

# Annual Report 2017-18

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## Foreword

In accordance with national legislation, Maidstone Borough Council has a responsibility to publish an Annual Report detailing on-street and off-street parking statistics.

The aim of the report is to summarise what services the Parking Services department provides and give an overview as to why Civil Parking Enforcement is required within Maidstone, how we operate and how well we are performing.

Reporting is an important part of our accountability. The transparency given by regular and consistent reporting should help the public gain a better understanding of Civil Parking Enforcement.

I hope that you will find the contents of this report helpful and informative.

Councillor David Burton

Chair of Strategic Planning, Sustainability & Transportation Committee



## Introduction

Maidstone is the county town of Kent, a town combining rural villages with a bustling town centre; located in Kent, and only 32 miles from London with excellent transport links. Maidstone Borough Council are continually investing to ensure that Maidstone is a place where people want to live and businesses want to invest.

This report provides information on performance and initiatives taken in 2017/18 to the public, whilst also allowing Maidstone Borough Council to evaluate our performance against previous goals and identify areas for improvement.

### Contact Us

Any enquiries or comments can be submitted to Parking Services by emailing [parkingservices@maidstone.gov.uk](mailto:parkingservices@maidstone.gov.uk)



## Parking Services Goals

Maidstone Borough Council's Parking Services Team is committed to:

- Enforcing the Traffic Management Act 2004 fairly and in accordance with the regulations
- Using technology to streamline and simplify town centre and residential parking
- Improving accessibility to the town centre for all members of the public
- Reducing the impact of antisocial parking
- Reducing peak time congestion in Maidstone's Town Centre
- Reducing harmful emissions in Maidstone's Town Centre
- Reinvesting any surplus into service and infrastructure to improve user experience

## Traffic Management Act 2004

The Traffic Management Act 2004 was implemented in 2008 decriminalising parking to reduce the strain on Police resources when enforcing against parking contraventions.

Several important changes came with this legislation including:

- ◊ Civil Enforcement Officers rather than 'Parking Attendants'
- ◊ Penalty Charge Notices (PCNs) issued at different charges dependent on the seriousness of the contravention
- ◊ A statutory process for members of the public to contest PCNs

An up-to-date version of the Traffic Management Act 2004 can be found [here](#).

For further information on the statutory appeals process please visit the following [link](#).



## Traffic Management Act 2004

CHAPTER 18

## Civil Parking Enforcement

Parking restrictions are placed at key locations throughout the borough of Maidstone to specifically ensure the free flow of traffic and to maintain highway safety for both drivers and pedestrians.

Enforcement is carried out by APCOA Parking's Civil Enforcement Officers on behalf of Maidstone Borough Council.

CEOs enforce parking restrictions under Section 6 of the Traffic Management Act 2004, in accordance with the relevant Traffic Regulation Order.

All TROs can be viewed online at:

<http://www.maidstone.gov.uk/residents/parking-and-streets/traffic-regulations-orders-tro>



## Civil Enforcement Officers

Maidstone's civil enforcement team patrol the borough on a daily basis to improve driver compliance.

Officers have the power to issue PCNs to any vehicles observed parked in contravention of an active parking restriction.

All Officers also act as the eyes and the ears of the Borough, reporting any faulty street furniture and greeting visitors to the Borough who require information or directions.



The role of a Civil Enforcement Officer can often be a difficult and unpopular one and is often the subject of many 'myths' and stereotypes.

Unfortunately, the common misconceptions about the role can influence the public's view of Officers. The information below may help to dispel some of the most common parking myths.

- ◆ All Officers are salaried and receive no commission
- ◆ Money generated by Officers is used to cover the cost of enforcement with any surplus being reinvested into key services by the Council
- ◆ Officers are not 'incentivised' to issue PCNs; charge notices can only be issued where a vehicle is observed parked in contravention
- ◆ Officers routinely carry out late or early shifts to enforce 24-hour restrictions
- ◆ Our Officers are here to help and often assist visitors to the Borough by providing information and directions
- ◆ All Officers wear hi-visibility uniform to ensure they are visible to the public (winter coats are issued for the colder months!)
- ◆ Officers don't wait in car parks; in fact over 70% of enforcement is carried out on-street

## Body-Worn Cameras

In 2016 APCOA, in partnership with Maidstone Borough Council, introduced body-worn cameras for all CEOs.

