

NORTHUMBERLAND

Northumberland County Council

Parking Services

**A guide to the Penalty Charge Notice appeals
process**

November 2017

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1.0 Civil Parking Enforcement Background

The Traffic Management Act (TMA) 2004 places a duty on local authorities to minimise congestion and disruption on their roads. The Act enables Council's to take on responsibility for enforcing parking restrictions on-street and in April 2012 Northumberland County Council were granted these powers following a successful application to the Secretary of State.

This means that parking restrictions previously enforced by the police were decriminalised and are now enforced by Northumberland County Council.

The benefits of Civil Parking Enforcement include:

- Reduction in obstructive parking and associated levels of congestion
- More effective management of on and off street parking throughout the county
- Consistency with neighbouring authorities
- Improved road safety and conditions for vulnerable road users e.g. children, elderly, mobility groups, and cyclists
- Improved conditions for public transport
- Improved accessibility to local services ie: taxi and disabled parking

Our aim is to provide both fair and consistent enforcement throughout Northumberland.

Traffic Regulation Orders (TRO) define which controls apply to specific stretches of road and off street parking areas.

A valid TRO, and the appropriate accompanying signs and lines must be in place for enforcement to be carried out.

2.0 Differential Charging

Northumberland County Council operates the differential charging system where less serious contraventions incur a lower penalty charge of £50 and more serious contraventions of the regulations mean a higher penalty charge of £70.

For example, a Penalty Charge Notice (PCN) issued to a vehicle parked in restricted parking area such as a bus stop, a pedestrian crossing or on yellow lines will incur a higher penalty to those vehicles issued a PCN after they have attempted to park legitimately but then commit a contravention, such as overstaying the time limit, not setting their disc correctly or not parking wholly within the bay etc.

The table below shows the differential charging levels for parking contraventions in Northumberland. These charges are set by the Secretary of State for Transport, not set arbitrarily by Northumberland County Council:

	PCN at Full Charge	Charge if paid within 14 days	Charge if paid after Charge Certificate
Higher Level PCN	£70	£35	£105
Lower Level PCN	£50	£25	£75

The penalty charge is discounted by 50% if paid within 14 days, and a surcharge of 50% is applied if the payment is not made within 28 days following receipt of the Charge Certificate.

3.0 Contravention Codes

The table below shows the contravention codes that may be used by Civil Enforcement Officer's in Northumberland both on-street and off-street (car parks) and the differential level that will apply, and the observation period applicable to each contravention.

3.1 On-Street Contravention Codes

Code	Description	Level	Observation period
01	Parked in a restricted street during prescribed hours*	Higher	2 minutes
02	Parked or loading/unloading in a restricted street where waiting and loading/unloading restrictions are in force	Higher	Instant issue
05	Parked after the expiry of paid for time	Lower	Instant issue if 10 + mins over
06	Parked without clearly displaying a valid pay & display ticket or voucher	Lower	5 minutes
07	Parked with payment made to extend the stay beyond initial time	Lower	5 minutes
11	Parked without payment of the parking charge	Lower	5 minutes
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	Higher	5 minutes

