



London Borough of Merton Council

Parking Annual Report

2021 – 2022

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Overview

Introduction

Merton 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 this annual report is to explain the aims and objectives of the council's parking service and to provide information on what we enforce and the effects of our policies.

The statistical analysis and information contained in this report relates to the period 01 April 2021 to 31 March 2022 and includes:

- the number of parking and traffic related Penalty Charge Notices (PCNs) issued
- the income and expenditure recorded in our Parking Account
- 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, which requires local authorities to produce and publish an annual report on parking enforcement activities.

Aim of Managing Parking

The enforcement of parking and traffic restrictions plays an essential role in maintaining the smooth flow of traffic throughout the borough, while Controlled Parking Zones help to reduce commuter parking which would otherwise impact on residents and local businesses. There are levers which can be used through how we facilitate these services, to encourage motorists to switch from more polluting vehicles, reduce the number of unnecessary vehicle journeys, and encourage more sustainable forms of transport.

In addition to enforcement, Parking Services operates a permit system for the borough's many controlled parking zones and a cashless parking system for pay and display parking, both on-street and in council-run car parks. We are also responsible for the maintenance of pay and display machines, repainting of lines, and maintenance of car parks.

The services we provide are publicly visible to residents, local businesses, and visitors to the borough. As such, it is essential that our services, particularly enforcement, are seen as fair, effective, and proportionate, in order to retain public confidence.

Merton Council's Parking Service

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

The team is responsible for:

- Parking operational policy and overall management
- Management of parking enforcement, Penalty Charge Notice (PCN) processing, permit administration, and cashless parking
- Management of car parks and on-street parking infrastructure
- Managing the PCN appeals and representations process
- Handling Member enquiries, complaints and Freedom of Information requests relating to Parking services
- Securing PCN debt recovery through Merton's Enforcement Agents

Parking Provision

Formed in 1965, the London Borough of Merton is an outer London borough to the south-west of the capital with an area of approximately 14.7 square miles. The borough's five main town centres are Wimbledon (taking in the Village, the Broadway, and South Wimbledon), Mitcham, Morden, Raynes Park and Colliers Wood.

Merton has 1,362 roads in total within its borders, a majority of which are within the borough's 69 Controlled Parking Zones (CPZs) where local parking restrictions apply. Restriction hours of operation vary from zone to zone, but the majority are in operation throughout the day, from Monday to either Friday or Saturday. In a small number of locations parking controls apply on Sundays due to higher demand for parking spaces due to local shopping and retail business opening hours.

While the remaining roads do not have local parking restrictions in place, there are national and London wide restrictions that apply at these locations, such as double yellow lines, dropped kerb restrictions and grass verge and pavement parking restrictions.

Information on Merton's CPZs and the hours of operation is available on the council's [CPZ maps and hours of operation | Merton Council](#) web page.

Parking Permits

Merton's parking permit service is facilitated through a combination of a hosted software system and an in-house administrative team. Merton's current software supplier is Park Now, who provide us with the web-based system called RingGo.

RingGo offers greater self-service benefits to the customer, including the facility to change vehicles (either temporarily or permanently), update personal details, and manage how reminders are received. It further offers the benefit of replacing hard-copy permits with virtual permits for many permit types, providing instant cover once payment has been made and no need for permits to be displayed in vehicle windscreens

To apply for a permit customers must first register for a RingGo account via the [London Borough of Merton Parking Permit \(myringgo.co.uk\)](#) web page. Once an account is set up, customers can then submit an application for their permit via the council's [Apply for or renew a parking permit | Merton Council](#) web page.

When submitting a permit application customers must confirm that they have read and accepted the permit Terms and Conditions in order to proceed. The Terms and Conditions

for all permit types are available on the council's [Parking permit terms and conditions : Overview | Merton Council](#) web page.

Merton's parking permits are subject to the charging structure introduced in January 2020. Information on parking permit charges is available on the council's [Parking charges from January 2020 : Parking permits | Merton Council](#) web page.

All diesel vehicles are also subject to a diesel levy on top of the permit cost. Information on Merton's decision to introduce a diesel levy is available on the council's [Diesel levy consultation | Merton Council](#) web page.

Other information on parking permits is available on the council's [Parking permits | Merton Council](#) web page.

