



Parking
Services
Annual Report
2021/22



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1 Introduction

Welcome to Cumbria County Council's Parking Services Annual Report for 2021/22. This report provides information on the activities of the Service across Cumbria between 01 April 2021 and 31 March 2022.

The Council is required to publish this information in accordance with Part 6 of the Traffic Management Act 2004. In addition, this report ensures that the Council complies with The Secretary of State's Statutory Guidance to Local Authorities on the Civil Enforcement of Parking Contraventions and the Local Government Transparency Code 2015.

2 Parking enforcement background

The legislative framework for local authorities to carry out parking enforcement changed on 31 March 2008 when Part 6 of the Traffic Management Act 2004 replaced parts of the Road Traffic Act 1991.

Parking restrictions are introduced through a legal order known as a 'Traffic Regulation Order'. Road markings and signs provide information to motorists about the restrictions. When a vehicle is parked in breach of a restriction, a Penalty Charge Notice can be issued by a civil enforcement officer, who is employed by the local authority.



3 Aims and objectives

Cumbria County Council is responsible for the enforcement of on-street parking across the county and at selected off-street parking facilities. Enforcement is carried out by the Council's in-house Parking Services team to ensure that finite number of parking spaces are shared fairly between residents, businesses, and visitors. The Council is also responsible for issuing a variety of parking restriction exemption permits or certificates in certain areas of the county. The Service fulfils an essential role in supporting and delivering Moving Cumbria Forward: Cumbria Transport Plan Strategy 2011-2026.

The aims of Cumbria County Council's Parking Services team are to:

- Manage parking to improve road safety and traffic movement.
- Manage the available parking for the benefit of the local economy and community.
- Cover the costs of enforcement, including parking restriction signs and lines, from Penalty Charge Notice income.
- Provide a better understood Parking Service and improved public facing role for Civil Enforcement Officers who will act as ambassadors on behalf of the Council.

The management of parking contributes to achieving the aims of the Cumbria Local Transport Plan and specifically supports the delivery of the Council Plan 2018-22 priorities. The Council's vision is to be **“a Council that works with residents, businesses, communities and other organisations to deliver the best services possible within the available resources”**.

The outcomes describe what the Council wants to achieve for the people of Cumbria. These provide a clear focus for everything the Council does:

- People in Cumbria are healthy and safe.
- Places in Cumbria are well-connected and thriving.
- The economy in Cumbria is growing and benefits everyone.

In delivering its aims and objectives the Parking Services team supports the Council's new ways of working and **“putting customers at the heart of everything we do”**.

The new ways of working will entail:

- Working with partner organisations and communities to achieve shared aspirations.



- Exploring new ways to deliver services and maximise our resources.
- Acting early to achieve better outcomes.
- Giving our customers choice and easy access to online services.

The Council's core principles when delivering the above are:

- Focusing on the most vulnerable.
- Managing demand.
- Supporting communities to thrive.



In delivering these aims and objectives, the Service works with Cumbria's 6 district councils, the Lake District National Park Authority and other partners who manage the majority of off-street parking facilities around the county. The above organisations also work with Cumbria County Council in their capacities as planning authorities to consider new developments and associated parking provisions and travel options.

The Council's parking policies are available at cumbria.gov.uk/parking

4 Operational activities

Background information

In May 2014, Cumbria County Council's Cabinet made the decision to return on-street parking enforcement duties to the authority from the various district councils who had previously delivered the service under the terms of an Agency Agreement. The majority of off-street parking enforcement in car parks still rests with the district councils and other landowners. The decision to bring the on-street service back

in-house was taken to ensure the delivery of a cost effective and consistent parking enforcement service across Cumbria. Civil Enforcement Officers enforce parking restrictions where Traffic Regulation Orders are in force. Cumbria Constabulary continues to be an important partner, and they are responsible for highway obstruction and dangerous parking.

The management of traffic and parking sits within a dynamic and changing context, therefore constant adjustment and improvement are necessary to guarantee effective and responsive management. The Council will continually monitor the performance of the Parking Services team to assess the effectiveness and impact of the parking enforcement activity undertaken by Cumbria County Council.



Working arrangements

The Service employs a team of 34 full-time equivalent Civil Enforcement Officers plus 3, mainly operational, Parking Team Leaders. To support their work, a team of 8 full-time equivalent office-based staff process Penalty Charge Notice appeals and payments, issue on-street parking permits and deal with parking related queries and complaints. The Service is part of the Council's Economy and Infrastructure Directorate and is managed by the Parking Manager, who reports to the Traffic Manager. All Parking Services staff are employed directly by Cumbria County Council.