Body-worn cameras ensure the Health and Safety of the officers by acting as a deterrent to verbally and physically abusive members of the public, as well as providing sufficient evidence to prosecute when required.

They also allow Officers to detect and identify crime and antisocial behaviour.

Since their introduction, the cameras have led to two successful prosecutions.

The cameras record for a full shift (all deployed hours) in 720p HD image quality with full colour and audio recording. All cameras are tamperproof by the officer.

Cameras also allow Parking Service to investigate complaints made by members of the public, providing an impartial 'third witness'.

However, footage cannot be used as supporting evidence when challenging a Penalty Charge Notice.



From April 2017 to March 2018 there were 11 instances of Civil Enforcement Officers being issued with severe verbal threats, expletive abuse or racial abuse.

During the same period there was one physical assault against an officer.

Body-worn Camera footage has helped in supporting 3 prosecutions in this time.

We hope that over time this will act as a deterrent to members of the public and improve the working conditions for all CEOs working on behalf of the Council.

## Contravention Codes

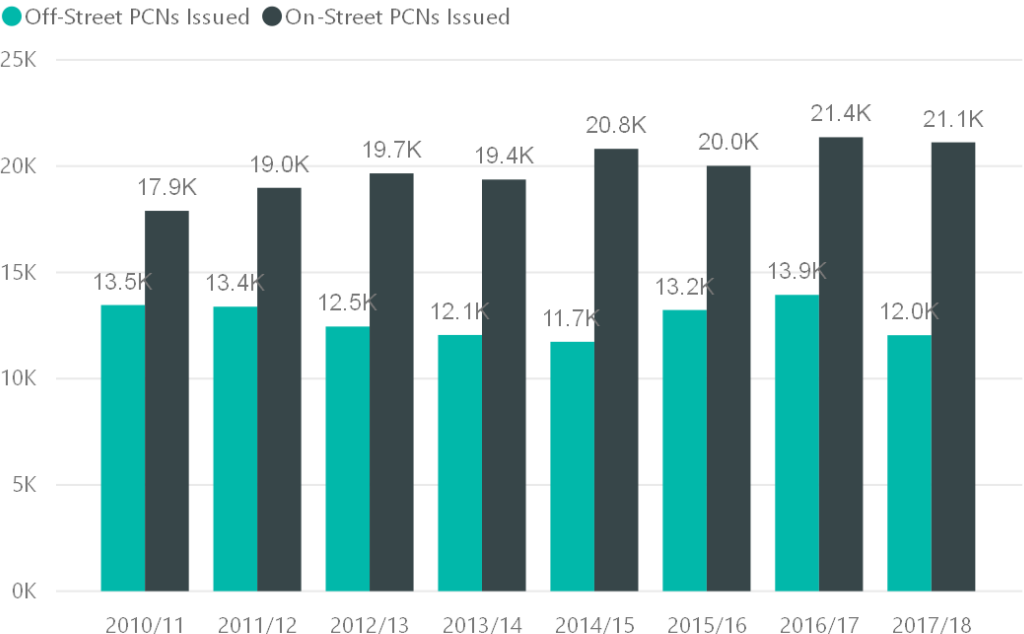
Penalty Charge Notices are issued to vehicles observed parked in contravention; the tables below show the contravention codes used on both on-street and off-street by Maidstone Borough Council.

