

Thanet District
Council

Parking Policy 2015-2020

Draft 1.02



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1.	Introduction
	<p>Thanet District Parking Policy provides the framework for effective parking management, which primarily supports the council's strategic objectives as outlined in the corporate plan and links in with the Thanet Transport Strategy, Local Plan, Regeneration Strategy and the Destination Management Plan. It is important that we have a consistent approach across the whole of the district which is not the case at the moment.</p> <p>Parking is an issue of significant concern for local residents. Councillors and members of the public often raise concerns about resident parking, inconsistency, obstructions and parking contraventions. Issues are often inextricably linked and the remit of this parking policy is broad, acknowledging the complex and challenging connections between parking and environmental, economic and regeneration issues.</p> <p>Today's level of car ownership is extremely problematic for town centres. Unrestricted parking will lead to congestion, obstructions, pollution and spaces being occupied by the wrong users at inappropriate times. It is important to remember that in reality there is no such thing as free parking someone, somewhere is paying for it to be provided, serviced and maintained. If parking is free or cheap, people may stay longer, reducing parking availability, and thereby deterring other shoppers from visiting that town centre.</p> <p>Evidence shows that drivers place a higher priority on parking availability than on parking price, although price is an important tool, both ensuring availability and in reducing the amount of 'searching' traffic. Searching traffic creates congestion as well as pollution and benefits nobody.</p> <p>Many people fear that making changes to the way parking is managed will adversely affect the town's economy. There is little evidence of such a relationship one way or the other. However, the limited evidence which does exist suggest that it is an area's broader retail, commercial, leisure or tourism offer which is the primary factor affecting a town's competitiveness, not the provision of parking. So, if a town has a good retail offer, it will continue to attract customers, despite having poor parking facilities, in contrast, a town with very good parking facilities, but a limited retail offer, will struggle to attract customers. However, all things being equal, parking will clearly have an effect.</p> <p>Town centre tariffs should be set to encourage shoppers and deter all-day parkers where demand exceeds supply. Keeping traffic moving and parking spaces turning over is essential for the economy, so effective parking restrictions and enforcement is an essential ingredient of the policy. Regulating parking is essential to keep traffic flowing, pedestrians and motorists safe, roads clear for emergency services and business deliveries, and ensuring people can park near their homes or local shops. There should be a mixture of both longer and short term parking to satisfy the drivers' need.</p> <p>Management of parking can have a positive impact by enabling more productive use of spaces making towns more attractive to visitors, thereby improving their economic viability.</p>

	<p>In particular this policy aims to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure the safety of all roads users by restricting parking in inappropriate locations. • Be fair in setting fees and charges that are related to supply and demand, encouraging use of parking spaces and incentivising people to come into town centres and other attractions, and have a consistent approach across the district. • Support the viability of Thanet's economy and regeneration initiatives that form part of this. • Provide a clear policy for enforcement which will allow the council to deal with parking issues fairly and consistently, ensuring an efficient and effective enforcement function. • Ensure the appropriate control of residents' parking, especially where this is affected by other parking demands. • Seek to ensure that the provision, location and safety of public car parks are of a good quality • Provide a consistent and clear approach for different types of parking permits. • Seek to ensure a clear approach towards parking for disabled persons including dealing with misuse of the blue badge scheme. • Consider parking's contribution to environmental agendas. • Ensure that the policies and services are transparent and provided consistently throughout the district. • Ensure that the council meets its statutory obligations.
2.	Influencing factors for parking in Thanet
	<p>Thanet is a great place to live, work and visit, surrounded by what are amongst the best beaches in England. Whilst it is a relatively small area, there is a lot on offer. Each of the three main towns has its own unique identity: Ramsgate with its stunning Royal Harbour and historic buildings; Margate with its sweeping sands and creative culture centring around the Turner Contemporary; and Broadstairs with its picturesque beach and strong cultural heritage as demonstrated by the internationally renowned Folk Week and the town's celebrated links to Dickens.</p> <p>But it is not just the main towns that make Thanet an attractive place to be. The historic villages of the central island such as Minster and St Nicholas at Wade and the variety of coastal communities such as those at Birchington, Westgate and Cliffsend all have their own unique charm.</p> <p>We do recognise that not everything is as good as it could be. Like many</p>

coastal areas, parts of Thanet have struggled to cope with the decline of the tourism sector in the 1970s and the social conditions which have resulted in the location of vulnerable families in Thanet, particularly in Cliftonville and Margate. Consequently parts of Thanet are suffering from high unemployment, fear of crime and poor health.