The Officers work as part of a 7 day per week shift system, generally between the hours of 07:00 and 19:00 but outside these times if necessary, to address parking related issues. The Officers work every day of the year, including public holidays, with the exception of Christmas Day, Boxing Day and New Year's Day.

Car Parks

The Council operates 4 off-street pay and display car parks, 3 are located in Carlisle city centre, while the other is in Kendal town centre. The Parking Services team are responsible for enforcing the Citadel car park, the Cecil Street car park, and the facility at the rear of the Council's headquarters, Cumbria House on Botchergate, Carlisle, and County Hall Car Park, Kendal. An Off-street Public Car Parks Management Plan details the operation of the facilities and is available on the Council's website at cumbria.gov.uk/parking

The pay and display machines accept cash, coins, card contactless payments, and the Flowbird pay by telephone option.

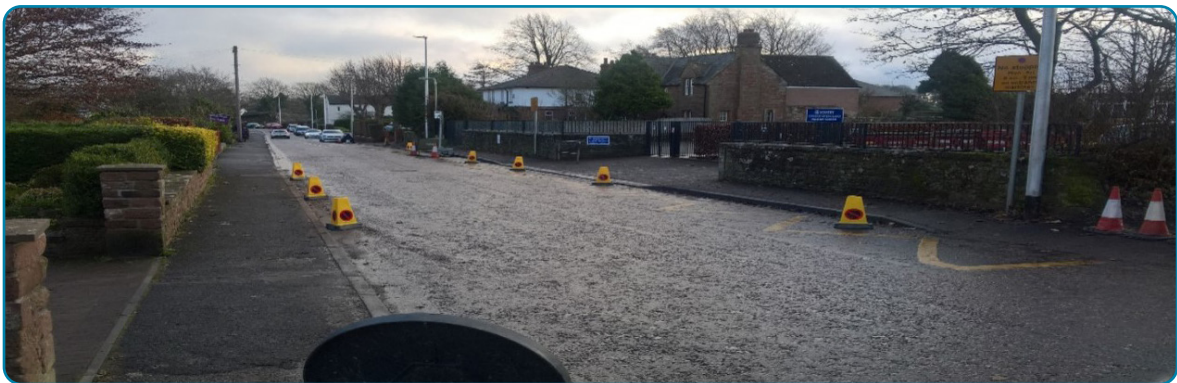
In April 2022, Cumbria County Council added the facility to purchase an annual permit at three of its Car Parks; Cecil Street, County Hall and Cumbria House car park. Parking can cost as little as 95p per day, and it is hoped this will help commuters with the increased cost of travel experienced by many households currently.



School parking initiatives

The Team regularly receives reports regarding inconsiderate parking outside schools, which creates potential safety issues for children and other road users. The Service supports the Schools Parking Protocol developed by the multi-agency Casualty Reduction and Safer Highways (CRASH) Group.

This includes the provision of educational resources to schools by the Council's Active Travel team and a self-help kit of parking cones and education banners by the Parking Services team. This initiative has been very well received by schools across Cumbria, with positive comments from the wider community. By encouraging responsible and legal parking, this initiative helps to ensure a safe passage to and from school for the thousands of pupils across Cumbria.



Blue Badge abuse

The Team continues to issue Penalty Charge Notices relating to the misuse of Blue Badges and reports instances of abuse of the process to the Council's Blue Badge Team. Civil Enforcement Officers have identified some motorists using other individuals' Blue Badges, using expired Badges or those belonging to the deceased. The Service also works in partnership with a number of organisations representing the interests of disabled people to assist in tackling this issue for the benefit of the wider community.



Partnership working

Although the Service’s Civil Enforcement Officers issue Penalty Charge Notices, they undertake many other tasks during their working day. During their patrols Officers regularly identify vehicles that appear to be abandoned, untaxed or uninsured. These vehicles can cause frustration as they take up valuable parking spaces as well as present a potential danger to the local community. As part of their routine duties, the Officers will note details where there are any vehicles presenting a cause for concern, carry out some basic open-source checks on their return to base and, as appropriate, report the issue to the relevant enforcement agency.

This initiative results in regular referrals being made to district councils, Cumbria Constabulary and the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency.