14	Parked in an electric vehicles' charging place during restricted hours without charging	Higher	5 minutes	
16	Parked in a permit space without displaying a valid permit	Higher	5 minutes	
18	Using a vehicle in a parking place in connection with the sale or offering or exposing for sale of goods when prohibited	Higher	5 minutes	
19	Parked in a residents' or shared use parking place or zone displaying an invalid permit, an invalid voucher or an invalid pay and display ticket	Lower	5 minutes	
20	Parked in a loading gap marked by a yellow line	Higher	5 minutes	
21	Parked in a suspended bay/space or part of bay/space	Higher	Instant issue	
22	Re-parked in the same parking place or zone within the prescribed time period of leaving	Lower	Casual	2 nd Obs. 5 mins
23	Parked in a parking place or area not designated for that class of vehicle	Higher	5 minutes	
24	Not parked correctly within the markings of the bay or space	Lower	Instant issue	
25	Parked in a loading place during restricted hours without loading	Higher	5 minutes	
26	Vehicle parked more than 50 centimetres from the edge of the carriageway and not within a designated parking place	Higher	Instant issue	
27	Parked adjacent to a dropped footway	Higher	Instant issue	
30	Parked for longer than permitted	Lower	Instant issue if 10 + mins over	
35	Parked in a disc parking place without clearly displaying a valid disc	Lower	10 minutes	
40	Parked in a designated disabled persons parking place without clearly displaying a valid disable persons badge	Higher	Instant issue	
42	Parked in a parking place designated for police vehicles	Higher	Instant issue	
45	Parked on a taxi rank	Higher	Instant issue	
46	Stopped where prohibited (on a red route or clearway)	Higher	Instant issue	
47	Stopped on a restricted bus stop or stand	Higher	Instant issue	
48	Stopped in a restricted area outside a school	Higher	Instant issue	

49	Parked wholly or partly on a cycle track	Higher	Instant issue
55	A commercial vehicle parked in a restricted street in contravention of an overnight waiting ban	Higher	5 minutes
56	Parked in contravention of a commercial vehicle waiting restriction	Higher	5 minutes
61	A heavy commercial vehicle wholly or partly parked on a footway, verge or land between two carriageways	Higher	Instant issue
62	Parked with one or more wheels on any part of an urban road other than a carriageway (footway parking)	Higher	Instant issue
63	Parked with engine running where prohibited	Lower	5 minutes
99	Stopped on a pedestrian crossing and/or crossing area marked by zig-zags	Higher	Instant issue
*Where loading is taking place, allow 30 min loading time			

3.2 Off-Street (Car Park) Contravention Codes

Code	Description	Level	Observation period
70	Parked in a loading area during restricted hours without reasonable excuse	Higher	5 minutes
73	Parked without payment of the parking charge	Lower	10 minutes
74	Using a vehicle in a parking place in connection with the sale or offering or exposing for sale of goods	Higher	5 minutes
80	Parked for longer than the maximum period permitted	Lower	Instant issue if 10 + mins over
81	Parked in a restricted area in a car park	Higher	Instant issue
82	Parked after the expiry of paid for time	Lower	Instant issue if 10 + mins over
83	Parked in a car park without clearly displaying a valid pay & display ticket or voucher or parking clock	Lower	10 minutes

84	Parked with additional payment made to extend the stay beyond time first purchased	Lower	Casual	2 nd Obs. 5 mins
85	Parked in a permit bay without clearly displaying a valid permit	Higher	5 minutes	
86	Parked beyond the bay markings	Lower	Instant issue	
87	Parked in a disabled person's parking space without clearly displaying a valid disabled person's badge	Higher	Instant issue	
89	Vehicle parked exceeds maximum weight and/or length permitted in the area	Higher	5 minutes	
90	Re-Parked within the prescribed time period of leaving a bay or space in a car park	Lower	Casual	2 nd Obs. 5 mins
91	Parked in a car park or area not designated for that class of vehicle	Higher	5 minutes	
92	Parked causing an obstruction	Higher	Instant issue	
93	Parked in a car park when closed	Lower	Instant issue	
94	Parked in a pay & display car park without clearly displaying two valid pay and display tickets when required	Lower	10 minutes	
95	Parked in a parking place for a purpose other than the designated purpose for the parking place	Lower	5 minutes	
96	Parked with the engine running where prohibited	Lower	5 minutes	

4.0 The Penalty Charge Notice (PCN)

A Penalty Charge Notice (PCN) is issued when a Civil Enforcement Officer (CEO) believes that a vehicle is parked in contravention of a Traffic Regulation Order. The issue of a PCN is intended to inform the driver of the contravention they have committed.

