

Stevenage Borough Council

Annual Parking Report 2024/25



Contents

Contents.....	2
Why do we manage Parking?	3
How do we manage parking?	3
Parking Projects	5
St Nicholas Ward Parking Restrictions.....	5
Market Square Parking Changes	6
Sefton Road Junction Protection.....	6
Primett Road Underpass Double Yellow Lines	7
Basils Road Goods Vehicle Loading	7
Parking Controls Ingleside Drive Estate	7
Parking changes in Danestrete and Danesgate	8
Kilby Road and Watson Road Double Yellow Lines.....	9
Cycle Parking/Lockable Bike Shelters.....	9
Parking Income and Expenditure	9
How many people get tickets and what happens next?.....	10

Why do we manage Parking?

Since 2005 Stevenage Borough Council has had the power, in partnership with Hertfordshire County Council (the local Traffic Authority) to manage on street parking within the town. This means the council can make, and enforce, local parking rules.

Having these powers, the council is expected to use them and before taking them on we developed a Parking Strategy. The 2004 Parking Strategy identified ways that parking affects the community and set out a range of ways that parking should be managed in future to support local and national policy aims.

Managing parking to support these aims benefits everyone who lives in, or visits, Stevenage. That could be by removing hazardous or obstructive parking so that the roads can be used safely and easily, by ensuring that customers are able to visit businesses, or by nudging people to consider using other modes of transport that are better for their health while reducing both traffic congestion and pollution.

Council parking enforcement also means that we can help deal with most illegal parking, freeing up the Police who would otherwise have to do so. The council can enforce against:

- breaking specific rules such as parking on double yellow lines or in an enforceable bus stop, parking for longer than is allowed or not paying when you are supposed to.
- parking that obstructs where the pavement has been lowered (or the road surface has been raised) to give access to a driveway or so that people can cross the road; and
- parking more than 50cm out from the kerb into the road (double parking).

The council doesn't set out to make money from parking but is expected by the government to make its parking service self-funding so that it doesn't form a burden on council taxpayers generally who after all may not even own a car. If the council makes more money from on-street parking fees and parking enforcement than it spends on managing parking, this either goes to offset any loss in past years or is used to fund specific things allowed by law such as transport or environmental improvements and building or maintaining parking facilities.

How do we manage parking?

Parking is largely managed by making rules about what drivers can and can't do and upholding those rules through enforcement if they are broken. The council can only enforce through issuing Penalty Charge Notices ("parking tickets" or PCNs).

It should be remembered that most drivers don't seek to park illegally and may never receive a PCN. If they do, it is because based on what the Civil Enforcement Officer (CEO or "traffic warden") can see they believe that the vehicle has been parked in a

way that breaks the rules. CEOs don't receive any sort of reward for issuing PCNs and one of the services KPIs is avoiding CEO errors, with a target error rate of under 1% so if anything, CEOs are incentivised not to issue PCNs unless they are certain that it is correct to do so.

Every year many tickets are correctly issued in this way, and when challenged by the driver correctly cancelled as they provide information or evidence that wasn't available to the CEO. The Parking Office at East Herts District Council considers all PCN challenges on the Stevenage Borough Council's behalf, so drivers are assured a fair and consistent hearing from a third party that has nothing to gain from their decision.

The rules that we make generally fall into two categories: preventing parking and creating opportunities for it.

Preventing parking usually means placing yellow lines. That could be double yellow lines that apply all the time somewhere that parking would create a hazard or obstruction, or a single yellow line to address a problem that only happens at certain times such as parking pressure from commuters. It can also mean banning parking on the verge or pavement to protect the environment and so that pedestrians aren't hindered by parked cars.

Creating opportunities means making it easier for one user to stop, but often at the cost of someone else being able to park. For example, we might have to make a bus stop enforceable so that buses can use it, meaning that cars that had been blocking it would have to be parked somewhere else. It can also mean setting conditions on parking, such as in the High Street where a time limit was introduced so that rather than being occupied all day by workers parking spaces would become available for customers to use, giving them the opportunity to support local businesses.

We also use charges to manage parking, where it is helpful to encourage turnover or steer long stay parking to other facilities while allowing some flexibility in how long drivers can park for. This is used in the town centre, where charges encourage drivers to park only as long as they need while allowing them to park all day if they must – but make it cheaper to use a car park for all day parking so that premium on-street space can be used for shorter visits. It is also used together with a three-hour time limit to encourage turnover of parking near the hospital to maximise parking availability for visitors and outpatients.