Civil Enforcement Officers have participated in a number of multi-agency initiatives to tackle untaxed, uninsured, and/or abandoned vehicles. In partnership with Cumbria Constabulary, the DVLA and district council colleagues.



Parking Services are often asked to provide intelligence for such operations.





The Service also works closely with officers from Cumbria Constabulary to jointly address parking related issues. The Service's Parking Team Leaders regularly attend the multi-agency hubs, which have been established in each of Cumbria's six district areas, to facilitate partnership working and problem solving. The Service works on a very frequent basis with Police Officers and Police Community Support Officers to jointly address community concerns. The Service has regular dialogue with Stagecoach and other providers to address parking-related concerns.



The Council's Parking Manager attends several multi-agency meetings hosted to improve the parking offers to customers. These include the regular meetings of the Lake District Car Parking Strategy Group. This forum is comprised of representatives from the Lake District National Park Authority, the Forestry Commission, the National Trust, Cumbria County Council and the district councils whose area encompasses the Lake District National Park. The Parking Manager also attends the meetings of the Northwest Parking Forum, which is comprised of local council parking enforcement representatives in the Northwest of England.

The Council is a member of the British Parking Association, the largest professional association representing parking and traffic management in Europe. The Association provides an extensive range of membership services to support parking professionals and organisations in their day-to-day work.

Parking Services fully participated in studies which were commissioned to review transport, parking, and movement within Cities, towns and villages.

The Service has worked with various county, district, and town council colleagues, stakeholders, and external consultants to collectively agree the measures which can be implemented to improve the parking offer in each town.

Ambassadorial work

The Council's Civil Enforcement Officers, have a highly visible presence across Cumbria. During their shifts Officers will frequently provide directions to local services and places of interest, report crimes and assist other agencies, including the emergency services. Officers carry a supply of free parking

disc clocks, which the Service funds, to hand to customers if required. The Officers are trained to administer basic first aid and have received heart start training in the use of defibrillator machines.

Parking Services Civil Enforcement Officers are often asked to assist colleagues in the Council's Highways and Transport teams with the Tour of Britain stages which pass through various parts of the county. Officers patrol various towns and villages along the route to help ensure that spectators park safely and responsibly.



The Service frequently receives compliments and positive feedback regarding the work undertaken by its office-based and front-line staff. In these instances the comments are relayed to the team member concerned and their manager. In addition the Parking Manager will contact the correspondent to acknowledge their sentiments.

My parking permits have arrived! Thank you for being the only person to make moving house less stressful!

Wow that was fast! Very efficient. Moving home is stressful enough so when things get sorted it's always much appreciated!

Just a message to say what a wonderful job the team have done to sort out the parking issues

That's absolutely amazing news and first rate customer service.

Today is amazing. Plenty of room for residents to park, thanks to your guys.

Thank you so much for the parking disks they were delivered bright and early this morning.

I would like to say thank you very much for your quick and efficient service. I ordered a replacement parking permit yesterday and it arrived in the post this morning. I am very impressed.

I would like to compliment Parking Services on the efficient, speedy way they have dealt with my application for a parking permit.

Thank you very much – you are a superstar!

Thank you very much indeed. I did not expect such brilliant service!

Many thanks for the additional permits. This will make a big difference to this man's quality of life at this difficult time.

That's fantastic, you have restored my faith! Thanks for your time in dealing with all of my issues. I understand it can't be easy with the systems in place. Have a great day!

Civil Enforcement Officer's operational equipment

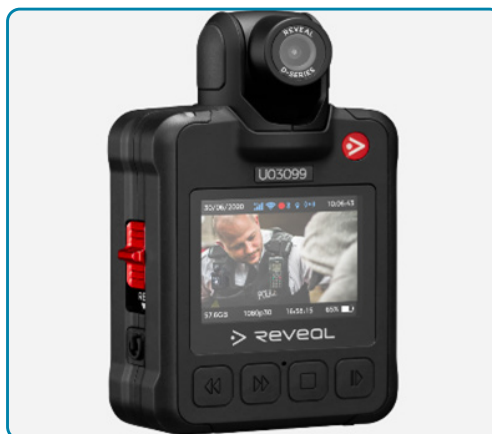


The Service has embraced new technology to improve the offer to customers. All Civil Enforcement Officers are equipped with a Samsung smart phone, enabling

them to receive calls and e-mails while on patrol. This has assisted in improving the response time to complaints and queries as the office-based staff can e-mail photographs and details of complaints directly to the Officer. The phones also incorporate a Skyguard lone worker application for the user's health and safety and work on a variety of mobile phone service provider networks. This can be used to call for emergency assistance and escalate to a manager should a member of staff require any further help.