Thanet's population is currently 132,300 having risen steadily from 126,702, as measured in the 2001 census. Thanet has the second highest population density of Kent districts, second only to Dartford.

Table 1

Car Ownership Levels	Thanet	
	value	%
All categories: Car or van availability	59,513	100.0
No cars or vans in household	17,710	29.8
1 car or van in household	26,323	44.2
2 cars or vans in household	12,043	20.2
3 cars or vans in household	2,541	4.3
4 or more cars or vans in household	896	1.5

Source: Census 2011

The proportion of older people in the community is increasing. 21.9% of Thanet residents are 65 and over (2011 census) compared to 18.72% across Kent.

This rate is expected to rise to a total of 28% by 2026.

These residents are more likely to be dependent on public or community transport to access services, especially health care.

The total number of journeys that individual people make has increased very little over the last 50 years. However, more of these journeys are now made by car, with 55.8% of work journeys in Thanet (2011 census) now being by car.

Table 2

Method of Travel to Work	Thanet	
	value	%
All categories: Method of travel to work	94,452	100.0
Work mainly at or from home	2,940	3.1
Underground, metro, light rail, tram	102	0.0
Train	2,168	2.4
Bus, minibus or coach	3,502	3.7
Taxi	364	0.4
Motorcycle, scooter or moped	575	0.6
Driving a car or van	33,109	35.1
Passenger in a car or van	3,793	4.0

Bicycle	1,395	1.5
On foot	6,890	7.3
Other method of travel to work	362	0.4
Not in employment	39,252	41.6

In 2010 local police and council officers conducted a blackberry engagement survey on 6,600 local residents. 57% of all people surveyed identified issues that they felt the police and council should address, while 43% felt they had no issues. Of the 57%, parking was highlighted as the second highest area of concern for residents. (Table 3)

Table 3

Issues Police and Council should address	
Anti-social behaviour	17%
Parking	9%
Speeding	8%
Litter and Fly tipping	5%
Environmental issues, e.g. fouling, littering	4%
'Other' issues	4%
Damage and Graffiti	3%
Crime	3%
Vehicle related nuisance	3%
Police attendance	1%

It is estimated that around 524,000 overnight tourism trips were made to Thanet in 2011. Of these trips, domestic visitors made 83% of trips (433,000) and overseas visitors made 17% of trips (91,000). Compared to 2009, the volume of domestic overnight trips was unchanged, and the volume of inbound overnight trips increased by 3%.

Thanet attracted 2.6 million day trips, up 3 per cent compared with 2009 and day trip expenditure increased by 5 per cent rising from £82,311 million in 2009 to £86.204 million in 2011. The total value of tourism activity in Thanet in 2011 is estimated to have been around £230 million, which is up 6% compared to 2009 and supports 5,477 jobs.

Although Thanet has benefited from reduced journey times from London with High Speed rail services many of its visitors travel by car. Thanet has a large number of tourists as visiting friends and family and these visitors are also more likely to travel by car.

Of the 152,756 visitors to Turner Contemporary Summer 2014 exhibition 57% of their visitors traveled by car. Of the complaints that Turner Contemporary receives 42% are about parking. (Taken from Turner Contemporary Summer 2014 Exist Survey).

The newly opened Dreamland car park was nearly full during the summer period of 2014 this was without the Park being opened for business.

3.	Parking Provision in Thanet
3.1	Introduction

	<p>This parking policy sets out a comprehensive approach to managing on street and off street parking, provision, control and enforcement. This is in line with legislation and guidance from the Government in the form of the Acts shown in section 8:</p>
3.2	<p>Car Parking Provision</p> <p>Overall parking provision (On Street and Off Street) There are 2,046 streets in the District, comprising of approximately 400 miles of highway (52 miles of which is yellow lined). There are also:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 623 on-street pay and display bays serviced by 62 pay and display machines; • 6 residents parking schemes with shared limited parking providing 778 spaces; • 26 surface car parks (5 of which are free) serviced by 33 pay and display machines providing 2,818 spaces; • 2 multi-storey car parks (MSCPs) serviced by 9 pay and display machines providing a total of 829 spaces; • 283 time limited parking areas across the district. <p>The distribution of bays is not consistent across the district, some locations have only free parking, some have time limited parking, some have pay and display and some areas have a mixture of both. The council should look at making where ever possible the time limited bays into pay and display or shared use bays with a residents parking scheme. This will help with enforcement and give residents more available parking.</p>
3.3	<p>Disability Provision</p> <p>This is a national arrangement of parking concessions for people with mobility issues who travel as drivers or passengers. The scheme allows badge holders to park close to their destination but the national concessions apply to on-street parking only.</p> <p>A large number of disabled people rely on their own vehicles as their principle mode of transport. Their journeys are often dependant on how close they can park to their destination. It is therefore imperative that parking facilities are provided for disabled persons which are located close to shops, residential and business areas as well as other key public sites e.g. beaches, sea fronts and tourist attractions.</p> <p>Disabled blue badge holders are allowed to park free of charge and without any time constraints in all TDC run off street and on street pay and display areas. Blue badge holders are also allowed to park without time limits in all of the resident's bays and time limited bays. In line with the stipulations of the blue badge guidance badge holders are also allowed to park for 3 hours on single or double yellow lines.</p> <p>The Council has numerous on-street parking bays designated for use by disabled drivers across all of Thanet's towns. Locations such as Albert Terrace in Margate, Albion Street and Victoria Parade in Broadstairs, and Harbour Street and Marine Esplanade in Ramsgate provide parking in close proximity to the sea fronts and town centres.</p>