Contravention Code	Contravention Description—on-street	Penalty Charge
1	Parked in a restricted street during prescribed hours	£70
2	Parked or loading/unloading in a restricted street where waiting and loading/unloading restrictions are in force	£70
5	Parked after the expiry of paid for time	£50
6	Parked without clearly displaying a valid pay & display ticket or voucher	£50
7	Parked with payment made to extend the stay beyond the initial time	£50
11	Parked without payment of the parking charge	£50
12	Parked in a residents' or shared use parking place without clearly displaying either a permit or voucher or pay and display ticket issued for that place	£70
16	Parked in a permit space without displaying a valid permit	£70
19	Parked in a residents' or shared use parking place or zone either displaying an invalid permit or voucher or pay & display ticket, or after the expiry of paid for time	£50
24	Not parked correctly within the markings of the bay or space	£50
25	Parked in a loading place during restricted hours without loading	£70
30	Parked for longer than permitted	£50
40	Parked in a designated disabled person's parking place without clearly displaying a valid disabled person's badge	£70
45	Parked on a taxi rank	£70
47	Parked on a restricted bus stop or stand	£70
48	Stopped in a restricted area outside a school	£70
99	Stopped on a pedestrian crossing and/or crossing area marked by zigzags	£70

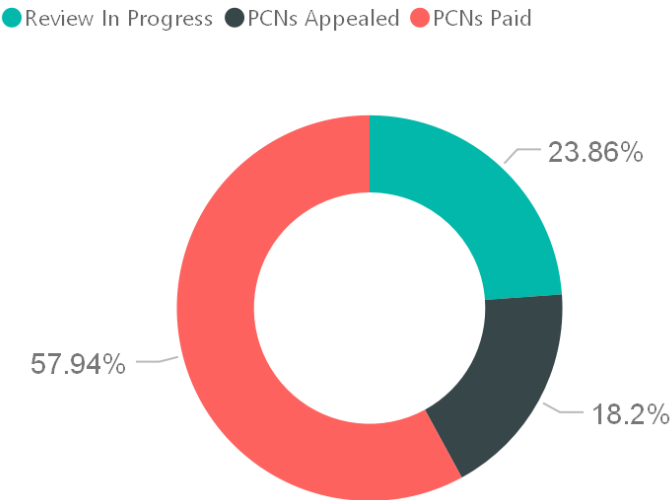
Contravention Code	Contravention description—off-street	Penalty Charge
81	Parked in a restricted area in a car park	£70
87	Parked in a disabled person's parking space without clearly displaying a valid disabled person's badge	£70
83	Parked in a car park without clearly displaying a valid pay & display ticket or voucher or parking clock	£50
80	Parked for longer than permitted	£50
82	Parked after the expiry of paid for time	£50
86	Not parked correctly within the markings of a bay or space	£50



Off-Street PCNs Issued and On-Street PCNs Issued by Year



No Action Taken, PCNs Appealed and PCNs Paid 2017-18



## Penalty Charge Notices

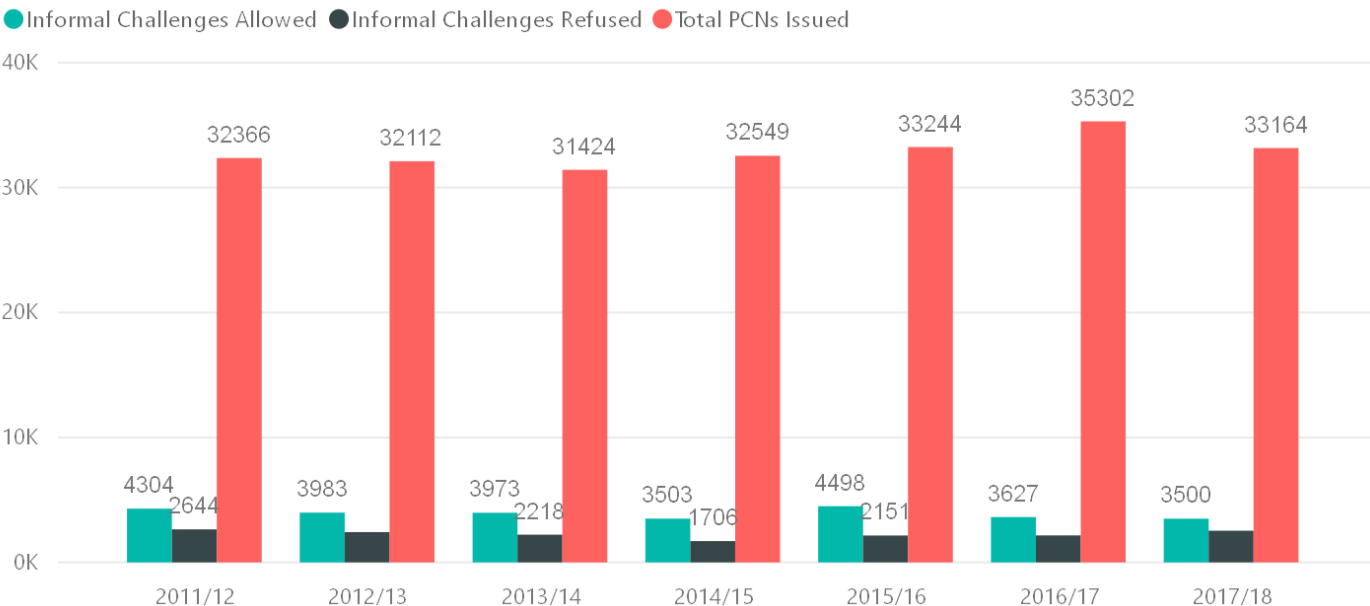
Following the introduction of the Traffic Management Act 2004 PCNs can now be issued at two levels depending on the severity of the contravention being committed.

