



An official statement on the problems created by pavement parking, the role of enforcement agencies and the associated penalties, 22 November 2010

Pavement parking can cause damage, danger and obstruction to road users and pedestrians – and people with disabilities, visual impairments, older residents and those with prams or pushchairs are particularly vulnerable. This sort of parking can damage not only grassed verges and pavements but also the cables and pipes laid underneath, costing hundreds of thousands of pounds to repair each year.

PARKING ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES

A team of Community Wardens is employed by West Oxfordshire District Council to help manage parking both on the street and in council-run free car parks across the district. Community Wardens have powers under the 2004 Traffic Management Act to issue penalty charge notices for contravention of yellow line parking and loading restrictions and certain instances of parking across dropped crossings. Police officers / PCSOs can no longer enforce yellow line restrictions but still retain powers to deal with obstructive parking by issue of a fixed penalty notice.



OBSTRUCTION

Where insufficient room for a pedestrian, wheelchair or pushchair is left between a vehicle and the highway boundary (nominally 0.9m) then a vehicle parked on a pavement would be deemed to be causing an unnecessary obstruction. Elderly, disabled and blind or partially sighted people are also presented with problems when this practice occurs.



ROAD SAFETY

Obstruction can in many cases also lead to road safety issues. Where pedestrians and particularly wheelchair users are forced into the carriageway because the pavement is blocked this can present an immediate danger, particularly on a busy road. Parked vehicles can also obscure visibility and dangerously conceal pedestrians at crossing points. Where, in the opinion of the enforcement officer (Police Officer or PCSO), the vehicle presents an immediate safety hazard to other road users – particularly the disabled and other vulnerable pedestrians – an immediate removal notice can be served. A Police Officer / PCSO would issue a £30 fixed penalty notice in similar circumstances.

DAMAGE TO FOOTWAYS & VERGES

Continual parking on pavements and verges causes problems for maintenance vehicles (grass cutting, sweeping etc) as well as leading to unsightly damage. It can also detract from the environmental quality of the neighbourhood.

