

PATROL

Public Affairs Update: To 11 June 2025

1. Current traffic management issues / areas of engagement

a. Pavement Parking

- **England (outside London):** PATROL continues to await a formal response from the Department for Transport (DfT) – following its October 2020 consultation – on when policy changes will be announced.

In late May, the Future of Roads Minister, Lilian Greenwood, indicated the Department would: *‘...publish a formal response to the 2020 consultation; one that will summarise the views received and announce our next steps. That is coming later this year.’*

The Minister also publicly stated this aim during the recent Traffex / Parkex industry event earlier in May and, during a Commons Chamber event on 15 May, indicated that she was: *‘...working speedily with my officials to do so, and I look forward to being able to announce the outcome of the consultation and our next steps shortly.’*

These updates follow PATROL writing to the Minister and former Secretary of State, as well as conducting subsequent engagement with Department officials, over the last year.

PATROL will update members on any further response it receives from the DfT as soon as possible and appropriate.

- **RESOURCE FOR AUTHORITIES:**
While PATROL awaits the Government’s response, authorities are encouraged to write to the Secretary of State on the issue of pavement parking in their own area. While the inclusion of data from local areas is key to the impact of such correspondence, PATROL has prepared a briefing document with suggested general wording, data and more to help authorities frame their own letters.
 - **Access PATROL’s pavement parking briefing document on the Member Portal at:** <https://www.patrol-uk.info/ctspoyc>.
- **Wales:** The Welsh Government’s plans to give councils powers to enforce against pavement parking have been on hold since 2023.
- **Scotland:** The *Transport (Scotland) Act 2019* bans pavement parking, double parking and parking at dropped kerbs, with certain exemptions designated by local authorities; for example, to ensure safe access for emergency vehicles. Authorities currently enforcing pavement parking include the major cities, Aberdeen, Dundee, Edinburgh, Glasgow and Stirling (commencing 15 July), as well as a number of other councils across the country.

b. Level of civil parking penalty charges and financial impact of enforcement in England

- PATROL has recently conducted research with its authorities into how the current civil parking penalty charge levels are impacting its authorities. The main findings of the research were as follows:
 1. Over a third of authorities' (34%) parking services no longer pay for themselves (operating costs have increased 29% on average).
 2. More than half of authorities (54%) believe the current levels of parking penalty charges are ineffective as a deterrent.
 3. Over two thirds of authorities (70%) reported individual motorists regularly receiving and paying PCNs in their area.
- A copy of the research report is available at:
https://www.patrol-uk.info/docs/PATROL-PCN-Research-Docs/PATROL_BPA_LGA_Research_report_Civil_parking_penalty_levels_RELEASE_100424.pdf.
- In response, PATROL (with the support of the British Parking Association [BPA]) is currently engaged with the DfT and Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government (MHCLG) on the following recommendations:
 1. The levels of civil penalty charges in England and Wales enforced under the *Traffic Management Act 2004* (TMA) should be increased to £100 (lower-level contraventions) and £130 (higher level), as appropriate.
 2. The PATROL Joint Committee should be given the ability to regularly consult on and review civil penalties (for parking and other traffic schemes) as part of PATROL's statutory function, bringing powers in line with the London model and depoliticising the issue moving forward.
 3. Approved device enforcement powers should be granted to authorities for the civil enforcement of off-street car parks.
 4. Statutory enforcement documents (post-PCN) should be issued digitally, rather than by first-class post, where motorists have engaged with the digital route.
- **The recommendations relating to DfT authority are currently with the Future of Roads Minister, Lilian Greenwood, following extensive engagement with the DfT policy team amid numerous changes to the Transport ministerial team over the last year.**
 - The Minister has indicated a national review of penalty charge levels would be required before any action is taken for English authorities. Responding to recent media reports, the Department has also indicated there are no plans to raise penalty levels in England. This is despite levels for London being uplifted only in February.
 - PATROL (together with the BPA) has expressed its dissatisfaction with this 'two-tier' position and has requested a face-to-face meeting with the Minister to understand her reasoning and express again its recommendations.
 - The Minister has indicated enthusiasm on changing the requirement for first-class posting of enforcement documents, with an update expected soon.
- **The recommendation to allow authorities approved device powers for civil enforcement of off-street car parks is in process with MHCLG, following an earlier meeting with the parking policy team inviting a paper setting out possible solutions.**

c. Moving Traffic Powers in England (outside London)