However, there is a nationwide appeals process for motorists who feel they have valid mitigation for parking in contravention.

The surrounding statistics show how many PCNs have been issued across the Borough this year, how many have been appealed and how many of those have been successful.

Every appeal is exceptional and has no bearing on the outcome of any other cases. Appeals are only judge in accordance with the mitigation submitted as part of the legal process.

Informal Challenges Allowed, Informal Challenges Refused and Total PCNs Issued by Year

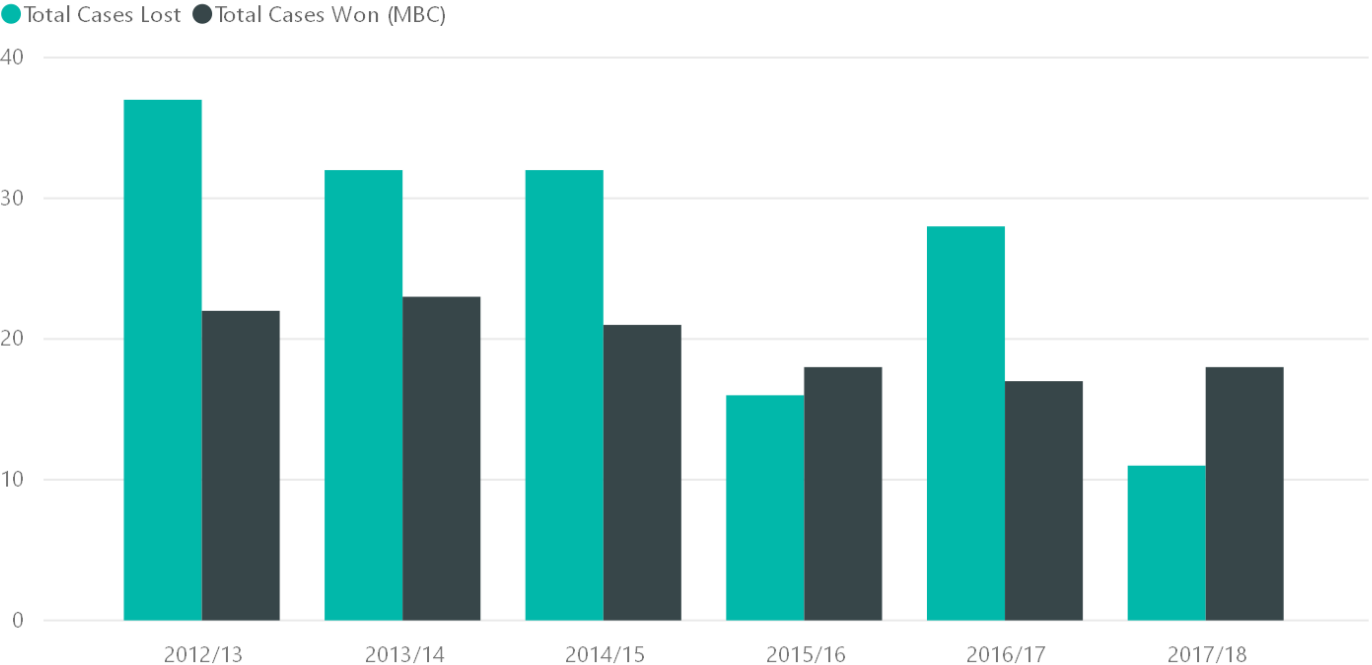


# Traffic Penalty Tribunal (TPT) Summary

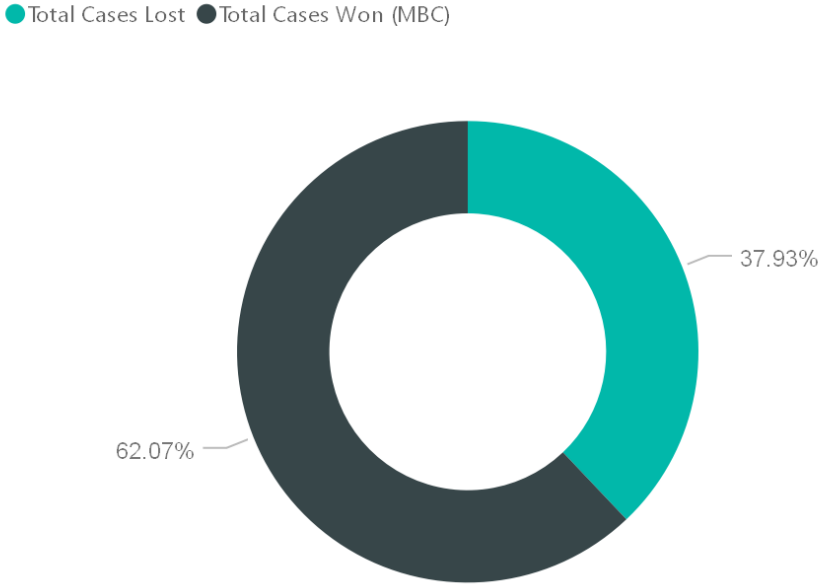
Cases appealed through the nationwide legal process can be referred to the Traffic Penalty Tribunal in instances where the Local Authority and the Appellant fail to reach an agreed outcome.

Fig 6.4 shows all cases escalated to TPT over the past financial year and their subsequent outcomes.

Total Cases Lost and Total Cases Won (MBC) by Year



Total Cases Lost and Total Cases Won (MBC)



## Car Parks (Off-Street Parking)

Maidstone Borough Council operate seven short-stay car parks and ten long-stay car parks.

All car parks are pay and display with Season Tickets being available for all long-stay car parks and additionally Mote Road short-stay car park.

Unlike income generated on-street by civil parking enforcement, any available pay and display surplus is reinvested into Maidstone Borough Council and used to defray the costs of core council services.

This year saw the introduction of a new car park at Sandling Road, trialling a new option for motorists allowing Check In/Check Out payments.

This new option streamlines how people visit the town, not having to return to vehicles to display a ticket, and not having to worry about getting back to the car and feed the meter.

Check In/Check Out (CiCo) allows visitors to Maidstone to enjoy their stay and takes the stress out of parking.

For further information on Maidstone's car parks and number of available bays/Disabled bays/motorcycle bays, please visit the following webpage:

<https://www.maidstone.gov.uk/home/primary-services/parking-and-streets/primary-areas/car-park-locations>

# Cashless Parking

Maidstone operate a cashless alternative to pay for parking, allowing users to pay via smartphone app or telephone.