When the council sets out to make new rules or to change existing ones, we consult the public to try to make sure that we get it right. This typically includes informal surveys as well as formal public consultation exercises, to understand who will be affected by any changes and how. It is rare for a change to please everyone, but great care is taken to ensure all points of view are considered. A final decision is then made by the Executive Member for Economy, Enterprise and Transport, the

senior councillor who oversees our work together with the Ward Councillors who represent the area affected.

Most changes to parking rules are subject to a long and tightly controlled legal process, so that motorists are not penalised through hasty or unconsidered changes. Given the work involved the council can only carry out a few projects to change parking rules each year, and these are prioritised based on the nature and history of each request or concern together with the need to make best use of available resources. This means that we are normally working on a mixture of large and small projects, in order to get them all done as quickly as possible – though it still typically takes at least nine months to complete even a simple change.

We keep records of all requests for changes to parking and reports of problems, so that when we have capacity to start a new project, we can consider what the next priority should be.

The council also sometimes builds parking. In the past large sums have been spent on this, but it was found that where parking was built car ownership would increase in following years so the benefit of it being easier to find a parking space would often be relatively short lived. In recent years, changes to council funding have meant ever greater financial constraints and significant reductions in the budget available to build parking bays. In June 2019 the council declared a Climate Emergency and set a target for net-zero emissions by 2030, which makes it harder to justify building more parking as it both encourages car ownership and driving and removes valuable if small areas of green space. Although it often seems an “obvious” or “easy” solution to those who want it, parking construction is now something that must be the exception rather than the rule.

Parking Projects

Several projects to update parking restrictions were successfully progressed after investigations and public consultations were undertaken this financial year.

St Nicholas Ward Parking Restrictions

In 2021-22 financial year as part of the Personal Injury Crash Project we investigated several sites where people have been hurt, and parking was considered a contributory factor in causing the crash. Additional locations subject to complaints related to road safety were also investigated. The aim was to identify what restrictions if any should be proposed to help prevent reoccurrence and improve road safety. A few projects proposing ‘no waiting at any time’ restrictions were added to our work programme to be progressed within next financial years according to resources available. Restrictions were introduced at several locations throughout the town in the financial year 2022-23 and additional parking restrictions to improve road safety were proposed at new locations throughout 2023-24 financial year.

In St Nicholas Ward parking at several locations, mainly junctions, were reported to cause a hazard and/or an obstruction. Those reports were brought forward to us by residents, local councillors, bus operators, Council's refuse collection team and others. Concerns were also raised regarding pavement parking in a small number of streets in St Nicholas area where the verge and footway parking was not formally prohibited.

Two Traffic Regulation Orders proposing parking restrictions at various locations throughout St Nicholas Ward were formally proposed in January 2025. Following consideration of all consultation responses a decision was made to implement the restrictions with only one minor amendment. Both Traffic Regulation Orders were approved to come into force in November 2025 introducing 'no waiting at any time' restrictions and the prohibition of verge and footway parking at several locations throughout St Nicholas area.

Market Square Parking Changes

Market Square, a street in Stevenage Town Centre, was subject to substantial changes to the street scene as part of the wider Town Centre regeneration works. A pedestrian footpath, plating, and other street furniture were introduced on that length of Market Square to the west of Stevenage St George's Way multi storey car park. This improved access to that part of Stevenage Town Centre for pedestrians and those using wheelchair and prams, thereby maintaining, and improving the amenity of the area. Also, the changes helped to improve the area's attractiveness, enhance pedestrian safety, and ensure continuity of trading for the surrounding businesses.

This has resulted in the need to modify the existing parking restrictions by replacing the loading bays located on the west side of the St George's Way car park with no waiting, no loading or unloading restrictions, introduce a new goods vehicle loading bay on southern side and relocate two existing disabled parking bays located on the south side of St George's car park to the south-western spur of Market Square.

These parking changes in Market Square were implemented in July 2024 following a public consultation carried out throughout May 2024. A road closure Temporary Traffic Regulation Order was implemented to help facilitate the civil works.

Sefton Road Junction Protection

In recent years the Council received various reports of unsafe parking at several junctions in Sefton Road. Those reports were brought forward to us by residents, local councillors, Council's refuse collection team and others.

The Council's investigations alongside concerns raised by the Police Traffic Management Unit have found that unrestricted parking at several junctions in Sefton Road were liable to cause an obstruction to traffic both during the day and in the evening.

A Traffic Regulation Order proposing double yellow lines at those junctions was advertised in July 2024. Following consideration of all consultation responses a decision was made to implement the restrictions, and the Order came into force in November 2024.

Primett Road Underpass Double Yellow Lines

The council received several reports about hazardous and obstructive parking taking place in Primett Road on that length of road between Lytton Way and the main part of Primett Road (the underpass).

