



# **ANNUAL PARKING REPORT 2008/09**

## Introduction

Leeds City Council parking services carries out a number of functions relating to car parking in the City.

We provide 65 car parks throughout the district. Our main physical asset is Woodhouse Lane Multi Storey car park in the City centre, which offers 1300 spaces. We have a further 16 pay car parks with 2027 spaces, and 2407 on street pay and display spaces. Our 48 free car parks offer a further 3400 spaces.

We also carry out Parking enforcement, issuing Penalty Charge Notices to vehicles parked in contravention of the rules. In addition, we are responsible for related duties such as suspending parking to allow building works and coning off areas for events.

The service employs 120 people. 85 of them are uniformed staff and supervisors. With shifts at different times and working 7 days a week, this means that there are about 35 uniformed staff on duty in the district during the day.

Leeds City Council carries out Parking enforcement in line with regulations produced by the Government in the Traffic Management Act 2004. One of the requirements of the Act is that we produce an Annual report about the Parking Service. This is the first report and it covers the financial year 2008/09 (1.4.08 – 31.3.09).

The aim of Leeds City Council is to improve the quality of life in Leeds in a number of specific ways. These improvements are called Strategic Outcomes. The Council is organised so that each department is responsible for contributing towards the Strategic Outcomes. The Parking Service is part of the Health and Environmental Action Service (HEAS), which in turn is part of the Environment and Neighbourhoods directorate. The Strategic Outcomes that are most relevant to us are :

**Strategic outcome:** Increased accessibility and connectivity through investment in a high quality transport system and through influencing and changing behaviours

**How we will contribute:** Achieving a reduction in parking offences through effective enforcement. Improve traffic flow across the city by fully implementing the Traffic Management Act and enforcing against perpetrators.

**How we will measure performance :** We carry out a detailed illegal parking survey every year, and we monitor offence levels through the number of Penalty Charges issued.

**Strategic outcome:** Increased entrepreneurship and innovation through effective support to achieve the full potential of people, business and the economy

**How we will contribute:** Manage on street and off street parking in the city centre and district centres to enhance the economy and support local employment, using effective pricing and restrictions to encourage the most effective use of available parking spaces.

**How we will measure performance :** We measure how many people use our car parks. If the restrictions and the prices are set correctly the usage should rise.

This report comprises commentary and statistical information in 4 key areas :

- 1) Review of the year
- 2) Illegal parking survey
- 3) Penalty Charge Notice information
- 4) Financial information

## **1) Review of the year**

The service made progress towards all of the main objectives in the Service plan for 2008/09. The following achievements have been made :

- Parking Services have worked with Highways Services to undertake a comprehensive review of signs and lines across the city. This ensures that all signs and lines are correct and enforceable, improving traffic flows and road safety.
- A new barrier system has been introduced at Woodhouse Lane Car Park in response to requests in the user satisfaction survey. The survey itself has shown an increase in customer satisfaction for the third year running with 98 % now rating the facility as good or excellent (78% in 2005, 83% 2006, 94%2007)
- The ParkMark scheme is administered by the Police to recognise car parks that are safe and well managed. ParkMark has been secured at a further four sites during the year, meaning seventeen of the council's car parks now hold it.
- We have increased access to the service by improving electronic communications such as the website. This has resulted in an increased number of people using the internet to pay fines etc. Current 15% of people use this method, with another 42% using the automated telephone payment line, so 67% of payments are completely automated. This has reduced the postal payments from about 40% to 24%, helping to improve efficiency.
- At the request of West Yorkshire Police, the service has introduced night time civil enforcement officers to reduce the number of parking offences committed across the city. There are now patrols until 4 am in some hot spots.
- Customer service standards have improved. The number of phone calls answered is 98 % (94 % last year) and correspondence answered in 14 days is 86% (77% last year).
- The service has zoned on street parking in Leeds city centre to make the charges easier to understand for customers, replacing 14 different tariffs with a simple 3 zone system.
- We have revised our induction training for new staff to include cultural, gender and disability awareness.
- All staff have achieved both BTEC level 2 and City & Guilds qualifications in Parking Enforcement and conflict management.

- Unfortunately abuse and assaults against staff are as big problem in the service. An investment in additional training and a review of deployment has been undertaken. As a result we have seen a 14% reduction in incidents compared to last year. However, there were still 186 recorded incidents and reducing this number remains a top priority.