Resident Permits

Resident permits are available to most residents who live within CPZs. Exceptions to this are where properties have been deemed as 'car free' under a legal undertaking which forms part of the planning permission before the property is built.

Resident permits are now virtual e-permits as opposed to physical paper permits, and it is no longer necessary to display a resident permit in the vehicle windscreen. To apply residents must first register with RingGo who are the providers of the council's permit software system.

The online application process includes the necessary eligibility checks and once completed and payment has been received, the resident is covered to park straight away.

Resident permits are available for 6 month or 12 month periods.

Resident permits for fully electric vehicles cost £20 per year, and all diesel vehicles are subject to the diesel levy which is a £150 charge on top of the permit cost.

For multi-vehicle households, an additional cost applies for the 2nd, 3rd and 4th resident permits purchased.

In 2021-22 a total of **23,213** resident permits were issued across the borough's CPZs.

Visitors Permits

Eligible residents who live in a Controlled Parking Zone can purchase permits for their visitors in advance of the date required. Merton currently offers both visitor e-permit sessions via RingGo and visitor scratch card permits.

Each resident has a set allowance of 200 visitor permits per year, typically this consists of 50 full day and 100 half day permits, which can be purchased in a combination of daily scratch cards and/or visitor e-permits. A full day permit counts as two of the 200 permits allowed and a half day counts as one of the 200 permits allowed.

Residents must be registered with RingGo and have an account to apply for either format of visitor permits. Visitor e-permits are valid as soon as satisfactory proof of residency checks are completed and payment has been received.

Visitor scratch cards are also subject to proof of residency checks. They are sold in batches of 10 full day or half day permits. The scratch card permits are posted to the resident address and need to be displayed in the vehicle to be valid.

In 2021-22 a total of **123,714** visitor e-permits were issued and **8,517** visitor scratch cards were issued.

Annual Visitor Permits

Eligible controlled parking zone residents can apply for an annual visitor permit. These are limited to one per household and as they are non-vehicle specific the diesel levy applies to the permit cost. Annual visitor permits are hard copy permits which need to be displayed to be valid.

In 2021-22 a total of **1,172** annual visitor permits were issued.

Business Permits

Business permits are available for a 6-month timeframe to businesses with premises located within a CPZ. Business permits are virtual e-permits so there is no requirement to display the permit in the vehicle windscreen.

A business permit is intended for use by the permit holder to enable them to park in permit bays during the restricted period and have access for regular use to undertake business related journeys

For a business permit to issued or renewed, as part of the application the company must include a business headed letter clearly stating why the permit is required in conjunction with the running of the business.

There is a maximum of 2 permits per business and each permit can hold one vehicle at a time. However, vehicle may be changed as many times as needed throughout the length of the permit, to cover other vehicles within the business. Once the business permit is authorised and set up the company have access to change the vehicle themselves via their RingGo permit account.

The diesel surcharge will apply to the permit cost if any of the vehicles registered are a diesel, irrespective of the duration the vehicle is used for.

In 2021-22 a total of **481** business permits were issued.

Trade Permits

A Trade Permit is intended for use by business owners who are based within a CPZ or tradespersons who are undertaking work on a property within a CPZ. Suitable proof is required which demonstrates eligibility.

Trade permits are available for 1 week, 1 month, 3 months, 6 months, or 12 months, depending on the permit applied for. Like business permits, trade permits are virtual e-permits.

In 2021-22 a total of **484** trade permits were issued.

Other Permits

Merton offers several other permits including Carers Permits (for use by the carers of a resident in a CPZ who is either a Blue Badge Holder or has carers attend them every day), Teachers Permits, NHS Permits, and Essential User & Social Services permits for public sector workers who may need to park within a CPZ when carrying out official duties.

In 2021-22 the collective total of all other permit types was **1,872**.

Suspensions and Dispensations

Within a CPZ, parking bays may be suspended, or dispensation granted to park on a yellow line. This is to enable activities such as moving home or carrying out building works. Suspensions are also arranged for road or utility works to take place on the highway, or for construction works. A fee applies to suspensions and dispensations which includes a charge per day and an administration cost to cover the costs of preparing and displaying notices at the location.

Information on Parking Suspensions and Dispensations is available on the council's [Suspending parking bays and yellow lines | Merton Council](#) web page

In 2021-22 a total of **1,896** parking suspensions and yellow line dispensations were facilitated.