CCTV

During the summer of 2020, the service upgraded our ageing and out-of-date body-worn CCTV cameras with new devices from Reveal Media. Body-worn cameras have been shown to improve interactions between Civil Enforcement Officers and members of the public, lowering complaints, reducing the risk of violence, and providing support by acting as an impartial and independent witness. These units have a front-facing screen that allows customers to see their own interactions with Civil Enforcement Officers, and research has shown this has a proven calming effect on those being recorded and maximises transparency with the public.



Training and development

A variety of internal and external training courses have been delivered to staff, including information security and governance, safeguarding, conflict management, parking enforcement legislation, Penalty Charge Notice appeals and first aid. Front line and office-based staff receive regular 1:1 meetings and supervision sessions with their respective line managers. In addition, managers undertake monthly internal audits of front-line and office-based staff activities, which assists in delivering transparent and consistent service.



Enforcement Agents

In 2022, following a procurement exercise, the Council signed a contract with enforcement agents to pursue payment of unpaid Penalty Charge Notices on behalf of the authority. Equita Limited were selected as the Council's enforcement agents and were awarded a 3-year contract.

As part of this activity, debtors have been referred for assistance with, health, welfare, and financial related issues. Guidance on the roles and responsibilities of enforcement agents can be accessed at cumbria.gov.uk/parking

5 Customer engagement

Transactional activities

The Service delivers a high-profile, public-facing operation, issuing approximately 43,000 Penalty Charge Notices and over 40,000 free on-street parking permits each year.

Policies and procedures

The Service has a full suite of policies and procedures which are published on the Parking Services section of the Council's web-site at cumbria.gov.uk/parking

These comprise of the following which are reviewed on a regular basis:

- *Parking Enforcement Policy.*
- *Guidance policies for the enforcement and cancellation of Penalty Charge Notices.*
- *Body Worn Video Device and Hand Held Unit Policy.*
- *Off-street Public Car Parks Management Plan.*

The Service also has a number of internal policies including an *Operations Manual for Civil Enforcement Officers*, *Data Protection Impact Assessments*, a *Records Retention and Disposal Schedule* and an *Internal Audit Plan*. The above documents, accompanied by regular internal monitoring, assist in ensuring that the Council delivers a fair, transparent and consistent Parking Service.

Customer contact

A new online application portal for on-street parking permits is now live. The new portal was developed in conjunction with the Council's ICT Service. This new facility enables customers to securely upload supporting documents for their application direct to the portal and incorporates district-based overviews of parking permit entitlement and a postcode address lookup facility.

Contractor Waiver

Contractor waivers are a short-term parking provision permit for a vehicle needing to park for longer than the permitted timeframe, whilst work is being undertaken at premises that are located in a restricted parking area.

These waivers are now available via a new online portal. The portal offers improved security and convenience for the customer and improves back-office efficiencies.

All Service staff are issued with contact cards to distribute to customers, which provide a signpost for parking related queries. The cards are very well received and advise customers of the contact mechanisms should they have a query regarding a Penalty Charge Notice, parking permit or any other parking related issue. The cards also serve to advise customers that the Council's Civil Enforcement Officers use body-worn video devices and how they can access further details regarding the policies and procedures.



On-street parking permits

The Service administers the on-street parking permit schemes for all six district areas in Cumbria. The permits are primarily issued to residential householders in the main city and town centre locations to assist occupants in parking close to their home address. In many locations, the Council offers free-of-charge, time-limited on-street parking with exemptions for local resident permit holders. These schemes are proven to facilitate a regular turnover of on-street parking, therefore enabling motorists to visit local shops, catering establishments and other services. This helps to support the local economy and encourage vibrant and sustainable high streets.

Residents living in eligible properties within the parking zones can apply for a limited number of vehicle specific and visitor's parking permits on the proviso that they can submit the relevant proof of eligibility. Details of the application process and parking permit entitlements can be accessed on the Parking Services section of the Council's website at cumbria.gov.uk/parking

In 2021/22 the Service issued a total 47,410 on-street parking permits as shown in the table below compared to 45,139 in 2020/21. Schemes and the range of permits available differ across each of Cumbria's six district areas.