## 2) Illegal Parking Survey

Although the reduction of illegal parking is key aim for the service, this is a difficult thing to measure. The number of tickets issued is not always a reliable measure as this may reflect enforcement levels, deployment, additional restrictions and so on rather than how many offences are being committed.

In Leeds, an illegal parking survey is carried out on the same spaces in the city every year. The survey is always carried out in the last week of November so that seasonal factors do not distort the results (for example, there is less traffic in school half term or University holidays).

Four areas are chosen to try and reflect the variety of areas across the district. The number of vehicles parked illegally is noted down by the assessor. Assessors are experienced traffic surveyors who are completely independent of the service. The four areas chosen are :

- Commuter area (Clarendon Road)
- Disabled Parking area (Wormald Row)
- City Centre shopping area (Greek street)
- District town (Pudsey Market Place)

The results are as follows :

	Number of contraventions				
	2008	2007	2006	2005	2004
<b>Commuter area</b>	64	59	46	77	198
<b>District Town</b>	33	61	30	44	64
<b>City Centre shopping area</b>	82	90	59	56	255
<b>Disabled parking area</b>	42	47	42	87	178
<b>Total</b>	<b>221</b>	<b>257</b>	<b>177</b>	<b>264</b>	<b>695</b>

This shows a reduction of 14% from November 2007 and a 69% reduction from 2004. However, it is still considerably higher than survey results in 2006. The arrangement of officer patrols was reviewed as a result of the 2007 survey and it appears that this change was successful in achieving a reduction in offences.

### 3) Statistical information

Parking 2008-2009				
Ref.	Performance Indicator	2008/09	2007/08	% change
	<b>PCN ISSUE</b>			
	Number of PCN's issued	127,137	129,363	- 2%
	Number of higher level PCNs issued (£70 ticket)	74807	N/a	
	Number of lower level PCNs issued (£60 ticket)	52330	N/a	
i)	PCNs paid	89,794	92,439	3%
	PCNs paid at discount rate	74,243	76,363	3%
ii)	PCNs challenged	35907	31868	12%
	PCNs challenged as % of total	28%	25%	
iii)	PCN challenges successful	17405	15281	12%
	Vehicles immobilised / removed	0	0	No change
	<b>ADJUDICATION (TPT)</b>			
iv)	Total no of adjudicated cases	120	334	-64%
	No of successful cases at Adjudication (Council decision upheld)	50	88	-44%
	No of unsuccessful cases at Adjudication	70	246	-72%
	Success rate overall – % of cases won by Council	42%	26%	39%
	<b>CORRESPONDENCE</b>			
	Total items of correspondence received	35,907	32,494	10%
	No of items of correspondence answered within 10 days	84 %	77%	8%
	% of correspondence dealt with electronically		16%	59%
	<b>TELEPHONE ENQUIRIES</b>			
	No of calls offered	53293	51966	3%
v)	No of calls answered	98%	94%	4%

## Notes

i) The number of PCNs paid always goes up over time as tickets issued in the previous year are paid in the subsequent year. The numbers paid so far are in line with previous years.

ii) The number of challenges to PCNs has gone up significantly. Analysis of the figures shows that this increase is entirely due to a much greater use of email to appeal against tickets. It appears that the greater ease of using email has improved access considerably.

iii) The rise in successful appeals is due to a more lenient approach in the processing office rather than any deficiencies in the quality of the notices.

iv) The success rate at formal appeal has been a concern for the service, and greater emphasis has been put on improving the quality of response at the pre-appeal stage. This avoids the Council wasting both our own resources and those of the motorist. Both the absolute number of appeals, and the proportion of cases where the Council's decision has been upheld, have improved significantly. The national average as reported by the Traffic Penalty Tribunal is 39% .

v) The answer rate for telephone calls has improved significantly despite a rise in the number of calls.

## 4) Financial information

	<b>2008/09</b>	<b>2007/08</b>
On street fee income	£3,541,865	£3,435,863
Off street fee income	£4,712,588	£4,631,967
PCN income	£4,048,887	£3,908,260
Other income	£517,675	£597,574
Total income	£12,821,015	£12,573,664
Total expenditure	£3,903,898	£3,862,976
Total surplus	£8,917,117	£8,710,688