Parking facilities

On-Street Parking

On-street parking is available across the Merton's many CPZs. Charges, bay type and length of stay varies depending on the specifics of the location. Bay types include permit holder, pay and display only, shared use, disabled bays, and motorcycle bays. Information on the borough's parking bays is available on the council's [Parking bays | Merton Council](#) web page.

Pay and display machines are located across the borough and at all on-street locations cashless parking is available via RingGo. Please see the council's [Pay by mobile phone for parking | Merton Council](#) web page for information on cashless parking.

The pricing structure for on-street parking is based on the availability of public transport to the area. Places with fewer transport options have lower parking charges than those which have ample public transport links. This is one of the levers through which the council can

influence motorist behaviour to discourage undue reliance on car use, and encourage more journeys by public transport, on foot and by bicycle.

Information on Merton's on-street parking charges is available on the council's [Find street parking charges and payment terminals | Merton Council](#) web page.

Off-Street Parking

Merton currently operates 12 public car parks across the borough's town centres. These car parks provide a combined total of 1,937 spaces, consisting of 1,846 standard parking spaces and 91 disabled parking spaces.

8 of the car parks have been awarded Park Mark accreditation. 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. As part of the council's project to modernise the borough's parking infrastructure, works are scheduled to take place at 3 other council run car parks to bring the facilities up to the Park Mark standard.

Details of our car park operational hours and tariffs are available on the council's [Car parks | Merton Council](#) web page.

Car Park Season Tickets

Car park season tickets are available, and a discounted cost is available to those who live or work in Merton. Details are available on the council's [Car park season tickets | Merton Council](#) web page.

In 2021-22 a total of **207** car park season tickets were issued.

Peel House Car Park Closure

In January 2022, structural engineering investigation determined that urgent repair and maintenance works were required at Peel House Car Park. Both levels of the car park were subsequently closed from 24 January 2022.

Following a further structural survey and health and safety assessment, the lower level short stay car park was reopened to the public on 25 August 2022.

We do appreciate that the closure has caused inconvenience to both commuters and Town Centre customers. However, due to safety concerns the council had no option other than to keep the upper level long stay car park closed.

Alternative Town Centre short stay parking is available in both Kenley Road and York Close car parks.

Motorcycle parking

Merton has motorcycle parking bays at locations across the borough where motorcycles can park free of charge with no time limit.

In addition, motorcycles are permitted to park free of charge in the borough's permit bays, pay and display bays and shared use bays. Motorcycles must be parked at right angles to the kerb with the front or back wheel facing the kerb, so that other motorists can use the other available bay space.

Motorcycles are not permitted to park on the pavement.

Information on the location of our motorcycle parking bays is available on our [Motorcycle parking | Merton Council](#) web page.

Parking Enforcement

Merton manages enforcement of both parking and traffic regulations in-house. A majority of the borough's various parking restrictions are enforced by Civil Enforcement Officers (CEOs) on foot. The purpose of parking enforcement is to encourage motorists to comply with parking restrictions. Parking enforcement is governed by strict legal requirements, and Merton CEOs undertake parking enforcement action in accordance with [Merton's Parking Enforcement Policy](#) and the [Code of Practice on Civil Parking Enforcement | London Councils](#). CEOs must follow strict protocols when carrying out parking enforcement duties as failure to do so would invalidate the PCNs they issue.

CEOs have the power to issue Penalty Charge Notices (PCNs) to vehicles parked in contravention of restrictions. They issue PCNs at the scene by affixing it to the vehicle windscreen, or in some cases by handing it to the vehicle driver if they are present.

There are circumstances where a PCN is issued by post, including when enforcement is by camera, when a CEO was prevented by someone from serving it at the scene, or when the CEO has begun the PCN issuing process, but the vehicle was driven away before it could be served to the vehicle.

Legislation allows parking restrictions at bus stops and on school keep clear zig zag markings to be enforced by CCTV camera. Signage is in place at locations in Merton to alert motorists that CCTV enforcement is undertaken and to encourage compliance with local restrictions.

Our CEOs patrol the borough each day to enforce parking contraventions and are also deployed to locations in response to reports of parking offences.

On-Street Parking Contraventions

Controlled Parking Zones

Our CEOs patrol the boroughs parking zones each day enforcing the various pay and display, permit and shared use bay restrictions.