- **Applications for a fourth tranche of authorities to receive moving traffic enforcement powers close on 7 July. Please advise PATROL ASAP if your authority has plans to adopt the powers.**
- The Designation Order for **Tranche 3** came into force on 7 December 2024, with the following new **22 authorities** included:
 - Bolton Council, Bury Council, Devon County Council, Dudley Metropolitan Council, Hull City Council, Leicestershire County Council, North Somerset Council, North Yorkshire Council, Nottinghamshire County Council, Plymouth City Council, Portsmouth City Council, Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council, Sefton Council, Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council, Southend-on-Sea City Council, Stockport Metropolitan Borough Council, Suffolk County Council, Sunderland City Council, West Sussex County Council, Wiltshire Council, City of Wolverhampton Council and City of York Council.
- Local authorities already approved to enforce moving traffic restrictions are as follows:
 - **Tranche 2: July 2023 order – 40 authorities:** Birmingham City Council, Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole Council, Bradford Council, Bristol City Council, Cambridgeshire County Council, Central Bedfordshire Council, Cheshire West and Chester Borough Council, Coventry City Council, Gloucestershire County Council, Herefordshire County Council, Hertfordshire County Council, Lancashire County Council, Leeds City Council, Leicester City Council, Liverpool City Council, Manchester City Council, Medway Council, Newcastle City Council, North Northamptonshire Council, Nottingham City Council, Oldham Council, Peterborough City Council, Rochdale Council, Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council, Salford City Council, Sheffield City Council, Shropshire Council, South Gloucestershire Council, Southampton City Council, Stoke-on-Trent City Council, Thurrock Borough Council, Trafford Council, Walsall Council, West Berkshire District Council, West Northamptonshire Council, West Sussex County Council, Wigan Council, Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead Council, Wirral Council and Wokingham Borough Council.
 - **Tranche 1: July 2022 order – 12 authorities:** Bath & North East Somerset Council, Bedford Borough Council, Buckinghamshire Council, Derby City Council, Durham County Council, Hampshire County Council, Kent County Council, Luton Borough Council, Norfolk County Council, Oxfordshire County Council, Reading Borough Council and Surrey County Council.
- The Traffic Penalty Tribunal decides appeals relating to the enforcement of moving traffic contraventions. As of the publication of this report, 966 appeals have been registered at the Tribunal against PCNs issued from 40 English authorities.

d. Level of private parking penalty charges and debt recovery fees in England

- The then Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) – under the previous government – consulted in 2023 on the level of penalty charges that private parking operators can charge, as well as the associated debt recovery fees.
 - The consultation (<https://www.gov.uk/government/calls-for-evidence/private-parking-code-of-practice-call-for-evidence/private-parking-charges-and-debt-recovery-fees-call-for-evidence>) was part of the Government's industry reform efforts through the *Parking (Code of Practice) Act 2019*.
 - PATROL's response is available to view or download at: https://www.patrol-uk.info/wp-content/uploads/2024/05/PATROL-response-to-Private-Parking-CfE_FINAL_061023.pdf.
 - The Government's proposed new Code of Practice was published in February 2022, but then withdrawn pending further consultation.
 - Separately to DLUHC (now MHCLG) and its work on the Code of Practice, the BPA and International Parking Community released their own version of a Code of Practice in June 2024.
 - The organisations state their Code (<https://www.britishparking.co.uk/write/Documents/AOS/NEW%20Redesigned%20Documents/sectorsingleCodeofPractice.pdf>) is based on the Government's, but with a series of amendments, and that their members should be required to meet the new standards by December 2026.
 - In May, a Westminster Hall debate (<https://hansard.parliament.uk/Commons/2025-05-06/debates/DE2A42ED-5A2B-49E3-835E-CFD8ADB3806B/ParkingRegulation>) covered regulation of the private parking sector, with numerous MPs expressing a series of concerns, including:
 - continuing unfair practices, such as unclear signage, broken machines, poor-performing mobile apps and inaccurate ANPR readings, as well as aggressive correspondence from operators
 - criticism of the existing industry appeals bodies, including their independence and conflicts of interest. One MP, Martin Rhodes (Labour, Glasgow North) stated:
'The International Parking Community and the Independent Appeals Service are both trading names of one company, United Trade and Industry Ltd. This overlap raises legitimate concerns about perceived conflicts of interest, as the same corporate entity that profits from private parking companies through membership fees is responsible for overseeing the code of practice and adjudicating disputes under it. This lack of separation, clearly, could undermine trust in the fairness of the process.'
- MPs from all parties urged a statutory (not voluntary) Code of Practice moving forward, with independent regulation and a single appeals body.
- **The Minister, Alex Norris MP, Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State at MHCLG, acknowledged that action was needed following the withdrawal of the Government's code in 2022. He has committed to the Department publishing a new draft code 'shortly'.**