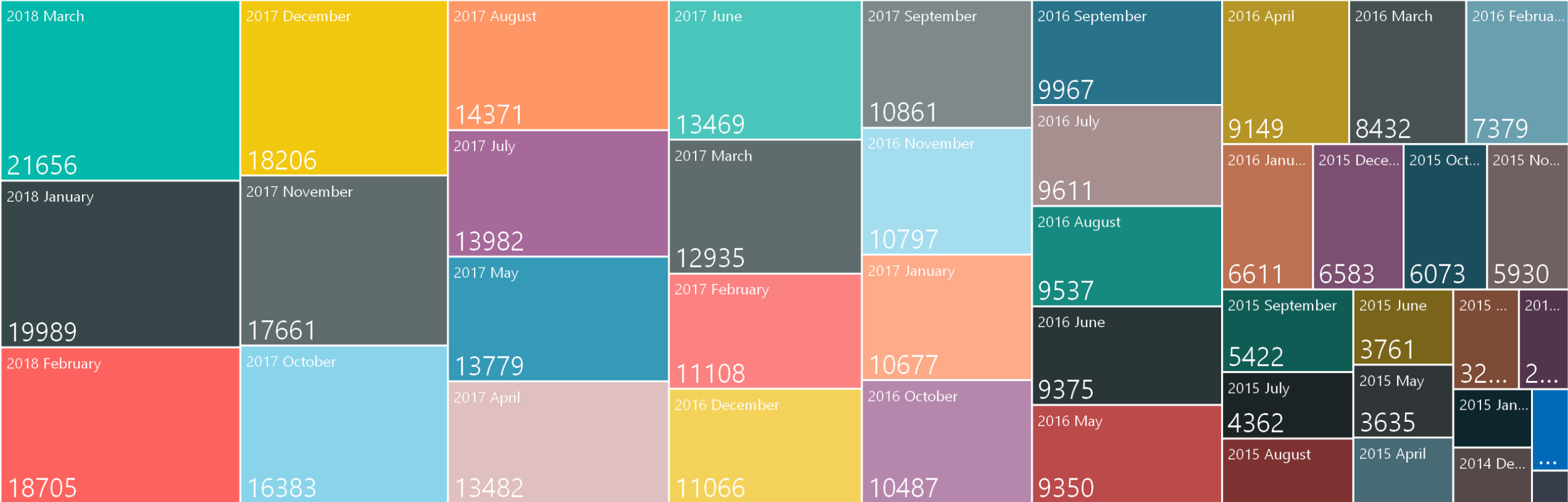
In September 2017 following a successful procurement exercise the new service contract for this service was awarded to RingGo and they began operation.

Since going live RingGo has demonstrated far improved reliability and a streamlined service which appears to have increased usage figures.

As well as increased usage of cashless parking facilities we've seen a noticeable shift from telephone payments to app payments and hope to report on this further next year.

Fig 9.1 shows the level of growth from when the service went live in 2014 until now.