In 2021-22 a total of **28,080** PCNs were issued for contraventions of the borough's CPZ restrictions.

School Keep Clear Lines

School keep clear lines are the yellow zig-zag lines outside of school entrances. They are there to improve road safety outside schools. Legislation permits the enforcement of parking on school keep clear markings to be carried out by CCTV cameras. Merton's School keep clear lines are monitored using a combination of CEOs, mobile CCTV enforcement vehicles and re-mountable CCTV cameras. Re-mountable CCTV Cameras are monitored remotely by a team of qualified officers via the back-office systems.

In 2021-22 a total of **99** PCNs were issued for school keep clear parking contraventions

Disabled bays

Blue Badge holders are permitted to use the borough's disabled parking bays. The Blue Badge must be clearly and correctly displayed on the vehicle dashboard.

In 2021-22 a total of **565** PCNs were issued for disabled parking bay contraventions.

Enforcement of Blue Badge Fraud

The Blue Badge scheme is designed to give people with genuine disabilities easy access to shops, services, and town centres. Merton has a zero-tolerance approach to those who are fraudulently misusing the Blue Badge scheme.

Our CEOs actively undertake Blue Badge enforcement to identify when abuse or misuse of a Blue Badge is taking place. This includes the use of a lost or stolen badge, a counterfeit badge or using the badge of a deceased person, as well as the fraudulent use of Blue Badges when the badge-holder is not present.

If a Blue Badge is displayed in a vehicle the driver may be approached by one of our CEOs, undertaking Blue Badge inspections. They are authorised to ask to see the badge and carry out further inspection checks if necessary, such as if the Blue Badge holder is not with the vehicle at the time.

No further action will be taken if the officer is satisfied that the badge is being used correctly, but enforcement action will be taken if abuse or misuse is identified, and this can lead to prosecution.

In 2021-22 our CEOs carried out a total of **486** Blue Badge inspections, and enforcement action for abuse or misuse was taken on **4** occasions.

Information on how Blue Badges can be used in Merton, is available on the council's [Blue Badge parking permits for disabled people | Merton Council](#) web page.

Information on Blue Badge misuse and enforcement is available on the council's [Blue Badge misuse and enforcement | Merton Council](#) web page.

Electric Charging Bays

Electric vehicle charging bays are available at various locations in Merton and may be used while the vehicle is charging. Vehicles parked in an electric charging bay when the vehicle is not charging are liable for a PCN.

Information on charging your electric vehicle in Merton is available on the council's [Electric vehicle charging : Charging your vehicle | Merton Council](#) web page.

In 2021-22 a total of **188** PCNs were issued for electric charging bay contraventions.

Yellow line restrictions

Yellow lines are located on parts of the highway where parked vehicles would cause a safety hazard, impair motorists' view or impact on the flow of traffic.

On single yellow line restrictions parking is prohibited at certain times of day and this varies depending on the location. There is signage in place at single yellow line restrictions which details the hours of operation.

Double yellow line restrictions apply 24 hours a day, seven days a week. They are a national restriction detailed in the Highway Code and as such do not require restriction signage.

On standard single and double yellow line restrictions, vehicles are permitted to park while loading/ unloading large or heavy items when the close proximity of a vehicle is a necessity for loading, or when picking up or dropping of passengers. For these reasons a CEO will carry out an observation period prior to beginning enforcement action.

Some yellow lines have additional waiting and loading restrictions in place at certain times, and these are indicated by yellow kerb stripes. Loading or unloading is not permitted at any time on yellow lines with double kerb stripes. Single kerb stripes mean that loading or unloading is not permitted at certain times as stated on nearby signage.

Waiting and loading restrictions are generally situated on busy roads and are operational during peak traffic times to prevent the traffic flow from becoming obstructed. If a vehicle parks on waiting and loading restrictions when they are in force, the contravention is instant, and the vehicle is liable for a PCN immediately. As such, for this kind of contravention the CEO does not have to apply any observation period and will issue a PCN straight away.

A number of the main roads in Merton are part of Transport for London's (TfL) Red Route network. All red-line restrictions are enforced by TfL.