Permit category	Issued 2020/21	Issued 2021/22
Resident's permit	25,915	26,459
Visitor's permit	18,252	19,417
Business permit	345	334
Guest house permit	34	45
Carer's permit	59	55
Contractor's waiver	534	1100
Total	45,139	47,410

6 Transparency and accountability

Council committees

The Service reports to the Council's 6 area-based local committees at least once per year. Local committees are comprised of the Council's elected Members for each district area; namely Allerdale, Barrow, Carlisle, Copeland, Eden, and South Lakeland. The reports keep members up to date on the Service's activities in their area, including details on penalty charge notices issued, initiatives, emerging trends, and staffing changes. Members also receive a monthly update for their respective district, providing a more localised breakdown of activities and developments. These updates ensure that Members are fully apprised of the activities in their respective electoral divisions, which assists in providing an enhanced service and responsiveness to local communities.

Full details of committees, reports and minutes can be accessed via the Council's web-site at cumbria.gov.uk

Performance audits

The Service receives regular audits by the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency. In instances where the recipient of a Penalty Charge Notice does not pay or challenges the notice, the Council applies to the DVLA for details of the registered keeper of the vehicle. These audits are conducted to ensure that authorities are accessing and using vehicle keeper details in a correct and lawful manner and have appropriate information security measures in place. The Service has been audited by the DVLA on 5 separate occasions since March 2017 and on each occasion, the highest possible rating of green was achieved.

The Service's Parking Manager and Parking Team Leaders conduct regular internal audits of team members to provide assurance that the Council's policies and procedures and civil parking enforcement legislation are being adhered to. As part of this process, the quality of Penalty Charge Notices issued by the Civil Enforcement Officers are examined in addition to the decision-making process by the Service's processing team when handling appeals and challenges.

Transparency

In 2021/22 the Service received 55 separate requests for information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000. Each contact was responded to in a timely manner providing the information requested.

The Council submits annual performance statistics to the Parking and Traffic Regulations Outside London Joint Committee (PATROL). These reports indicate the number of Penalty Charge Notices issued, paid, challenged and cancelled.

7 Penalty Charge Notice statistics

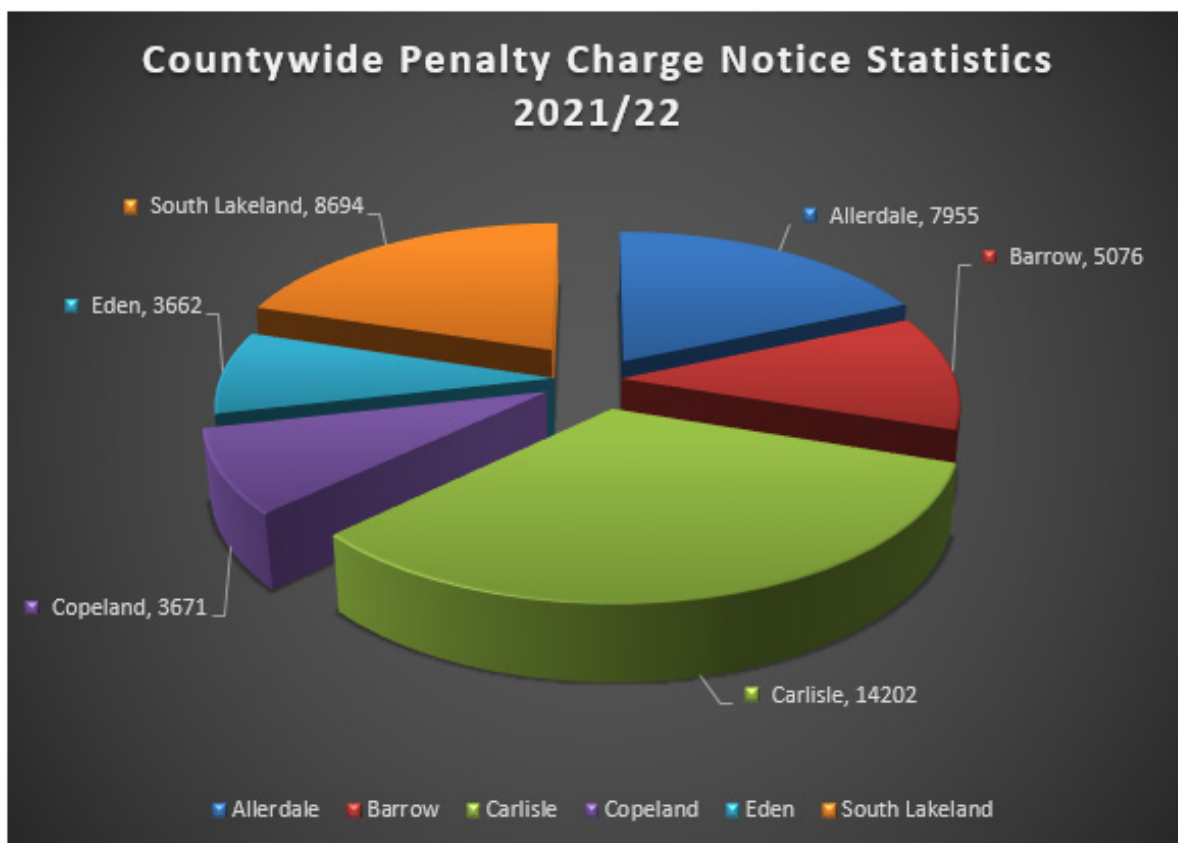
Between 01 April 2021 and 31 March 2022 Cumbria County Council’s Civil Enforcement Officers issued a total of 43,260 Penalty Charge Notices for on-street parking contraventions.

