



Department  
for Transport

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Web Site: [www.gov.uk/dft](http://www.gov.uk/dft)  
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XXXXX 2019

Dear \_\_\_\_\_

## **Parking Charges on Railway Land**

The Department has received feedback from Transport Focus and members of the public who have expressed concern about some of the practices employed by certain operators of railway station car parks (“Parking Operators”). We are of the view that there are clear areas for improvement in terms of the signage and notices which Parking Operators use. I have set out below some steps that I recommend you take to provide car park users (referred to as “Customers” in this letter) with clear and accurate information.

If you have subcontracted the operation of your railway station car parks to a third party, then I ask that you draw this letter to the attention of your subcontractor(s). Ultimately it is in all parties’ interests to ensure that parking restrictions are transparent, fair and enforceable.

Please take note of the following best practice recommendations:

1. Parking Operators should place clear and visible signs in railway station car parks so that Customers are aware of the rules, tariffs and terms and conditions which apply.
2. A Parking Operator should clearly state the basis on which a parking charge is made where it issues a Customer with a parking charge notice. The relevant terms of the parking contract should be referenced in that notice. Confusion may arise if a Parking Operator suggests that a parking charge is made pursuant to the Railway Byelaws, when in fact it is made under the terms of the parking contract. It would be undesirable if a culture were to develop in which Parking Operators threaten

Customers with prosecution under the Byelaws purely to pressure them into paying parking charges.

NB: We recommend that Parking Operators do not use the term “penalty charge notice” when making a charge under the terms of a parking contract. A “penalty charge notice” is the legal term for a ticket issued by a local authority in exercise of its civil enforcement powers under the regime established by the Traffic Management Act 2004. Using this term in the context of a railway station car park has the potential to mislead a Customer as to the basis on which a parking charge is made.

3. The parking charge notice documentation should alert the Customer to the fact that they have access to an internal appeal with the Parking Operator and an independent appeals service, in accordance with the terms of the parking contract.
4. A Parking Operator should take a proportionate approach to parking management. Our assumption is that resorting to prosecution under the Railway Byelaws would normally be reserved for serious or repeat offences.

I should be grateful if you would confirm in writing to: [Jeur.rahman@dft.gov.uk](mailto:Jeur.rahman@dft.gov.uk), by no later than **30 April 2019**, that:

- the above recommendations have been implemented in respect of the operation of your railway station car parks; and
- you have put in place arrangements to review, on a periodic basis, your adherence (or, where appropriate, the adherence of your subcontractor(s)) to the above recommendations.

I am copying this letter to the Rail Delivery Group, the British Parking Association, the International Parking Community, Transport Focus and London TravelWatch.

Yours sincerely

**Fiona Walshe**  
Deputy Director – Passenger Experience Policy