In 2021-22 a total of **12,952** PCNs were issued for yellow line contraventions

Footway Parking

Footway (pavement) parking has been prohibited in Greater London since legislation was passed in 1974. The restrictions apply 24 hours a day seven days a week, and councils within London have the authority to issue PCNs for footway parking contraventions. The London-wide ban on pavement parking is detailed in Rule 244 of the Highway Code and as such signage for this restriction is not required. The legislation does, however, give local authorities the discretion to allow vehicles to park partially on the footway where it is necessary to prevent obstruction to the traffic flow.

In Merton, parking partially on the pavement is allowed in certain locations where there are currently no local parking restrictions in place, and it is necessary to prevent obstruction to the traffic flow and access for emergency services and public service vehicles. At most of these locations, motorists must leave a minimum gap of one metre on the pavement for wheelchair users and pedestrians to pass by without obstruction.

In Merton's CPZs, where there are local parking restrictions in place, pavement parking is only permitted where pavement parking bay markings and signage are installed.

Information on Merton's Footway Parking Policy and the list of roads where partial pavement parking is allowed, or no pavement parking is allowed, is available on the council's [Parking and traffic enforcement policies : Parking on pavements | Merton Council](#) web page.

In 2021-22 a total of **865** PCNs were issued for footway parking contraventions

Grass Verge Parking

Parking or partial parking on grass verges anywhere in Merton, due to the damage it causes and the cost to the council of repairing the damage. A contravention of Merton's grass verge parking restriction occurs if a vehicle is parked with any part of its wheels are touching a grass verge. The vehicle is liable for a PCN.

In 2021-22 a total of **317** PCNs were issued for grass verge parking contraventions

Dropped kerb restrictions

A dropped kerb is where the level of the pavement has been lowered to meet the level of the road to enable pedestrian or vehicular access.

A dropped kerb parking contravention occurs if a vehicle is parked with any part of the wheels or body overhanging the flat section of the dropped kerb. This is a national restriction and is detailed in the Highway Code and as such does not require restriction signage.

CEOs can enforce contravention at pedestrian access dropped kerbs, such as at the corners of side roads, or where a kerb has been dropped to allowed access to a shared driveway during their patrols.

At residential dropped kerbs serving a single property, where there are no other restrictions in place such as yellow lines, our CEOs cannot take parking enforcement action until we have received a complaint from the resident at the time, informing us that they have not given permission for the vehicle to park there. This measure is in place to ensure that we do not inadvertently issue PCNs to vehicles connected with the household, such as those belonging to the residents or visitors who the resident has allowed to park there.

In 2021-22 a total of **787** PCNs were issued for dropped kerb parking contraventions

Other parking restrictions

The restrictions detailed in this section of the report are those most commonly contravened. Information on other parking restrictions Merton enforces, is available in [Merton's Parking Enforcement Policy](#).

Off-Street Parking Contraventions

Our CEOs patrol the boroughs car parks each day enforcing the various pay and display, permit and bay restrictions.

In 2021-22 a total of **10,642** PCNs were issued for contraventions of the borough's car park restrictions, **123** of which were contraventions of the car park disabled bays.

Traffic Enforcement

Since May 2012 the London Borough of Merton has been enforcing moving traffic restrictions including no entry and one way street restrictions, banned left / right turns and yellow box junctions.

Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) cameras are utilised to enforce moving traffic restrictions.

The purpose of moving traffic enforcement is to encourage greater compliance with the restrictions. ANPR cameras are installed at locations where low compliance with the traffic restrictions has been identified. Through issuing Penalty Charge Notices to vehicles caught contravening the restrictions, motorist behaviour changes and a higher level of compliance with the restrictions is achieved.

ANPR traffic enforcement cameras are set to cover a fixed point in the road where the traffic restriction is located. ANPR cameras do not continually film and only trigger during the restriction hours of operation if a vehicle passes the point in the road where the restrictions apply. The ANPR camera software then automatically captures approximately 20-30 seconds of footage of the vehicle contravening the restriction.

Unlike CCTV public safety surveillance cameras, ANPR cameras are not continually monitored by staff and cannot be remotely controlled to move and look elsewhere. They remain in the position they are placed in when they are installed, which is set to the fixed point in the road relevant to traffic enforcement restrictions.

For each case, the contravention footage captured by Merton's ANPR enforcement camera is reviewed by one of the CCTV Review Team, to establish whether a contravention has occurred. If the footage contains satisfactory evidence that a contravention of the moving traffic restriction has taken place and that no exemptions to enforcement apply, the PCN is then issued.