A PCN can be served in a number of ways. It can be attached to the windscreen of a vehicle, it can be handed directly to the driver if they are present or return to the vehicle, or it can be served by post to the registered keeper of the vehicle. There are three circumstances when a PCN can be served through the post and these are:

- when the CEO is prevented from serving a PCN by threat of force, obstruction or violence; or
- when the CEO has started to issue the PCN but did not have enough time to serve it before the vehicle was driven away; or
- when the contravention is detected on the basis of evidence from an approved device (this could be either an enforcement vehicle, or a static/fixed CCTV camera).

In these three circumstances the PCN is served by post to the owner/registered keeper whose details are obtained from the DVLA.

The TMA 2004 states that responsibility for a PCN rests with the registered keeper of the vehicle at the time that the contravention occurred. The registered keepers details are held by the DVLA and it does not matter if the registered keeper was not the driver at the time of the contravention, they still remain responsible for the PCN.

5.0 The PCN Journey

When a Penalty Charge Notice is issued it follows a legal process. The journey that each PCN takes depends on what the recipient or vehicle owner does, and when they do it.

If you receive a PCN, you have 2 options; you can pay it or you can challenge it. It is not advisable to simply ignore the PCN as ultimately if the PCN remains unpaid we may register the debt with an Enforcement Agent.

5.1 To pay the PCN

If you want to pay the PCN, the charge will be reduced by 50% if you pay it within 14 days from issue. After this time the PCN reverts to full charge, and at certain stages in the process additional charges may be also added.

Details of how to pay are printed on the back of the PCN and on the Council's website at parking.northumberland.gov.uk. You can also view photographic evidence and make an informal challenge.

To pay, have the PCN number and your vehicle details ready:

- **Online** - go to parking.northumberland.gov.uk
- **Automated Service (Telephone)** - call 0345 600 6400 to make payment 24 hours, 7 days a week.
- **By telephone** - call 0345 600 6400 an advisor will take your payment, Monday to Thursday 8:30am to 5pm and Friday 8:30am to 4:30pm.
- **In Person** - at one of our Information Centres (contact us on 0345 600 6400 for opening times and directions to your nearest Information Centre).
- **Post** - send cheques/postal orders made payable to "Northumberland County Council" to Parking Services, County Hall, Morpeth, Northumberland, NE61 2EF. Allow 2 working days for 1st class post and 5 working days for 2nd class post.

Please note that if you pay the reduced amount after the discount period has ended, your payment will be accepted as part-payment and a Notice to Owner will be sent to the owner/registered keeper of the vehicle, showing the remaining amount due.

If we do not receive a payment, the PCN will revert to full charge after 14 days. Then we will contact the DVLA for the details of the owner/registered keeper and, after 28 days have elapsed, we send a Notice to Owner.

5.2 Informal Challenge

An informal challenge against the issue of a PCN can be made at any time up to receiving a 'Notice to Owner'. An informal challenge is sometimes referred to as an 'informal representation'.

An informal challenge can be made by anyone but it must be received in writing. It is important that you clearly explain why you think you should not pay the PCN and if you have any evidence to support your reasons you should send this with your challenge.

You can make an informal challenge:

- **Online** - at parking.northumberland.gov.uk
- **Email** - parkingservices@northumberland.gov.uk
- **Post** - complete the informal representation form or send a letter to Parking Services, Northumberland County Council, County Hall, Morpeth, NE61 2EF.

We aim to respond to informal challenges within 10 working days, however sometimes this may take longer. The PCN will be frozen from the day we receive your challenge until we reply. If you have challenged the PCN within the discount period and we reject your challenge, we will offer a further 14 days to pay the charge at the reduced rate.

The Parking and Processing team investigate and carefully consider any challenge made against a PCN. The team are well trained and operate within defined policies; they consider each challenge on its own merits and may exercise discretion in some circumstances.

They will cancel a PCN if they consider it was issued wrongly (for example if the signs or lines were incorrect) or if you have demonstrated that acceptable mitigating circumstances should be taken into consideration, such as a genuine medical emergency or an unforeseen and unavoidable vehicle breakdown. They would only consider these mitigating circumstances however, if adequate evidence had also been sent to support the challenge.