Transactions by Year and Month



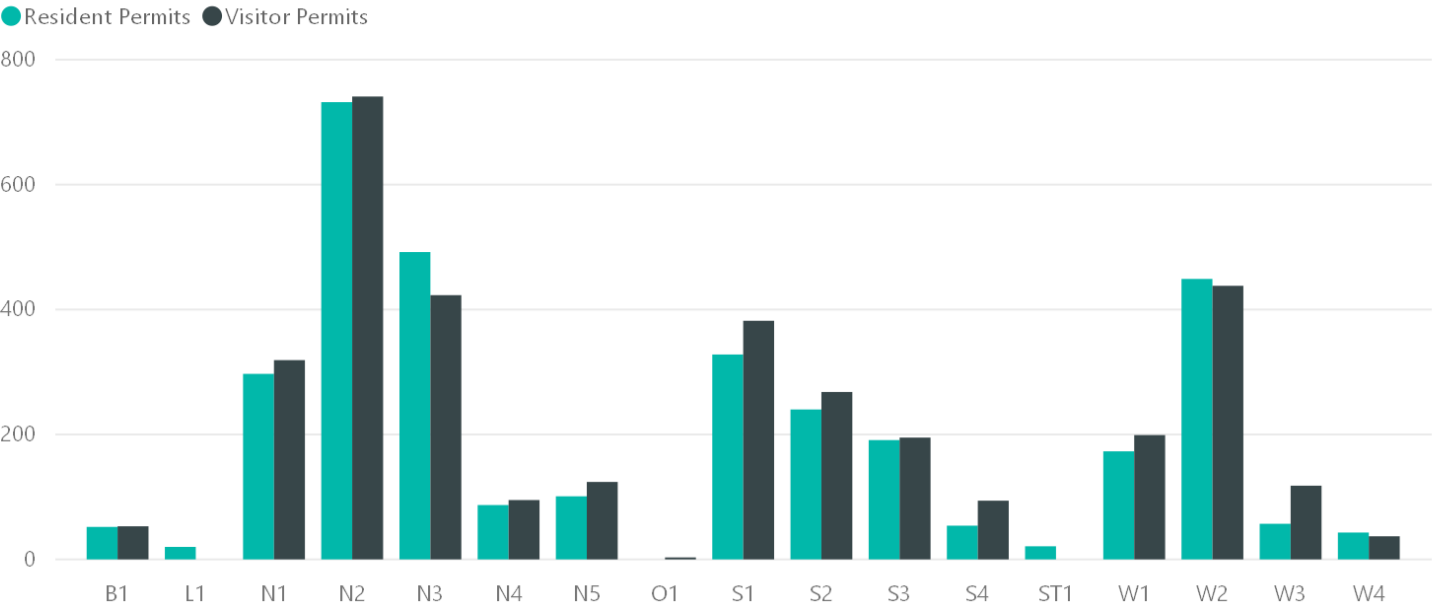
# Resident Parking Scheme

Due to the huge increase on vehicle ownership in the past two decades as well as the effects of commuter parking on local residents situated close to Maidstone Town Centre we operate a Resident Parking Scheme.

The scheme aims to reduce the effects of antisocial and commuter parking on residents as well as maintaining the free flow of traffic on the public highway.

Maidstone use runs of bays, as opposed to individual marked bays; individual bays must adhere to sizing restrictions which would reduce the amount of available on-street parking.

Resident Permits and Visitor Permits by Zone