Traffic enforcement PCNs are served by Royal Mail first class post to the registered keeper of the vehicle. Registered keeper details are provided to the council by the DVLA.

All CCTV Review Officers are trained and qualified to the appropriate Business and Technology Education Council (BTEC) or equivalent standard. The team works in line with the CCTV Code of Conduct and Merton's CCTV Enforcement Policy.

Information on the CCTV Code of Conduct is available on [London Council's CCTV Enforcement web page](#)

Merton's CCTV Enforcement Policy is available on Merton Council's [Parking and traffic enforcement web page](#)

Moving traffic contraventions

Low traffic neighbourhoods

Low traffic neighbourhoods (LTNs) are residential areas, bordered by main roads where "through" motor vehicle traffic is discouraged or removed. The aim is to deter drive-through access by those trying to avoid the main roads and to make it harder or impossible to drive straight through from one main road to the next.

LTNs are achieved through a combination of narrowed access points, removable bollards or planters, street end closures, and banned movements such as 'no left/right turn' restrictions which are enforced by ANPR cameras. Every street is still accessible by vehicle so that residents can drive onto their street and get deliveries.

By deterring traffic from using residential streets as 'rat runs' to avoid congested main roads, the aim of LTNs is to make these streets safer, quieter environments with cleaner air, and also to encourage the health benefits of taking more journeys on foot and by bicycle.

Further information on Merton's LTNs is available on the council's [Low traffic neighbourhoods | Merton Council](#) web page.

In 2021-22 a total of **10,293** PCNs were issued for contraventions of the borough's Low Traffic Neighbourhood restrictions.

School streets

School street schemes have been introduced across London as a measure to influence a change in driver behaviour and improve air quality and safety for the children, by reducing the volume of traffic around schools.

Funding was allocated to local authorities by Transport for London (TfL) and the Department for Transport (DfT) specifically for school street schemes.

Merton's school street restrictions have been in place since October 2020 when legal traffic signs were put in place at each school street detailing the restriction times. The signage is compliant with the Traffic Signs Regulations and General Directions (TRSGD) (2016) and is also included in the Highway Code. School street signs are used across London and as with other moving contravention signs, motorists should be familiar with them and are obligated to abide by the restrictions accordingly.

If an unpermitted vehicle drives into a school street during the restricted times, as detailed on the signage at the location, the vehicle is in contravention of the restriction and is liable for a PCN. Merton's school streets restrictions are enforced by ANPR.

Information on school street locations and their operational times is available on the council's [school streets \(school safety zone\) web page](#) web page.

In 2021-22 a total of **39,337** PCNs were issued for contraventions of the school street restrictions.

Yellow Box junctions

Yellow box junctions are marked with clearly visible yellow crossed diagonal lines painted on the road. They are installed to address congestion and safety issues and to improve traffic flow where previously there were delays due to vehicles blocking the junction and impeding the traffic flow.

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.

Merton's yellow box junction restrictions are enforced by ANPR.

In 2021-22 a total of **16,527** PCNs were issued for yellow box junction contraventions

Banned turns and manoeuvres

Other traffic restrictions relating to banned turns and manoeuvres are also enforced in Merton using ANPR cameras. These include failing to drive in the direction shown by the arrow on a blue sign, using a route restricted to certain vehicles, performing a prohibited turn, and failing to comply with a no entry sign.

In 2021-22 a total of **19,190** PCNs were issued collectively for contraventions of these other banned turn and manoeuvres.

Bus Lane Enforcement

Bus lane restrictions are referred to in rule 141 of the Highway Code and are in place on certain days and times to keep public transport routes free-flowing and clear of congestion. Bus lanes must be kept clear during the hours the restrictions are in force, and other vehicles are not permitted to enter them whether a bus is in the lane or not. Exemptions may apply to taxis, bicycles, and motorcycles.

A thick white line clearly delineates the bus lane boundary, and a white arrow marking on the road surface indicates the point where the bus lane breaks or ends and where vehicles wishing to turn left are permitted to move over into the left-hand lane.

There is also an 'End of Bus Lane' sign at the point where the white boundary line ends, and motorists are not permitted to enter the left-hand lane until they have passed this sign.

CCTV enforcement of the bus lane restrictions and issuing PCNs when contraventions occur generally encourage motorists to comply with the restrictions in future and keep the bus lanes clear when the regulations are in force.