- 20,896 were issued in the higher band (£70 but reduced to £35 if paid within 14 days from the date of issue).
- 22,364 were issued in the lower band (£50 but reduced to £25 if paid within 14 days from the date of issue).

Between 01 April 2021 and 31 March 2022 Cumbria County Council’s Civil Enforcement Officers issued a total of 76 Penalty Charge Notices for off-street parking contraventions.

- 57 were issued in the higher band (£70 but reduced to £35 if paid within 14 days from the date of issue).
- 19 were issued in the lower band (£50 but reduced to £25 if paid within 14 days from the date of issue).

Penalty Charge Notices issued by Cumbria County Council between the above dates is provided below.



8 Financial summary

The income and expenditure of local authorities in connection with their on-street charging and their on-street and off-street enforcement activities are governed by Section 55 (as amended) of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984. Where management and enforcement of parking has generated surplus income, the above Act states that local authorities may commit this against Highways and Transport related measures.

The Cumbria County Council parking enforcement budget is comprised of income from Penalty Charge Notices, pay and display tickets and contractor's waivers less any expenditure on enforcement, processing and administration, parking enforcement infrastructure and delivery of the parking permit schemes. A summary of the expenditure and income is summarised in the tables below.

On-street parking account for Cumbria County Council – 2020/21 and 2021/22

	2020/21	2021/22
Income		
Contractor's waivers	£17,473	£13,549
Penalty Charge Notices	£695,287	£1,188,530
Other income	£230,150	£146,105
Total income	£942,910	£1,348,184
Gross expenditure		
Employees	£1,162,838	£1,304,715
Other	£200,298	£222,030
Total gross expenditure	£1,363,136	£1,526,745
Net expenditure	£420,226	£178,561

Off-street parking account for Cumbria County Council – 2020/21 and 2021/22

	2020/21	2021/22
Income		
Pay and display	£14,279	£74,169
Penalty Charge Notices	£4,224	£4,224
Total income	£18,503	£78,393
Gross expenditure		
Employees	£8,787	£2,090
Other	£23,363	£40,916
Total gross expenditure	£32,150	£43,006
Net expenditure or (Surplus)	£13,647	(£35,387)

In 2021/22 the on-street parking account outturn position showed net expenditure of £178,561 compared to £420,226 in 2020/21 which is mainly the result of Parking Services income being heavily impacted by the Covid-19 restrictions in place during the 2020/21 financial year. Parking Services were withdrawn completely or operating in a limited capacity for large periods of the year. The on-street expenditure stated above includes the total cost of delivering the service, including administration of the parking permit schemes.

In 2021/22 the off-street parking account outturn position showed net income of £35,387 compared to net expenditure of £13,647 in 2020/21, which again, is due to income being impacted by Covid-19 restrictions.

9 Contact details

e: parking@cumbria.gov.uk

w: cumbria.gov.uk/parking

t: 0300 303 2992

Please note - cost of calls may vary depending on mobile provider

Parking Services | Cumbria County Council
PO Box 415 | Carlisle | CA1 9GU



Translation Services

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