Resident Perm...	Visitor Permits	Zone	Year
732	741	N2	2017/18
492	423	N3	2017/18
449	438	W2	2017/18
328	382	S1	2017/18
297	319	N1	2017/18
240	268	S2	2017/18
191	195	S3	2017/18
173	199	W1	2017/18
101	124	N5	2017/18
87	95	N4	2017/18
57	118	W3	2017/18
54	94	S4	2017/18
52	53	B1	2017/18
43	37	W4	2017/18
21	0	ST1	2017/18
20	0	L1	2017/18
0	2	O1	2017/18
3337	3488		

# Disabled Parking

Due to the pedestrian zone and commercial concessions in Maidstone Town Centre to help boost the local economy, there are limited on-street disabled bays.

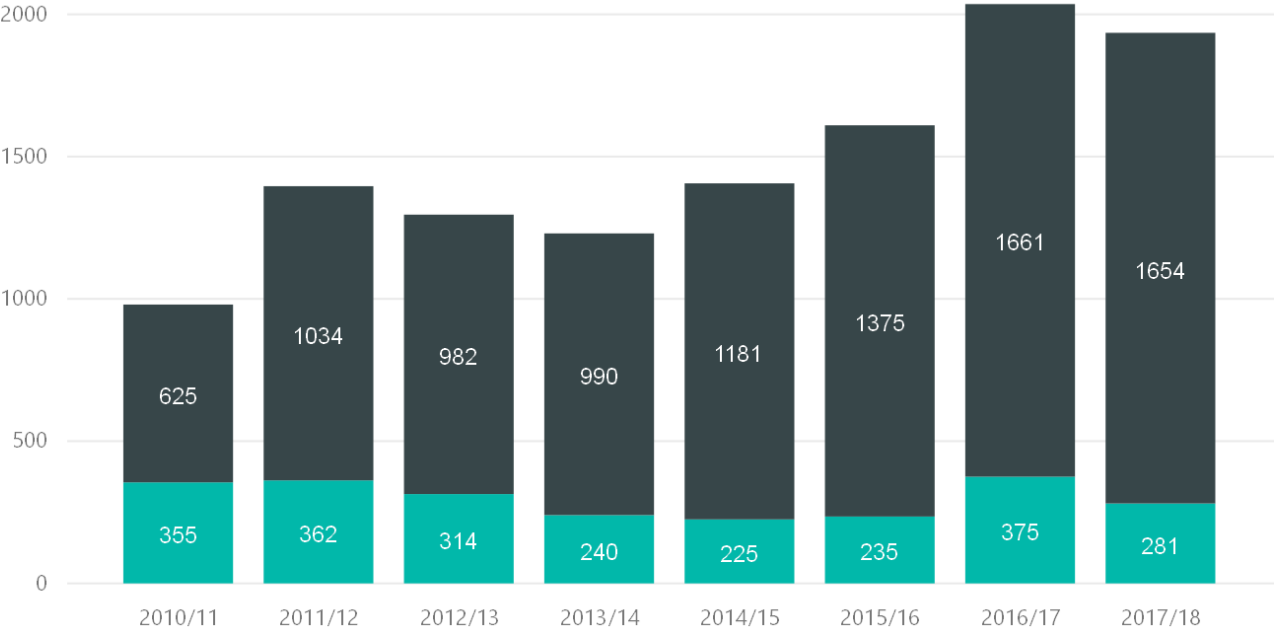
All on-street disabled bays are regularly patrolled to ensure they are not being misused and improve availability for valid blue badge holders.

