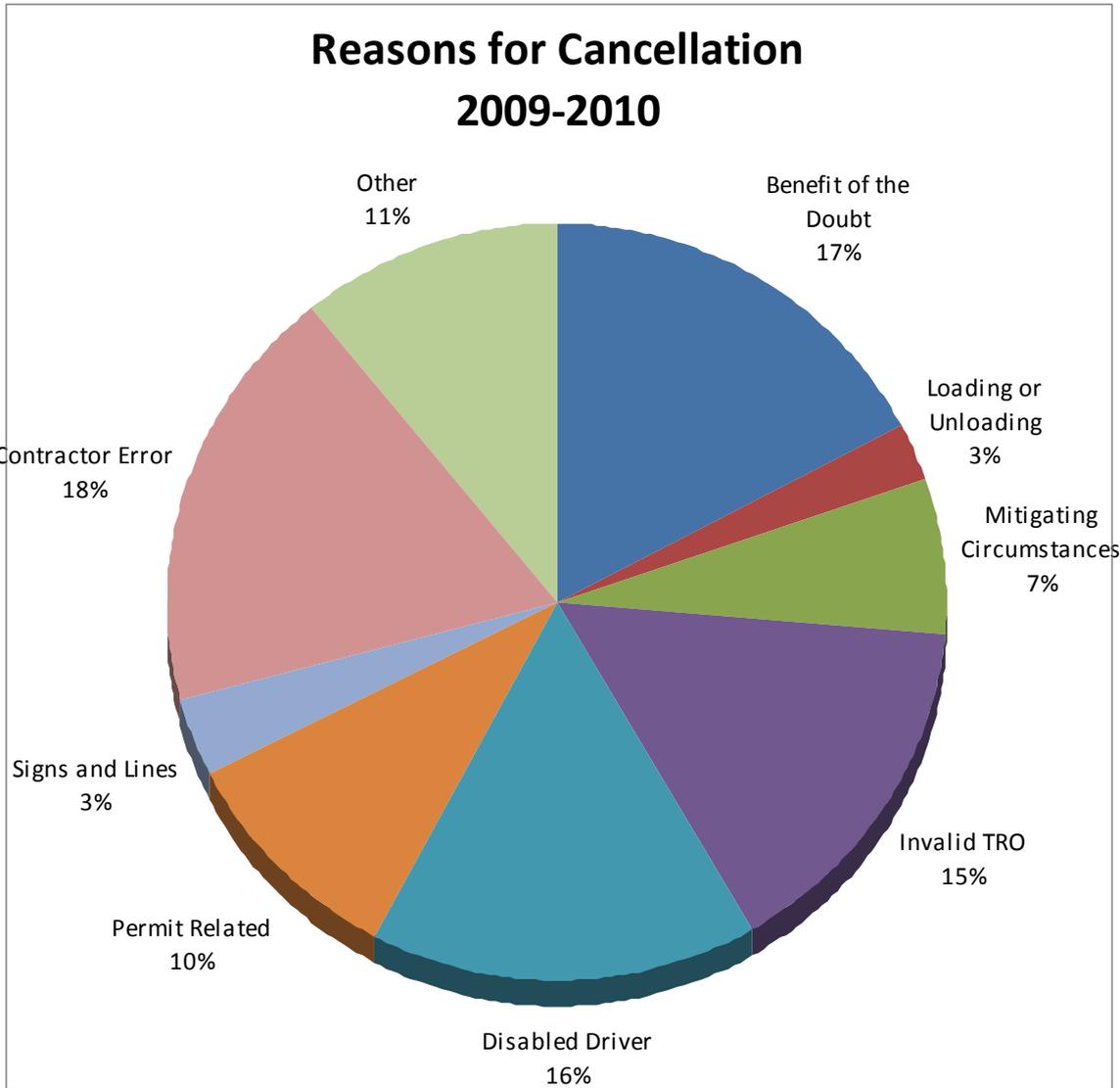
Statistical Information Relating to Penalty Charge Notices