After carefully considering all evidence, we will write to you with the outcome, explaining our decision. We will send our response by email if you have challenged online or by email, and by letter if you have written to us.

We will only consider one informal challenge per PCN and will only reset the discount period once. If your informal representation is rejected and you want to challenge it further, you need to wait until we send a Notice to Owner to the registered keeper of the vehicle, when they can then make a formal challenge (also known as formal representation).

5.3 Formal Challenge (Formal Representation)

A PCN will revert to full charge if it remains unpaid. After 28 days we make a request to the DVLA for details about the registered keeper of the vehicle so that a Notice to Owner (NtO) can be sent.

The NtO is the first piece of statutory documentation, and the purpose is to remind the registered keeper that there is an outstanding penalty charge.

The NtO requests either full payment of the PCN or a formal written challenge as to why the PCN should be cancelled. The NtO includes the formal representation form for completion. However you do not have to use this form you may also submit your formal challenge directly online, by email, or by letter.

As with informal challenges, representations **must be in writing** and can be submitted by;

- **email** to parkingservices@northumberland.gov.uk
- **post** to Parking Services, Northumberland County Council, Morpeth, Northumberland, NE61 2EF

After you have made a formal representation you will receive either:

- **Notice of Acceptance** – explaining that your PCN has been cancelled
- **Notice of Rejection** – explaining that you need to pay the PCN at the full rate or make an appeal to the Traffic Penalty Tribunal

Both the Notice of Acceptance and the Notice of Rejection must be sent to you by first class post, and the Legislation states that they are classed as 'served' two days after they are sent.

The Legislation allows the following statutory grounds for cancelling a PCN:

- The person on the NtO was not the owner at the time
- The contravention did not occur
- The vehicle was stolen or taken without owner's consent
- The traffic order was invalid
- The car was hired and the hirer accepts liability
- The PCN has been charged at too high an amount
- There has been procedural impropriety on the part of the enforcement authority
- The penalty charge had already been paid in full

These grounds are considered as follows:

The person on the NtO was not the owner at the time

This could mean that you never owned the vehicle; that you sold the vehicle before the contravention occurred; or that you bought the vehicle after the contravention occurred.

Please provide proof of sale or purchase, details of the purchaser or buyer, or confirmation from an insurance company. If you state that a third party has purchased the vehicle but this person denies it or no proof can be provided, then we will continue to use the name supplied by the DVLA. It is important to remember that the Legislation states that it is the registered keeper at the time of the event that is responsible for the penalty charge therefore we revert to the DVLA information supplied in the case of a dispute.

The contravention did not occur

The Parking and Processing team consider the evidence gathered by the CEO at the time of issue along with any information provided within the formal representation and if the evidence demonstrates that the contravention did not occur the PCN will be cancelled. You need to provide as much detail as possible in your formal representation.

The vehicle was stolen or taken without owner's consent

A crime reference number should be provided and details of the relevant police officer and station. If you claim that the matter has not been reported because a friend or family member took the vehicle, then failure to report it to the police is counted as you giving consent.

The traffic order was invalid

If you feel that the Traffic Regulation Order was not valid you should provide all relevant information within your formal representation. The Parking and Processing team will then investigate and act accordingly.

The car was hired and the hirer accepts liability

This ground is ordinarily used by hire companies, where the signed hire agreement transfers liability to the 'hirer' of the vehicle. The hire company will have to supply the name and address of the hirer and a copy of the signed agreement which includes the statement acknowledging liability. Once this has been received a Notice of Owner will be sent to the hirer of the vehicle.

The PCN has been charged at too high an amount

In practice, this only applies when you accept the PCN but think that you should only pay the discount amount or if you think that you have paid the discount amount within the discount period and we have not received it within the correct time. You must provide evidence of payment for this ground to be considered.

There has been a procedural impropriety on the part of the enforcement authority

If you think that we have failed to observe the regulations concerned with issuing and processing your PCN or any subsequent paperwork then there may have been a procedural impropriety. You must clarify how you think that we have not applied the statutory policy and procedures.