e. Restricting the generation of surplus funds from traffic contraventions

- The DfT (under the previous government) gathered evidence on councils' abilities to generate and / or retain a surplus from traffic enforcement, the practices that may lead to such surpluses being generated and what the impact may be if the revenue was surrendered to HM Treasury, rather than being used to fund local transport projects.
 - View the consultation at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/calls-for-evidence/restricting-the-generation-of-surplus-funds-from-traffic-contraventions/restricting-the-generation-of-surplus-funds-from-traffic-contraventions>.
- The consultation followed the publication of the then government's *Plan for drivers* (<https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/plan-for-drivers-ensuring-traffic-measures-have-local-support>) in October 2023, which targeted the improvement of drivers' experience and services provided for motorists.
- In light of PATROL's research referenced at Item '2b', which conversely found councils are facing financial shortfalls and that any surpluses were generally small or non-existent, PATROL responded to the call for evidence on surpluses, making reference to its findings and subsequent recommendations.
 - PATROL's response is available to view or download at: https://www.patrol-uk.info/wp-content/uploads/2024/05/DfT-Call-for-Evidence_Restricting-surpluses_PATROL-Response_090524.pdf.

PATROL awaits a formal response to the consultation on surpluses from the DfT. The Future of Roads Minister, Lilian Greenwood, indicated the Department was still considering the consultation in response to a written question on 9 June.

f. Other items of interest since last report

- **6 June: CONSULTATION OUTCOME**

- **Remote attendance and proxy voting in local authorities**

MHCLG consulted in December 2024 on enabling remote attendance at local authority meetings. The Department has now responded reaffirming the importance of in-person meetings for local democracy, while recognising the value of hybrid and remote attendance and voting as more modern, accessible practices.

- Legislation is planned to enable local authorities in England to adopt remote attendance and proxy voting, when parliamentary time allows. Authorities will be empowered to create locally appropriate remote meeting policies.
 - Principal councils (unitary, upper and second-tier) will be required to offer proxy voting at full council meetings for members absent due to new parenthood or serious illness. For other meetings, it will be optional. Other councils can choose to offer proxy voting but won't be required to.

Read the full consultation results and outcome at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/enabling-remote-attendance-and-proxy-voting-at-local-authority-meetings/outcome/remote-attendance-and-proxy-voting-in-local-authorities-consultation-results-and-government-response>.

- PATROL submitted a response in favour of allowing fully remote meeting attendance and canvassed opinion from members, which showed 85% of respondents would prefer to attend meetings remotely only. Other findings of the survey were equally compelling, including that 77% have missed or decided not to attend a meeting due to it being held in person, and 89% would save from four hours to a day by being able to attend remotely.

PATROL awaits the Government's legislative plans.

- **3 June: UPDATED GUIDANCE**

- **Blue Badge scheme local authority guidance (England)**

This guidance was updated to cover onboarding and use of the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) 'Searchlight' system to validate Blue Badge applicants in receipt of a qualifying PIP or HRMCLDA award. Find out more at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-blue-badge-scheme-local-authority-guidance-england/blue-badge>.