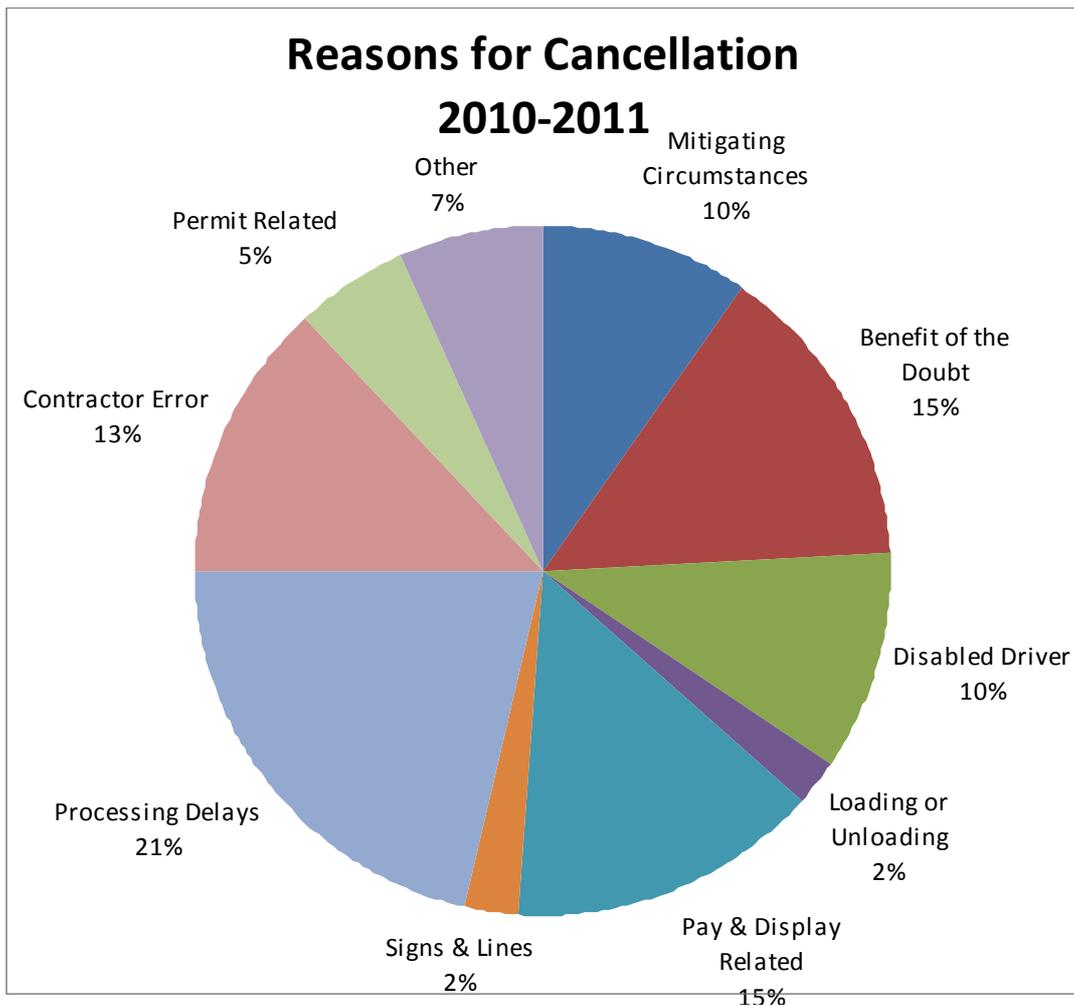
For the period 31 March 2008 to 31 March 2011 the following Penalty Charge Notices (PCNs) were served for vehicles parked in contravention of the relevant restriction.

		31/03/08 to 31/03/09	01/04/09* to 31/03/10	01/04/10 to 31/03/11
1	Higher Level PCNs served	11,925	10,881	11,254
2	Lower Level PCNs served	12,630	12,433	10,718
3	Number of PCNs paid	19,165	17,871	16,432
4	Payment Rate	78%	77%	75%
5	PCNs paid at discount rate	14,099	13,506	12,014
6	PCNs paid at full charge before Charge Certificate	3,618	3,638	3,973
7	PCNs paid after service of Charge Certificate	1,073	362	420
8	PCNs paid after issue of Warrant	375	365	25
9	Number of PCNs against which an informal or formal representation was made	7,301	6,884	6,213
10	Number of PCNs cancelled as a result of an informal or formal representation	3,182	5,278	4,921
11	Number of cases subject to adjudication at the Traffic Penalty Tribunal	82	67	43
12	Number of PCNs registered at the Traffic Enforcement Centre	2,202	505	853
13	Number of PCNs written off	54	462	207
14	Number of vehicles immobilised	N/A	N/A	N/A
15	Number of vehicles removed	N/A	N/A	N/A

*Following an adjudication hearing in October 2009 the decision not to collect payment on outstanding PCNs served in car parks. This increased the number of PCNs cancelled and written off.







Council Corporate Targets

The Council has adopted a Traffic Light system to monitor its Corporate Targets.

Red = More than 10% away from target

Amber = Below target but within 10% of target

Green = Achieving target

Items 1 & 2 (consolidated) - PCNs served 13 month trend

Item 4 payment rate target 70% paid over 13 month trend

are both reported to the Council's Cabinet on a monthly basis.

Financial Reporting

The income and expenditure of local authorities in connection with their on-street charging and their on-street and off-street (car parks) enforcement activities are governed by section 55 (as amended) of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984.

This means that all our income and expenditure related to the service of and income from PCNs in respect of off-street parking is covered by section 55.

Details of the income and expenditure relating to section 55 is detailed below.