Subsequent site investigations confirmed that vehicles parking at that location were liable to cause an obstruction to the passage of traffic especially due to the narrow width carriageway in that area.

A Traffic Regulation Order proposing double yellow lines on that length of road was advertised in August 2024. Following consideration of all consultation responses a decision was made to implement restrictions, and the Order came into force in November 2024.

Basils Road Goods Vehicle Loading

The council received several requests to introduce additional loading facilities in Basils Road section near the High Street to make it easier for delivery drivers delivering goods to businesses in that area.

After taking in consideration the comments received and following site investigations, the Council proposed a Traffic Regulation Order to implement a commercial vehicle loading/unloading bay in Basils Road section adjacent to the High Street. To ensure that traffic on that section of road always remains unobstructed following the introduction of that loading/unloading area, the Council also proposed a second Traffic Regulation Order to 'upgrade' the existing restrictions on the opposite side of road from 'no waiting at any time' to 'no waiting, no loading or unloading at any time'.

The above proposals were advertised in August 2024 and subsequently implemented in November 2024. The restrictions were implemented to improve the amenity of the area for local businesses by introducing commercial vehicle loading/unloading and to improve road safety.

Parking Controls Ingleside Drive Estate

The council received various complaints from residents about the levels of non-resident parking in Ingleside Drive and adjacent streets such as Baron Court car park, Ansell Court car park and others. Some of the comments received highlighted how commuter parking in these residential areas was the main contributory factor to a parking congestion that had a negative impact on residents' quality of life.

These comments were carefully considered, and the Portfolio Holder in consultation with the Ward Councillors decided that permit parking restrictions should be investigated. Therefore, a parking survey was undertaken throughout August – September 2024 to find out if residents would like the Council to implement a residents permit parking scheme. The survey results demonstrated a high level of support for permit parking controls as 65% of those who replied were in favour.

Site investigations were carried out including vehicle registration surveys at various times and days of the week. Evidence of significant daytime parking pressure was found which corroborated the comments submitted by some residents who expressed a fear of driving out in the morning for shopping or other activities as they would not be able to find parking available near their house on return. That was likely to have a significant negative impact on residents' lives especially those who are elderly or disabled.

Based on residents' comments submitted throughout the initial survey, permit parking controls with operational hours between 8.30am and 5.30pm Monday to Saturday were formally proposed in January 2025. Double yellow lines at a small number of locations and a motor vehicle parking ban on verge and footways throughout the estate were also formally proposed.

After taking in consideration the responses received throughout both consultations, the implementation of the proposed Traffic Regulation Orders was advertised in March 2025 and their enforcement commenced in June 2025.

Parking changes in Danestrete and Danesgate

Following the redevelopment of former Matalan site in Stevenage Town Centre, parts of Danesgate and Danestrete adjacent to that site were subject to public realm improvements previously agreed by the Council as part of the planning permission.

A new footpath and several parking laybys were created around the site. The Council advertised formal parking restrictions proposing to regulate the parking areas in order to maintain and improve the amenity of the area. Two parking laybys were designed as disabled person's vehicles parking spaces with a maximum stay of three hours in order that Blue Badge holders to park without difficulty or causing to seek a space, and without causing an obstruction, either of which may add to traffic congestion in the area. Also, two parking laybys were designed for commercial vehicles loading and unloading facilities to help ensuring continuity for existing businesses and attract additional investment to the local area. Furthermore, two parking spaces were designed as electric car club bays to help facilitate transport for residents and workers without a vehicle and help reduce emissions and improve air quality.

The amendments to the street scene, also necessitated the introduction of "no waiting, no loading" restrictions. If these were not introduced around the disabled

person's parking bays or the other parking places, the council would not have been able to address obstructive parking that prevented their use and disrupted the flow of traffic on the carriageway.

The above parking controls were advertised and consulted on in January 2025 and subsequently implemented in March 2025.

Kilby Road and Watson Road Double Yellow Lines

Various concerns were raised with the Council regarding obstructive parking taking place in Kilby Road and Watson Road. These concerns were raised by residents and the Fire Department who carried out a test emergency drill, during this drill they were unable to access the road due to parked vehicles causing an obstruction.

After site investigations and following discussions with the Emergency Services, Stevenage Borough Council decided to undertake an experimental scheme of parking control to evaluate the effect of "no waiting at any time" restrictions in these two streets, and the surrounding areas affected by displacement of parked vehicles. The Experimental Traffic Regulation Order was implemented in February 2025. Unlike a permanent traffic order where formal consultation is undertaken, the Experimental Order is a more flexible approach. The double yellow lines were introduced at junctions and bends through those two streets, and residents were asked to give feedback throughout the duration of this experiment to collate information and make an informed decision at the end of the experiment.