	<p>27 of our 33 car parks have disabled bays located at convenient and accessible areas of the car park and blue badge holders can use these bays free of charge for an unlimited period.</p> <p>Some councils across the country allow disabled blue badge holders to park within the disabled bays for a maximum period of 3 hours only with no return for 1 hour and within the normal parking bays at the normal charge.</p> <p>Disabled bays in residential streets can be applied for where parking is causing serious access problems to the property. See our web site for information on how to apply for a bay.</p>
3.4	<p>Motorcycle Provision</p> <p>Motorcycle bays are located in some of our off street car parks and we are currently exploring the option of adding extra bays to all of our off street car parks. Users are able to use the allocated bays off street bays where available or any other parking bay if not.</p> <p>Motorcycles can be parked free of charge in off street car parks but when using on street areas motorcycle users need to purchase pay and display tickets. The council should charge for motorcycles parking both on and off street to make it more consistent across the district.</p>
3.5	<p>Coach Provision</p> <p>Coach parking is located in the following areas –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vere Road car park Broadstairs 11 spaces (re-opening in 2015). • Joss Bay Car Park Broadstairs 20 spaces. • Palm Bay Coach Park Margate 12 spaces. • Dreamland Car Park Margate 20 spaces. • Lido Car Park Margate 7 spaces. (Private – not owned by TDC and the future of this site is unknown due to potential development). • Minnis Bay Birchington 10 spaces • Ramsgate Port 30 spaces (informal car parking that is required to be pre-booked by operator. Offer dependent on any possible redevelopment of the Port). <p>Working with the tourism department is very important in getting information out to all the different coach companies, groups and societies about the parking that is available across the district.</p> <p>Bays are marked out in specific car parks. Demand can vary hugely during the summer months and with the reduction of spaces at Vere Road car park providing facilities in one location to deal with the peak demand is not feasible.</p> <p>Coaches can park on the highway but this is often inconvenient and irritating for the residents. For revisiting coach drivers they tend to be aware of where they might be able to park, for new drivers to the area they are less likely to</p>

	<p>want to park on the highway.</p> <p>A ban on coach parking is already in place along the eastern and western esplanades in Broadstairs every day between the hours of 6am and 6pm. The council will assess other areas that could benefit from this type of ban but this has to be managed and is not always a practical solution. Signage is important and where possible signs will be placed on the highway directing coaches to locations that are suitable for larger vehicles to park.</p> <p>Providing a coach only car park can be costly not only in the construction of the car park but with the on-going costs of the operation. However, there are examples of resorts and town centres who are trying to encourage visitors travelling by coaches by investing in quality coach parking.</p> <p>Subject to funding the council will explore ways to improve its existing facilities at Palm Bay or look at alternative locations like Barnes Car Park before investing in new locations for coach parking. Facilities at existing sites could include upgrading access roads, rest rooms and security.</p>
3.6	<p>HGV Provision</p> <p>HGV parking is located at Ramsgate Port where 50 spaces are available. Retention of the parking is subject to future developments at the Port, but the Parking Plan is not currently planning to provide alternative sites.</p>
3.7	<p>Multi-Story Car Parks</p> <p>TDC operate 2 multi storey car parks:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mill Lane Margate - 384 Spaces + 17 Disabled + 4 Parent and Child Bays • Leopold Street Ramsgate - 394 Spaces + 22 DISABLED+ 2 Parent and Child Bays • Mill Lane is currently open 7 days a week from 07:00 to 19:00 hours and barriers close the car park to minimise anti-social behaviour during low usage times. • Leopold Street is open 7 days a week 24 hours a day on the ground floor, however the upper floors are closed during the night to minimise anti-social behaviour and vandalism. To increase the number of bays available overnight the disabled bays become dual use bays between the hours of 18.00 to 09.00 hours every day.
3.8	<p>Electric Vehicle Charging Points</p> <p>The Council supports improvements to vehicle technology and emission reduction and will actively pursue possibly options in the future. For example we are now supporting electric vehicle charging bays at two town centre car parks: 2 in Leopold Street car park Ramsgate and 2 in Mill Lane car park Margate. The electric charging is free but the occupation of the space is charged as per the tariff with a maximum stay of 3 hours within the charging bay.</p>