The penalty charge had already been paid in full

If you have paid the PCN in full please provide details of the date, time and method of payment and we will investigate and locate the payment. If you paid by card please also include the last four digits of your card and that will help us locate your payment more quickly.

Other Grounds

We will also consider other grounds of appeal which are not listed in the legislation, these will mainly be because of mitigation, where the offence is admitted but it is argued that there is a compelling reason why the PCN should be cancelled. You will need to provide as much detail as possible and any appropriate evidence.

5.4 Mitigating Circumstances

The Parking and Processing team are responsible for considering informal challenges and formal representations against PCN's. They consider each challenge based on its own individual and mitigating circumstances and make the decision whether to uphold or cancel the PCN based on the evidence provided.

Some examples of mitigation include:

Delays

Delays due to shop or bank queues, meetings taking longer than expected etc. are not grounds for cancellation of a PCN.

A driver is expected to choose a car park suitable for the required length of stay, and are advised that it is better to overestimate the amount of time needed, rather than under-estimate and risk incurring a PCN.

If the delay is related to any medical or emergency situation i.e. sudden sickness, difficulties in walking due to disablement, stopping to assist in an emergency situation and any other such cases, a degree of leniency may be exercised.

Children/Elderly People

Claims are often made by people, accompanied by young children or elderly people, that they were delayed because of them. Again this should not be considered as a reason to cancel a PCN because allowance should be made for this when parking.

Cases involving urgent hospital or doctor's visits with sick children and delays due to sudden illness may be treated with leniency. It is usually appropriate for us to consider the length of the delay.

Emergencies

An emergency is an unforeseen situation, which prevents a driver from moving his/her vehicle. They are usually of a medical nature and leniency will be exercised where it is felt that the driver could not have foreseen the situation and/or had no chance to return to the vehicle.

It is useful to remember that there is an exemption for motorists who were unable to move their vehicle due to 'circumstances beyond their control', and we will consider whether or not the circumstances fall into that category.

Where a driver makes a claim for cancellation on the grounds that either he/she or a passenger is taken ill or injured in any way, proof is requested in the form of a letter from a GP or hospital. If the letter does not cover the date of the PCN, or it relates to a pre-arranged doctor's visit, the PCN will not be cancelled. There may also be cases where it is clear from the proof submitted that the driver has been advised not to drive, and if this is the case, the PCN will be upheld.

Urgent toilet visits will not normally permit cancellation of a PCN unless mitigating medical circumstances applied.

Acceptable documentary evidence to support the "other grounds" is generally required before consideration would be given to cancelling a Penalty Charge Notice in any of the above circumstances.

5.5 Non Mitigating Circumstances

The following list shows some examples of situations where we are usually **unlikely** to cancel a PCN, the list is not exhaustive:

- I thought I was parked legally but made a mistake
- There was nowhere else to park
- This is the first time I've got a parking ticket / I won't do it again / I'll be more careful next time
- I only stopped for a minute
- I thought I was allowed 5 minutes to park on a yellow line
- I lent the car to a friend and they won't pay the penalty
- I was parked outside my own house / business
- I forgot to set my disc
- I set my disc to the wrong time by accident
- I set my disc to the time I thought I would be leaving
- I don't understand what disc parking is
- I had a disc but forgot to put it out
- I went to get change for the pay & display machine
- I got lost / forgot about the time and so could not return to my vehicle in time
- My meeting / hospital / dental appointment ran late

- My ticket had fallen on the floor / I had forgotten to display it
- My permit / Blue Badge had fallen on the floor / I had forgotten to display it
- I did not know I had to Pay & Display / I did not know I needed a disc
- I had been loading / unloading and was unpacking/moving the items
- I thought I could return to the machine and pay for some more time/ change my disc if I needed longer
- I thought my Blue Badge gave me the right to park anywhere

The above is intended to give examples of mitigating and non mitigating circumstances but is not intended to be a definitive list on what action will be taken in all circumstances. The duty of the Parking and Processing team to use discretion may take precedence if circumstances warrant it.