- The latest *Disability, accessibility and blue badge statistics* for England (2023-24) were published by the DfT in January:
<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/disability-accessibility-and-blue-badge-scheme-statistics-2023-to-2024/disability-accessibility-and-blue-badge-statistics-england-2023-to-2024>.

- **21 May: PRESS RELEASE – Government transfers responsibility for National Parking Platform to the BPA**

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/government-teams-with-parking-giants-to-ensure-drivers-can-use-preferred-apps-in-all-car-parks>

The new agreement will see the BPA working with councils to run the platform on a not-for-profit basis. It will operate under clear terms to ensure transparency, sustainability and public value. The government will maintain oversight of the platform by monitoring the sector's compliance with these terms. So far, the platform has been rolled out in 10 local authorities.

- **22 April: PRIVATE MEMBERS BILL**

- **Littering from Vehicles (Offences) Bill (under Ten Minute Rule)**

Claire Hughes MP (Labour, Bangor Aberconwy) has proposed a bill to ‘...*increase penalties for civil offences relating to littering from vehicles to make provision about the use of technology in detecting and identifying persons who have committed such offences; and for connected purposes.*’

The bill had its First Reading in the Commons Chamber on 22 April:

([https://hansard.parliament.uk/Commons/2025-04-22/debates/37F6812D-5BF1-43B6-BB8F-8B6476F897E0/LitteringFromVehicles\(Offences\)](https://hansard.parliament.uk/Commons/2025-04-22/debates/37F6812D-5BF1-43B6-BB8F-8B6476F897E0/LitteringFromVehicles(Offences))), with the Second Reading scheduled for 11 July.

- **12 April: SPEECH FROM SECRETARY OF STATE FOR TRANSPORT**

- **‘Vision for transport’**

<https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/secretary-of-state-for-transport-vision-for-transport>

The Secretary of State for Transport has set out her vision for a transport system that ‘works for everyone’.

- **20 March: DVLA DIGITAL SERVICE ENHANCEMENT**

- **New QR code service launched to make sharing driving license information easier**

Motorists who have signed up for a driver and vehicles account (<https://www.gov.uk/driver-vehicles-account>) can now use a QR code to share their driving licence information quicker and easier than ever before.

2. Driving Improvement Awards enters its second year



- **PATROL's Driving Improvement Awards offers member authorities the chance to submit a bid for funding to develop a public awareness campaign or activity to effect change in their area, with bids encouraged around a specific theme each year, based on current or pressing events, issues and trends in the traffic enforcement landscape.**
- A key aim of awarding funding is that the winning campaign can act as a model of action for other authorities, with materials produced subsequently being made available for free use by other councils. In this way, councils can seek to replicate the success in their own communities, reducing the burden on their individual finances and drawing widespread attention to important issues.
- In the Awards' first year (2024-25), PATROL's Advisory Board chose the theme of abuse experienced by civil enforcement officers and other enforcement staff. This focus was chosen in response to the consistent and high-profile negative public sentiment towards parking and traffic enforcement across authorities; a problem that has been systemic for many years.
- The winning bids came from Brighton & Hove City Council and North Essex Parking Partnership (NEPP), who worked together and with PATROL to develop and deliver a campaign in their local areas – **'Beyond the Uniform'** – from January 2025.
 - The campaign received significant engagement, with over a **quarter of a million impressions** across social media and digital channels, as well as national media interest.
 - In North Essex, a **73% decrease in incidents of abuse was recorded in Harlow during the campaign activation period year-on-year with the same period, with a 60% decrease for the year in full.**
 - PATROL will be rolling out the creative assets produced for the campaign, white-labelled, for all its authorities to take forward in their own areas and coordinating a wider awareness effort about staff abuse, the campaign and its outcomes in the coming months.
- **The 2025-26 Driving Improvement Awards has invited bids from authorities on the theme of Blue Badge abuse and misuse.** This is a growing and ever more widely reported issue impacting all authorities, with recent data indicating continuing rises in both badge thefts and fraudulent usage.
- **A shortlist of four authority bids has been decided, with the winning authority set to be unveiled at PATROL's Annual Reception on Tuesday 15 July.** The event will also see Brighton & Hove and NEPP presenting their activities and results from last year's campaign.