Merton has undertaken bus lane enforcement since 2004 via static CCTV cameras which were monitored manually by officers. In June 2016, ANPR cameras were introduced at various locations across the borough to enforce moving traffic contraventions including bus lane contraventions.

Motorists who do not observe the bus lane restrictions are in contravention of the bus lane restrictions and are liable for a PCN. As with other traffic enforcement, PCNs are issued to encourage greater compliance with the restrictions which contributes to reducing congestion and keeping traffic free flowing. The free movement of buses across the borough's public transport routes and enabling faster bus journey times is of particular importance at a time when the council is encouraging more sustainable forms of transport.

In 2021-22 a total of **4,693** PCNs were issued for bus lane contraventions.

PCN Appeals and Representations

Merton seeks to provide a transparent and fair parking enforcement service. Motorists who feel that they have been unfairly issued with a PCN may contest the charge under the provisions made under the statutory PCN process. In line with the statutory process, all representations must be made in writing.

Parking Services has a dedicated team of officers who review PCN representations and apply a fair and consistent approach, considering and reviewing each case on its own merits.

Merton has an on-line system through which customers can view specific details about their PCN, view images or CCTV footage of the contravention, submit a challenge or representation and make payments. This provides access to sufficient information to enable motorists to make an informed decision about whether to appeal their 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.

Further information on appealing a PCN is available on the council's [How to appeal against a parking PCN | Merton Council](#) web page.

In 2021-22 a total of **32,382** representations against PCN cases were received. Of the total representations received, **9,667** were successfully appealed resulting in the PCN case being closed.

Environment and Traffic Adjudicators Data

Environment and Traffic Adjudicators (ETA) - Parking and Traffic Appeals 2021/22							
Appeals	Total decisions	Appeals allowed	Of which not contested	Total PCNs	Decisions as a % of PCNs	Appeals allowed as a % of PCNs	Do Not Contest as a % of PCNs
Merton	931	430	292	155,914	0.60%	0.28%	0.19%
London Totals	42,248	18,130	9,200	6,683,315	0.63%	0.27%	0.14%

The low proportion of appeals referred to ETA demonstrates increasing motorist confidence in the quality of appeal decisions made by Merton's Notice Processing team.

Merton has just under the London average percent of PCNs going to ETA and is close to the London average in its proportion of appeals allowed. This will hopefully foster further motorist confidence in our PCNs and appeal decisions. In future we will also be focusing on reducing the proportion of appeals which are not contested.

London Tribunals Reports

Annual reports by the Chief Parking Adjudicator and appeal statistics are available on the London Tribunals [Annual reports and appeal statistics | London Tribunals](#) web page.

Air Quality

Merton' Parking Services contributes to and helps deliver the key policies set out in [Merton's Health and Wellbeing Strategy](#), [Merton's Air Quality Action Plan](#), the council's [Local Implementation Plan](#) and the [Mayor of London's Transport Strategy](#) through working collaboratively with other teams across the council, on specific schemes and strategies. These include the implementation of parking and traffic restrictions and sustainable transport, reduction in polluting vehicle emissions, engine idling and air quality improvements, and developing policies to promote active transport such as walking and cycling.

Air quality has been identified as a priority both nationally and within London, where pollution levels continue to exceed both EU limit values and UK air quality standards. The council declared Merton an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) in 2003 and emissions from road traffic have been identified as the major source of pollution in the borough. Merton council is committed to tackling pollution and the Air Quality Action Plan (2018 – 2023) identifies measures through which emissions can be reduced at a local level.

Merton is designated an air quality management area and so action must be taken to reduce levels of nitrogen dioxide, of which around 60% comes from vehicle emissions. The council is committed to tackling climate change and reducing air pollution. A diesel levy was introduced in 2017 and all diesel vehicles are subject to an extra charge when purchasing a parking permit. In addition, the cost of permits is lower for non-polluting vehicles such as electric vehicles.

Financial Information and Parking Account

The Local Government Transparency Code 2014 requires local authorities to publish certain data and part of this requirement is to publish annual information on the council's parking account. We are required to provide a breakdown of the income and expenditure from on-street and off-street parking and Penalty Charge Notices, and how surplus on the account has been or will be spent.

