

# TfL driver defies Market Place restrictions



Those many residents who have received parking tickets from Transport for London for accidentally stopping in the confusingly marked loading bays or for other minor infractions in the Market Place will be astonished to see the above photograph of a TfL car parked in the south side disabled bay.

The photo was taken on the afternoon of 9 March by the RA's Roads & Traffic Committee chairman Gary Shaw who happened to be there when the TfL car came along. Mr Shaw said "TfL's employee appeared to have come to the Market Place to check on some work that had been carried out in Northway. There was plenty of available space on the opposite side of the road but he pulled straight into the disabled bay and the car remained there for several minutes at least. TfL's CCTV camera which has relieved residents and visitors of many thousands of pounds over the years is right above the disabled bay which is clearly marked and cannot

realistically be used by accident unlike the loading bays."

"The CCTV camera is used all the time to catch loading bay offenders who very often genuinely fail to recognise the restriction but it hardly ever monitors the disabled bay whose status is perfectly clear. It's quite possible that someone needing that bay was denied it during the time that TfL's able-bodied employee parked there."

The Roads & Traffic Committee sent the photo to TfL's senior parking officer who replied that staff and contractors are under instructions not to contravene parking regulations other than in an emergency and acknowledged that this was no such case. TfL have told the Committee that they intend to reinforce that message to their staff. Nevertheless the sight of a Transport for London vehicle flouting the restriction that is best understood and best respected by the rest of us will do little to encourage confidence in the enforcement arrangements in the Market Place.

# CPZ - keeping the traffic or the money flowing?

The letter reproduced below from Suburb resident Hildburg Williams eloquently reminds residents that Barnet Council's CPZ scheme exists not for the purpose of resolving our parking problems but for raising revenue for the Council.

In the early days of the scheme it was mostly non-CPZ residents who fell foul of complicated restrictions but as the schemes have become better understood by visitors it tends now to be the permit-holders themselves who form the prime target for the Council's parking contractors. A common complaint among residents is of critical delays or bureaucratic mix-ups when the Council is asked to issue replacement permits after an

old one has expired. Transferring a permit to a new car or obtaining a temporary permit for a hired or borrowed car can also be a problem. Mrs Williams' case seems extraordinary but it is by no means unusual.

It beggars belief that the Council's contractors could genuinely have doubted Mrs Williams' account and it is clear that had any modicum of common sense been used her parking ticket would have been cancelled. After all she was a registered resident of the road with a current permit on a car that was out of action and which was not being used in the CPZ at the time. What possible purpose or public interest was there in fining her for parking inside a

zone that the Council claimed was put in for the benefit of residents? The answer of course is that the Council had absolutely no public interest in pursuing Mrs Williams and this act, along with countless similar ones, reveals the true ambition of the CPZ programme - the extraction of as much money as possible from the personal or private economy to bolster the Council finances that it might maintain its ever more intrusive presence in our lives.

Potential new CPZ residents are often seduced by the thought that the parking schemes will ensure that parking controls in their roads will operate in their interests. For as long as these interests are identical with the Council's some may find the

schemes a convenient solution but from the moment those interests fail to coincide, permit-holders will be left in no doubt whatsoever as to what the CPZ programme is all about.



Gary Shaw, RA's Roads & Traffic Committee chairman

17 Asmuns Place

Dear Sir,  
Barnet Council has been much in the news lately, especially concerning its parking policies. I myself have been involved in a rather lengthy and frustrating parking permit issue, which has left me exhausted and resigned to pay the inflated fine in the end.

It all started when my car had to be taken away for extensive repairs and the garage provided me with a courtesy car for the duration of this work. The exchange took place on 16 June 2014.

As I live in a Controlled Parking Zone I was anxious to find out what I had to do since the courtesy car would be parked outside my home. I rang the Barnet permit office and spoke to a lady who told me to display two notices, clearly visible, inside the vehicle, and let her have the make and registration number of the courtesy car as soon as it arrived. This I did, sending an e-mail to the lady who gave her

name as Szilvia, and also requesting a transfer of my parking permit to the courtesy car.

I acted on the advice given to me, so I was surprised to find a parking ticket on the courtesy car when my own car was delivered back to me on 28 June 2014. Being convinced that there must have been a misunderstanding I wrote a letter on the same day explaining the circumstances and sent the ticket (unopened) back to Barnet together with the two notices which had stayed inside the vehicle all the time.

Nothing happened until the end of July when I received a Penalty Charge Notice from Barnet Parking Services in Sheffield. I was told that no "temporary dispensation permit" had been found and that therefore the charge was correctly issued. For me it became clear that the lady I had spoken to on June 16 had failed to send me the required dispensation notice with the official code and had also failed to put me on the database.

In case the information I had sent her was not sufficient, the Parking Permits team should have informed me of the correct way of transferring a parking permit to a courtesy car and also how to obtain a dispensation code. After all I approached Barnet for advice and had acted on it.

In the following correspondence Barnet remained adamant that the fine was justified, dismissed my explanations and completely ignored the print out of my e-mail as evidence of my innocence. A Notice to Owner arrived in October, which although I didn't know it, was my opportunity to make formal representations. Since I was not the legal owner of the courtesy car I only responded with another letter, enclosing again a print-out of the e-mail.

When I received the Charge Certificate and was threatened with the possibility of having bailiffs sent round to my home, I turned to Citizens Advice Bureau for help. At this stage not much

could be done, although my adviser actually managed to speak to a person at the Barnet Parking office who also happened to know 'Miss Szilvia'. I was advised to request a recording of the conversation I had with her on 16 June. I am still waiting.

As I wanted to make sure that the payment for the charge actually reached its correct destination, I decide to deliver my letter, with the enclosed cheque, personally to the officer my adviser from the CAB had spoken to and would be informed about me. Unfortunately I was told that he was not known at the address he had given on his e-mail. Instead I was put in touch with a lady at the Coventry branch of Barnet Parking Services who informed me that no letters were accepted 'by hand'. Payments should be made either on-line or by cheque sent through the post.

Yours sincerely,  
Hildburg Williams

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- Annual shows featuring flowers, fruit, vegetables, cooking, baking, photography and fancy dress
- Annual plant sale
- Talks/lectures/Question Time
- Suburb in Bloom competition

We offer:

- Reductions at local garden centres
- A quarterly newsletter
- An advice line and 'buddy' scheme

We also provide links with schools, allotment group and community library.

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