

EIR Request (received 24 August 2023) - Reference: DFI/2023-0319

I would like to make a request for information under the Freedom of Information Act.

I would like to receive information on the number of fines issued in the Belfast area this year (January 1 to August 24, 2023) for parking in disabled parking spaces without displaying a blue badge, including the money collected from these fines during this time period.

If I could also get this information broken down into the general areas where fines were issued (North Belfast, West Belfast) that would be great.

Response (issued 08 September 2023)

Thank you for your emails of 24 August 2023 requesting information on Penalty Charge Notices (PCNs) issued in Belfast between 01 January 2023 and 24 August 2023, for parking in disabled parking spaces without displaying a blue badge and the money collected from these fines during this time period.

In considering your request on behalf of the Department, I have determined that the information requested falls under the aegis of the Environmental Information Regulations 2004 (EIR), as opposed to Freedom of Information Act 2000. Your request is for information that relates to activities, policies or plans that affect the environment. Section 39 of the Freedom of Information Act specifically excludes from consideration under that Act requests for what is deemed to be environmental information.

A guide explaining the Environmental Information Regulations can be found at:

<https://ico.org.uk/for-organisations/foi-eir-and-access-to-information/guide-to-the-environmental-information-regulations/>.

The Environmental Information Regulations established general public rights of access to environmental information held by public authorities, similar to the general rights established under FOI. There is no provision for privileged access to information, it may either be released to the World at large, or it must be withheld. Any information provided in response to an information request (either FOI or EIR) is considered to have been placed in the public domain.

By way of context the Department for Infrastructure (DfI) is responsible for the enforcement of most on-street parking restrictions and three Park and Ride charged car parks in Northern Ireland. The Department is also responsible for enforcement in off-street car parks, on behalf of 8 Local Councils.

The table below provides details of On-Street PCNs issued in Belfast Council area between 01 January 2023 and 24 August 2023, for parking in disabled parking spaces without displaying a blue badge:

On-Street Parking PCNs Issued	
Location	Total
Andersonstown Road (West Slip Road)	1
Bedford Street	8
Belmont Road	9
Berry Street	16
Botanic Avenue	5
Bradbury Place	2
Bridge Street	15
Castle Place	8
Chichester Street	41
College Square East	13
College Street	59
Donegall Pass	6
Donegall Quay	13
Donegall Square North	24
Dunluce Avenue	3
Eblana Street	3
Eglantine Avenue	8
Elmwood Avenue	11
Galway Park (Dundonald)	1
Glengall Street	21
Great Victoria Street	48
Gresham Street	20
High Street	32
Hillview Avenue	1
Larkfield Gardens	1
North Street	79
Old Bakers Court	2
Park Avenue	1
Pretoria Street	4
Queen Street	9
Ridgeway Street	1
Royal Avenue	1
Samuel Street	1
Sandhurst Drive	1
Sandhurst Gardens	24
Slieve Gallion Drive	1
Smithfield Square North	18
Strandview Street	1
Stranmillis Gardens	2

On-Street Parking PCNs Issued	
Location	Total
Stranmillis Road	7
Ulsterville Avenue	19
University Road	1
University Street	8
Upper Arthur Street	16
Upper Queen Street	52
Wellington Park	1
Wellington Place	256
Winetavern Street	8

The table below provides details of Off-Street PCNs issued in Belfast Council area between 01 January 2023 and 24 August 2023, for parking in disabled parking spaces without displaying a blue badge:

Off-Street Parking PCNs Issued	
Location	Total
Ashdale Street (CP)	9
Charlotte Street (CP)	254
Corporation Square (CP)	301
Corporation Street (CP)	203
Cromac Street (CP)	170
Dunbar Street (CP)	214
Eastside Park & Ride (CP)	1
Exchange Street (CP)	193
Hope Street North (CP)	138
Kent Street (CP)	119
Lancaster Street (CP)	343
Little Donegall Street (CP)	239
Little Victoria Street (CP)	314
Marlborough Avenue (CP)	99
Northside Park & Ride (CP)	2
Smithfield (CP)	170
Station Street (CP)	252

Unfortunately the Department's finance system does not categorise PCN revenue by offence type, so I am unable to provide an answer to the part of your question relating to monies collected from these specific fines.

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