	If demand of the current charging points increases then the council will look at increasing the number of charging points within the district's car parks with external funding if available.												
4.	Current Performance												
4.1	Income Income from the off street parking goes back into the general council fund and provides a significant contribution to the front line services that the council provides. Revenue from parking also supports in house services like CCTV and the minor works team. Income from the on street parking is used to run the service and any surplus from on street parking is ring fenced for further on street investment. The council will also look at alternative ways of using its off street car parks and additional ways of increasing income from the car parks for example by holding events, leasing parts of the car park out to private enterprise for car washing or advertising etc.												
4.2	Usage Parking transaction data for our car parks is collated from the different payment hardware systems each month. This allows us to see the amount of vehicles that are using our car parks every day of the week, time of day and the duration of their stay. The following table provided annual usage figures for the last three years: <table><tr><td>Year</td><td>On-Street</td><td>Off-Street</td></tr><tr><td>2011-2012</td><td>619,767</td><td>741,348</td></tr><tr><td>2012-2013</td><td>436,692</td><td>634,709</td></tr><tr><td>2013-2014</td><td>497,614</td><td>509,036</td></tr></table>	Year	On-Street	Off-Street	2011-2012	619,767	741,348	2012-2013	436,692	634,709	2013-2014	497,614	509,036
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4.3	Off Street Parking Currently there are 33 off street car parks which are made up of free and pay and display bays with a total of 4,270 parking spaces. The popularity of these car parks varies depending on location. Full details can be found on our website using the following link: http://thanet.gov.uk/your-services/parking/parking-charges/fees-and-charges-car-parks/ The management of off-street car parks is regulated through the Thanet District Council Off-Street Parking Places Order 2003 as amended in 2010 and 2011. For any fundamental changes to the way off-street car parks are managed, the order would need to be amended or revised. The council annually review the order and assess the viability of any additional off street parking sites. Parking charges are reviewed annually. The level of charges for off-street parking should encourage and incentivise their use over on-street bays which in turn, will help to reduce congestion and improve turnover of visitors to an												

	<p>area.</p> <p>Parking charges are currently collected in three ways. The primary method used is ticket machine allowing payment by cash only. An alternative payment method is one which allows payment by debit/credit card via a mobile phone. A variety of season discs can also be purchased in advance which allows parking within selected car parks.</p> <p>The security of users is clearly important if drivers are to be encouraged to use off-street car parks. People need to feel secure when entering or leaving a car park on foot and confident that their vehicle is parked in a safe place. In addition the requirements of appropriate legislation, for example the Disability Discrimination Act, needed to be met, by ensuring all car parks have adequate disabled bays and access. Some of the council's car parks have CCTV and all have regular enforcement by the council's officers.</p> <p>Signage is important and the council will look at ways of improving the signage to the car parks across the district and informing drivers of the locations of its other car parks.</p> <p>It has been highlighted in the Beach Management Plan that Motorhome parking should be explored particularly around the coast and is a possible income stream, clearly this does come with a need to provide services. But the levels of services do vary.</p> <p>New pay and display parking locations will be investigated across the district on land already owned by the council as this would raise revenue to help support the much needed front line services that the council provides.</p> <p>Consideration will be given to the disposal of car parks. This needs to be clearly thought through as it could have an effect on the parking behaviour for a wider area. Section 12 includes sites currently under consideration for disposal.</p>
4.4	<p>On-Street Parking</p> <p>Thanet Council have an agency agreement with Kent County Council to administer and enforce parking restrictions and on-street parking on their behalf.</p> <p>The availability of parking space, especially on-street around the district is limited and there will be an increasing pressure as car ownership grows. It is therefore essential to manage the various parking demands across the district, providing a balanced parking offer of short stay (on-street), long stay (off street) and free parking.</p> <p>Currently there are 631 on-street pay and display areas available across the district: Full details can be found on our website using the following link:</p> <p>http://thanet.gov.uk/your-services/parking/parking-charges/fees-and-charges-os/</p> <p>Charges for pay and display are higher than off-street charges to ensure that the limited spaces are used by those who need them most and to encourage a higher turnover of spaces. In addition charges can help to reduce cruising by drivers trying to find available spaces. It is clear that the Council's policy is to encourage people to park in long stay car parks to ease congestion.</p>