Cycle Parking/Lockable Bike Shelters

Living in a flat or small house with little or no space to safely store a bike can be a significant barrier to cycling and the benefits it offers, in reduced transport costs and improved health for the individual and improved air quality and reduced healthcare costs for society.

In 2021-22 financial year Stevenage Borough Council installed the first Cycle Hangar in the town, two were installed in 2022-23, one in 2023-24 and one in 2024-25 financial year to help provide cycle storage for those who need it. A Cycle Hangar is a lockable, sheltered storage pod for up to six bicycles, with stands to hold them upright and hoops to lock them to.

Residents can contact the Council's parking team to make suggestions where potential future cycle hangars should be installed subject to evidence of demand, availability of suitable space and funding.

Parking Income and Expenditure

The total revenue cost of on-street parking management shown in the council's records for 2024-25 was £816,873. The bulk of this comprises payments to East

Herts District Council for providing enforcement patrols and administering penalty charges issued including consideration of any challenges or appeals. The second largest sum was internal staff costs within the council, followed by the cost of maintaining the traffic signs and road markings needed for parking enforcement. Other costs included buying materials such as special papers to allow parking permits to be printed, monitoring and maintenance costs for pay and display machines and electric car chargers, and internal recharges within the council such as postage costs.

The capital spending on parking management projects in 2024-25 was £32,322 on projects to introduce new restrictions or change existing parking rules, undertake parking study, and create additional parking spaces.

The council's income from penalty charges was £517,586. Payments for on-street parking totalled £678,798 which includes £26,011 received from the sale of residents' parking permits and visitor vouchers. A further £34,603 was received in other payments such as fees for suspending parking bays and charges for bar markings across driveways. The total income received was £1,233,242 resulting in a revenue surplus of £416,368. Once capital is also considered, the surplus was £384,046.

How many people get tickets and what happens next?

In 2024-25, a total of 18,796 PCNs were issued on behalf of the council. 12,265 of these were higher-level penalty charge notices for more serious contraventions such as parking on the zigzags at a pedestrian crossing. 6,531 were lower-level penalty charge notices for less serious contraventions such as parking in a bay for longer than is allowed.

Though most drivers who receive a PCN pay it, often quite quickly as there is a discounted rate for prompt payment, many take up the option to challenge it. That could be because they think the enforcement officer has got it wrong, or because they feel they deserve the benefit of the doubt, or any other reason. As soon as a challenge is received the case is put on hold, and the challenge is considered by one of the Parking Office team at East Herts District Council. As has been mentioned, there is nothing for them to gain or lose from their decision, and drivers are assured a fair and consistent hearing. If a driver is unsuccessful in challenging their PCN, the process allows them to appeal to the independent adjudicator, the Traffic Penalty Tribunal (TPT), for a final decision. Very few cases from Stevenage go to the TPT each year, and the council's decision is usually found to be correct. If it is not, both we and the Parking Office learn from this to improve how enforcement is carried out and decisions are made.

In 2024-25 12,279 PCNs were paid, of which 10,063 received a 50% discount for prompt payment within 14 days. 4,396 PCNs were challenged or appealed, as a

result of which 3,493 were cancelled. A further 1,169 PCNs were written off for other reasons such as mistakes made by enforcement officers or being unable to trace the driver. Naturally some PCNs issued in the previous year would only have been paid, challenged or cancelled in 2024-25, and some PCNs issued in 2024-25 will only be paid, challenged or cancelled in the following year.

Stevenage Borough Council doesn't immobilise or remove vehicles as part of its parking enforcement regime.

Table 1: PCN statistics

Financial year	PCNs issued			PCNs paid		PCNs challenged or appealed	PCNs cancelled	
	Total	Higher rate	Lower rate	Total	At a discount		after a challenge or appeal	for other reasons
2016-17	10,981	6,479	4,502	7,677	6,580	2,645	2,207	
2017-18	10,823	6,813	4,640	7,454	6,001	3,009	2,460	
2018-19	10,929	6,793	4,136	6,968	5,758	2,557	1,779	
2019-20	13,327	9,010	4,317	8,852	7,237	3,003	3,182	
2020-21	7,781	5,046	2,735	5,116	4,150	2,046	1,424	607
2021-22	12,322	7,377	4,945	7,855	6,414	3,115	1,715	607
2022-23	11,937	7,447	4,490	8,162	6,424	2,740	1,865	584
2023-24	16,203	10,534	5,669	10,869	8,435	3,493	2,707	838
2024-25	18,796	12,265	6,531	12,279	10,063	4,396	3,493	1,169