5.6 The Outcome

There are three possible outcomes to the formal challenge of a PCN:

- If we accept the formal representation we will cancel the PCN and we will send a Notice of Acceptance to the registered keeper explaining our decision. In the case of vehicle ownership or hiring grounds we will send a Notice of Acceptance to you and we will send a new NtO to the new owner or hirer.
- If we request further information before the case can be considered we will write to you explaining what you need to provide and give you 14 days to provide it. The case will be placed on hold during this time. If we do not receive the further information within the specified time, the formal challenge will be rejected and we will send out a Notice of Rejection.
- If we reject the representation we send the owner/registered keeper a Notice of Rejection explaining our reasons. We also enclose full details on how to appeal to the Traffic Penalty Tribunal (TPT) and have the case heard by an independent adjudicator should you disagree with the decision.

5.7 No formal representation received

If the PCN is unpaid and we do not get a reply to the NtO, the case proceeds to the Charge Certificate stage (see section below) after 35 days have elapsed from the NtO issue date. Once a Charge Certificate has been issued, you may no longer challenge the issue of the PCN, unless there are exceptional circumstances.

You cannot appeal to the TPT until you have received a Notice of Rejection from us explaining why we have decided not to cancel the PCN. Therefore, you cannot make an appeal to the TPT if you have not made a formal representation to us.

Exceptional circumstances only apply if the owner/registered keeper cannot feasibly reply on time, for example due to hospitalisation. A person going on holiday is not usually sufficient exceptional circumstances.

If a late representation is accepted, the Charge Certificate is withdrawn and the process reverts to the point where we receive a formal representation.

5.8 Charge Certificate

The issue of the Charge Certificate increases the amount owing by 50%, less any prior payments and ends the legal right for you to dispute the issue of the penalty charge. It occurs 35 days from:

- the NtO issued & no representation is received; or
- the date of the Notice of Rejection; or
- the date the appeal is refused by the Adjudicator; or
- the date an appeal submitted to the TPT is withdrawn.

5.9 Appeal to the Traffic Penalty Tribunal

If you disagree with our decision not to cancel the PCN at formal challenge stage you can appeal to an independent adjudicator at the Traffic Penalty Tribunal. The adjudicators are independent of the council and their decision is final.

You can appeal to the TPT at: www.trafficpenaltytribunal.gov.uk/appeal

The TPT website explains what the adjudicator can consider and how to appeal. There is no charge for appealing however costs are not normally awarded. The website gives full details.

You should appeal within 28 days of the Notice of Rejection.

If you are unable to appeal online you may request a paper form from the Traffic Penalty Tribunal by calling 01625 44 55 99 and leaving your name, address, telephone number, vehicle registration mark and penalty charge notice number.

There are statutory grounds of appeal and the independent adjudicators will only consider appeals made on the statutory grounds.

The council will consider the appeal made to the TPT and any new evidence or mitigation made and will decide to:

- continue to contest the issue of the PCN; or
- decide not to contest the appeal, which means the PCN will be cancelled

If we believe, based on the evidence available, that the case should be contested then we will prepare and submit a case file including all evidence gathered by the CEO demonstrating that the contravention occurred along with copies of all correspondence relating to the PCN. We will demonstrate that we have complied with the legal process, and explain why we think the PCN should be paid.

The appellant can supply new evidence to TPT at any point before the hearing.

Every appellant has the choice to have his/her case considered by the written submissions of both parties, by a telephone hearing or a face to face hearing.

If the appeal is allowed, the Council receives an instruction from TPT to cancel the PCN.

If the appeal is dismissed, the Council will continue the process to recover the amount owing. The appellant is given 28 days from the service of the adjudicator's decision to pay the penalty charge.

The adjudicator's decision is final and binding upon both parties, but there are limited grounds for the Council or the appellant to ask for a review of the decision.