Parking Account for 2021-22

LONDON BOROUGH OF MERTON INCOME & EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT						
		Consolidated Parking Account 2021/22		Detailed Parking Account 2021/22		
<u>2020/21</u>		<u>2021/22</u>		Parking	Bus Lanes	
£		£		£	£	
					Moving Traffic Violations	
					£	
	<u>INCOME</u>					
(4,846,202)	Penalty Charge Notices	(7,811,518)		(2,528,216)	(245,640)	(5,037,662)
(4,143,814)	Parking Permits	(4,548,638)		(4,548,638)	0	0
(3,066,013)	On-Street Parking Charges	(4,250,218)		(4,250,218)	0	0
(12,056,029)	TOTAL INCOME	(16,610,374)		(11,327,072)	(245,640)	(5,037,662)
	<u>EXPENDITURE</u>					
2,597,848	On-Street Parking	2,780,769		900,002	87,444	1,793,323
128,024	Parking Management & Planning	154,108		154,108	0	0
2,838,185	Parking Enforcement	3,001,591		971,472	94,388	1,935,732
6,491,972	Contribution to Memorandum Items	10,673,906		9,301,490	63,809	1,308,607
12,056,029	TOTAL EXPENDITURE	16,610,374		11,327,072	245,640	5,037,662
0	Control Total	0		0	0	0
	<u>MEMORANDUM ITEMS</u>					
	Total Expenditure on:					
8,982,049	Concessionary fares	7,756,714				
2,034,937	Carriageway & Footway Maintenance	2,083,310				
2,863,300	Planned Carriageway & Footway Maintenance	3,124,873				

Parking Customer Relations

The functions and provisions which are managed and facilitated by Parking Services are by nature highly visible to residents, local businesses, and visitors. While Merton seeks to provide a high standard, fair and transparent parking service, there are times when customers may feel that this has not been the case.

Parking Services welcomes customer feed-back of all types as this is a valuable tool in helping us identify where there may be the need for service improvement. Merton has a dedicated Parking Customer Relations team who manage a wide variety of customer enquiries, concerns, and complaints.

Parking Customer Relations Strategy

Merton's Parking Customer Relations works on the following strategy:

- **Reputation** – Strive to create a positive customer experience and nurture positive customer perception.
- **Approachable** – Project a human feel to Parking Services and not a service hidden behind systems and procedures.
- **Accessible** – Ensure information is easily accessible, clear and that we are transparent and open.
- **Committed** – Adopt a right first time approach in everything we do, with proactive problem solving when things go wrong.
- **Consistent** – Ensure consistency, continuity, and fairness in how we apply our procedures and treat our customers.
- **Learn** – Listen to customer feedback and complaints, learn from mistakes and be open to changes which will improve the customers' experience.
- **Review** – strive for continuous improvement by regularly reviewing our procedures to ensure they are effective and efficient.

Customer Relations Correspondence

The Parking Customer Relations Team also manage, investigate, and respond to formal correspondence in line with the council's corporate policies, procedures, and response timescales. This includes formal complaints, Member enquiries and also Freedom of Information requests which are statutory.

The response timescales are as follows:

Informal correspondence and enquiries: The councils corporate respond time for informal or general correspondence and enquiries is 15 working days.

Formal complaints: Merton has a two stage complaints policy which is managed by the councils central Complaints Team. Stage one complaints are responded to within 20 working days. Stage two complaints are responded to within 25 working days.

Merton's complaints policy is available on the council's [Complaints, compliments and comments : Overview | Merton Council](#) web page.

Freedom of Information requests: Local authorities have 20 working days to respond to requests made under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 / Environmental Information Regulations 2004 Information request

Information on how to request information is available on the council's [Make a Freedom of Information request | Merton Council](#) web page.

Member enquiries: Ward Councillors and MPs may make enquiries on behalf of their constituents. The council's response time for responding to these enquiries is 10 working days.

Customer Relations Performance Data

The corporate target is for service areas to respond to 90% of formal correspondence within the specified response timescale.

The table below shows the volume of each correspondence type received by Parking Services in 2021-22 and the percentage responded to on time.

Parking Services			
	Stage 1 Complaints	Freedom of Information Requests	Member Enquiries
Total Received	24	114	280
Responded to on Time	24	113	247
Responded to Late	0	1	33
Percentage on Time	100%	99%	88%