Maidstone Borough Council allow blue badge holders to park free of charge in all Council-operated car parks.

Year	PCNs Off-Street	PCNs On-Street
2010/11	355	625
2011/12	362	1034
2012/13	314	982
2013/14	240	990
2014/15	225	1181
2015/16	235	1375
2016/17	375	1661
2017/18	281	1654
<b>Total</b>	<b>2387</b>	<b>9502</b>

PCNs Off-Street and PCNs On-Street by Year

● PCNs Off-Street ● PCNs On-Street



## Parking Finance

Maidstone Borough Council is required under section 55 of the Road Traffic Regulations Act 1984 to keep an account of income and expenditure relating to on-street parking places; as well as income from and expenditure relating to our functions as enforcement authority.

This includes all income and expenditure related to the issue of and income from Penalty Charge Notices in respect of off-street parking places, but not income from ordinary car park charges nor any other expenditure in car parks.

Section 55(4) outlines the purposes for which any surplus in the parking account can be used. It also provides for the making good of any deficit in the parking account from the general fund, and for surpluses to be used to repay the general fund for any charges to that fund in the previous four years, or may be carried forward.

Local authorities may under the powers of section 35 of the Road Traffic Regulations Act 1984, impose charges for parking in car parks provided under section 32 or 33(4) of that Act; and under sections 45 and 46 of the 1984 Act, charge for parking at on-street parking places.

### On-Street Parking Revenue

Area of Spend	On-Street	Full Yr Budget	Yr End Actual	Variance
Off-Street Parking Enforcement	RC22	£63,620	-£26,969	£90,588
On-Street Parking	RC10	£73,880	£168,064	£94,183
Residents Parking	RC11	£12,820	£60,703	£47,883
<b>Total</b>		<b>£150,320</b>	<b>£201,798</b>	<b>£232,655</b>

### Off-Street Parking Revenue

Area of Spend	Off-Street	Full Yr Budget	Yr End Actual	Variance
Mote Park P+D	RC23	£150,270	£130,843	£19,427
Non-Paying Car Parks	RC21	-£20,840	-£20,401	-£439
P+D Car Parks	RC20	£1,254,210	£1,598,980	£344,770
Parking Services section (misc.)	SL10	-£50	£0	-£50
Sandling Road Car Park	RC25	-£115,130	-£131,594	£16,464
<b>Total</b>		<b>£1,268,460</b>	<b>£1,577,828</b>	<b>£380,172</b>

### Transport Revenue

Area of Spend	Transport	Full Yr Budget	Yr End Actual	Variance
Socially Desirable Buses	RE11	-£64,130	-£60,770	-£3,360
Park and Ride	RE10	-£302,320	-£304,663	£2,343
<b>Total</b>		<b>-£366,450</b>	<b>-£365,433</b>	<b>-£1,017</b>