5.10 Registration of charge

Once a Charge Certificate has been issued, a further 14 days are given to pay. If you decide not to pay, we apply to the Traffic Enforcement Centre (TEC) at Northampton County Court for permission to recover the debt.

Whilst it is not a statutory requirement, prior to registering the debt, a further letter will be sent to the registered keeper/owner requesting payment of the outstanding penalty charge and reminding them what will happen to the PCN and that further charges will be incurred.

If this letter still does not result in payment, we send information to TEC together with a registration fee for each case, and this fee is added to the outstanding charges owed to the council. TEC will grant an Order for Recovery of the debt on a standard form entitled "Order for recovery of unpaid penalty charge (Parking)". When we receive the order we send it to the owner/registered keeper together with an "Application to file a statement out of time/extension of time (Parking)" form (or Witness Statement supported by a Statement of Truth). You then have 21 days to either pay the new amount owing or to complete and file the Statement of Truth.

5.11 Witness Statement

The owner/registered keeper completes the Witness Statement and sends it direct to TEC stating that one of the following has happened:

- They did not receive the NtO
- They made a representation but got no reply
- They made an appeal but got no reply
- They paid the PCN

If the owner/registered keeper states that they didn't receive the NtO, TEC advise us that we should re-issue it. All other grounds are referred to the Council with instructions that we must follow.

If we do not receive a Witness Statement, we apply to TEC again for permission to pass the outstanding debts to our Enforcement Agents.

5.12 Referral to Enforcement Agent

Ultimately if a PCN remains unpaid we can apply for a Warrant of Execution. The Council sends details of such cases to TEC, who then send back permission for us to issue a warrant.

The warrant is valid for one year and the debt is passed to our Enforcement Agent to collect on our behalf. Once the case has been passed to an Enforcement Agent we are unable to accept payment or enter into any discussion about the PCN and callers are referred to the Enforcement Agent or advised to seek independent guidance.

6.0 Contact Details

You can pay or appeal online by going to: <https://parkingpcns.northumberland.gov.uk> and follow the instructions.

You can use our automated phone service to make payment 24 hours, 7 days a week by calling 0345 600 6400.

A Customer Services advisor can give you advice or take a payment over the phone, call 0345 600 6400, Monday to Thursday 08:30 to 17:00 and Friday 08:30 to 16:30.

You can get advise, submit your challenge, or make payment in person at any of the Council Information Centres at (check our website for the most current information):

Alnwick: Greenwell Lane, Alnwick, NE66 1HB
Ashington: Wansbeck Square, Ashington, NE63 9XL
Bedlington: Bedlington Library, Glebe Road, Bedlington, NE22 6JX (no cash payments)
Berwick: Walkergate Building, Walkergate, Berwick TD15 1DJ
Blyth: Blyth Library, Bridge Street, Blyth, NE24 1DJ
Cramlington: Concordia, Cramlington, NE23 6YB
Hexham: Queens Hall, Beaumont Street, Hexham, NE46 3LS
Morpeth: Royal Sovereign House, Manchester Street, Morpeth, NE61 1AF
Seaton Delaval: Library, Astley High School, Elsdon Avenue, Seaton Delaval NE25 0BW

You can visit us Monday to Friday from 09:00 to 17:00 (excluding bank holidays). Please note the Alnwick Information Centre closes at 16:30.

Post your challenges or payments addressed to 'Northumberland County Council' at Parking Services, County Hall, Morpeth, Northumberland, NE61 2EF. Please write PCN number, vehicle registration and address details on the reverse of the cheque/postal order. Please allow 2 working days for first class post and 5 working days for second class post.

7.0 Important Information

The Parking and Processing team cannot discuss the issue of your PCN with you over the telephone or in person, you must put any challenge in writing so that the team can consider what you say alongside the evidence gathered by the CEO at the time of issue.

The team can answer parking queries, explain the legal process and offer advise but they cannot discuss the individual circumstances of your PCN.

It is important that you do not pay your PCN if you want to challenge it.

An officer will not deal with a formal challenge if they have responded to the informal challenge.