	31/03/08 to 31/03/09	01/04/09 to 31/03/10	01/04/10 to 31/03/11
Total Expenditure**			
Central Services	35,050.90	29,199.32	41,968.86
Public Consultation	1,854.18	305.00	987.43
Equipment	967.52	-	-
Signs and Lines	10,542.26	13,616.10	17,910.75
Misc	932.54	1,315.21	-1,284.87
NCP Contract	915,151.93	917,908.75	924,292.99
Council Officer Costs	128,884.31	140,868.03	132,680.66
Stationery	173.37	27.48	121.88
Debt Registration Fees	13,360.00	1,331.40	12,817.71
Technical Services	25,669.09	24,345.15	22,520.00
Telephones	1,212.29	680.86	503.23
Traffic Order Related	6,468.27	5,567.80	16,040.15
Traffic Penalty Tribunal	14,315.40	16,158.05	5,227.95
Total	1,154,582.06	1,151,323.15	1,173,786.74

		31/03/08 to 31/03/09	01/04/09 to 31/03/10	01/04/10 to 31/03/11
Total Income**				
1	Reserve	33,300.00	-	-
2	Misc	-	9,317.16	-
3	NCP Contract	6,381.93	6,415.51	6,147.53
4	On Street P&D Income	237,839.06	253,294.15	248,974.00
5	Off Street PCN Income	220,743.75	185,269.01	190,759.28
	On Street PCN Income	448,176.69	453,589.62	370,297.40
	Total	668,920.44	638,858.63	561,056.68
6	Permit Income	239,969.87	263,672.71	271,743.85
7	Suspense	-3,523.02	-459.30	-714.62
8	Traffic Order Related	-	-	25,000.00
	Total	1,182,888.28	1,171,098.86	1,112,207.44
	Net	28,306.22	19,775.71	-61,579.30*

*The deficit for 2010/2011 is accounted for by the fall in PCN income £77,801.95 when compared with 2009/2010 and processing delays. As part of the ongoing Organisational Development a review of processes, policies and contractual arrangements with NCP Limited is currently being undertaken.

** The total income and expenditure represents the consolidated figures for all enforcement activity. Internally off street and on street activity is allocated on a pro rata basis in line with the number of PCNs served off and on street. For the report period this equated to;

	31/03/08 to 31/03/09	01/04/09 to 31/03/10	01/04/10 to 31/03/11
On Street	67%	71%	66%
Off Street	33%	29%	34%

Milestones relating to Parking Services

During the period covered by this report there have been a number of milestones involving Parking Services that impact on residents and visitors across the District

Launch of Variable Messaging System

The variable messaging signage system, installed by Hertfordshire Highways with the support of St Albans City and District Council, helps drivers find available car parking spaces as quickly and easily as possible by removing the need for them to drive round the City searching for a spare car park space. It is anticipated that as drivers will no longer be circulating around the City on the hunt for a car park space traffic congestion in St Albans will also be reduced.

Variable message car park signs displaying the number of available spaces for each car park connected to the system have been installed on the main approaches to the city. As vehicles enter and exit the relevant car parks, the information displayed changes automatically alerting them to where spaces are available.

The variable message signs can also be used to guide drivers to overflow parking, alert them to other road conditions and inform them about events that are happening in the City.

Enforcement of Footway and Verges

Following feedback from residents and Councillors the District Council has put in place the relevant legal process to take action against vehicles parked on grass verges and or the footway.

The current locations affected by the restriction which applies 24 hours a day, 7 days a week are;

Watsons Walk, Harpenden Road (Texaco Garage to Sandridgebury Lane), Colney Heath, Watling Street, Hatfield Road (part), Ashley Road (part), Batchwood Drive

Vehicles parked on the verge or footway in these locations may receive a PCN.

New Resident Parking Schemes

A number of new resident parking schemes have come into effect during this period.

Riverside Road area

Riverside Road, Cornwall Road and Approach Road. Restrictions apply Monday to Friday 11am to 1pm. During this period vehicles are required to display the relevant permit.

Hospital Area

Alban Avenue, Batchwood View, Eleanor Avenue, High Grove and Margaret Avenue.
Restrictions apply Monday to Friday 8am to 6pm. During this period vehicles are required to display the relevant permit.

On-Line Payment and Enquiry Facility

St Albans City and District Council in partnership with NCP Limited and their IT supplier have introduced a new IT system that enables recipients of PCNs to view any photographic evidence taken at the time. After viewing the case the driver can either challenge the PCN or make payment on line. <https://live.esd.ce.civicahosting.co.uk/stalbans/>

During the coming year further developments will be investigated to enable residents to purchase their annual resident permit on line.

Dropped Kerbs and Double Parking

Following a review by the Department for Transport, the City and District of St Albans from Monday 29 March 2010 in line with other Local Authorities has been enforcing parking rules at dropped kerbs and where vehicles are double parked (more than 50cm from the edge of the carriageway) **WITHOUT** the need for signs or road markings.

Action against vehicles parked across a private drive can only be taken at the request of the resident. Requests can be made by calling the Parking Hotline 01727 845 283.

For further information relating to parking within St Albans City and District please contact:

**The Parking Shop
Drovers Way Multi Storey Car Park
Drovers Way
St Albans
AL3 5EB
Telephone 0845 601 7803**

Or

<http://www.stalbans.gov.uk/transport-and-streets/parking/>

Or

parking@stalbands.gov.uk