	<p>The current on-street pay and display charges and time allowed are varied to reflect local circumstances in terms of local parking demand and turnover of spaces. Parking charges are currently collected in two ways by pay and display and via mobile phone.</p> <p>There are six residents' schemes across the district, two in Margate, one in Birchington, one in Ramsgate and two in Broadstairs. The schemes are set up to allow residents that have a valid permit to be able to use the time limited or pay and display bays within selected streets with no restrictions.</p> <p>The council should investigate looking at further residents' schemes across the district for more consistency as there are areas across the district such as the old town Margate, Westbrook, Westgate and areas of Ramsgate and Broadstairs that suffer with a high demand of long term parking without any restrictions at all. Time limited bays across the district could also be made more effective by changing them to pay and display bays or shared residents' bays which would encourage a better turnover of vehicles.</p> <p>A ban on caravan/ camper van parking is already in place along the eastern and western esplanades in Broadstairs every day between the hours of 6am and 6pm. The council will look at other areas that could benefit from this type of ban but this has to be managed and is not always a practical solution as it just displaces vehicles to another location. It has been highlighted in the Beach Management Plan that Motorhome parking should be explored particularly around the coast and is a possible income stream, clearly this does come with a need to provide services. But the levels of services do vary. Signage is important and where possible signs will be placed on the highway directing them to locations that are more suitable for this type of vehicle.</p> <p>Anti-social parking across the district such as pavement parking is a problem at some locations. However if this parking was to be taken away with no solution then residents will find it even more difficult to find somewhere to park. In future the council will work with residents to find a possible solution in problem areas that it is made aware off.</p> <p>Park and ride is an alternative solution however unlike most towns that have a scheme Thanet is unique by having four town areas that have a greater visitor demand during the summer months only. Most schemes offer drivers an easier way to leave their vehicle at an out of town location and then use a quick service to travel in to town without delays. Thanet does not have a central point that could be used for all towns that would give drivers the same opportunity.</p> <p>A large amount of investment would be required for such a scheme not only for the land but for the on-going operating costs. It may be possible with partners to look at a scheme for the summer period only covering the towns that get traffic congestion.</p>
4.5	<p>Types of Permits</p> <p>Off street permits are available to park within our off street car parks ranging from parking within all of our car parks to a few selected car parks. Resident's permits allow users to be able to park within the time limited or selected pay and display bays with no limit.</p> <p>Full details of all permits can be found on our website using the following link:</p>

	http://thanet.gov.uk/your-services/parking/season-parking-permits/car-park-permits/
4.6	<p>Cashless parking</p> <p>Thanet Council offers 'cashless' parking in its on and off street parking bays. This convenient system allows motorists to pay for parking easily using a mobile phone and also includes options to extend the parking time up to the maximum stay.</p> <p>The first time you use the 'cashless' system you will need to register your vehicle and payment card details. You will also need the location number that is located on signs on or near the pay and display machine.</p> <p>Full details of cashless parking can be found on our website using the following link:</p> <p>http://thanet.gov.uk/your-services/parking/pay-to-park-by-phone/pay-by-phone/</p>
4.7	<p>Pay and Display</p> <p>Pay and display machines have been the main parking payment system in Thanet for 30 plus years until 2011 when the option of cashless parking system was first introduced.</p> <p>All of our charges start off with an initial 1 hour charge (off street) or a 10 minute charge (on-street) and then linear charges up to the maximum stay, which gives users the specific time they have purchased.</p>
4.8	<p>Tariff Reviews</p> <p>Parking tariffs are reviewed annually to ensure our revenue keeps pace with our costs. When setting levels we also look at those of our neighbouring town centres and other comparable towns to help us get the right balance to ensure both a quality service and buoyant economy can be maintained.</p> <p>Over the last two years we have been able to maintain the tariffs at the same level even though the costs to maintain those car parks increased.</p> <p>When looking at neighbouring towns we also looked at stand-alone retail developments such as Westwood Cross where parking is free to the customer because the cost is absorbed within the rents paid by the businesses operating there and very often reflected in the price the customer pays for their goods.</p> <p>Full details of our parking charges can be found on our website using the following link:</p> <p>http://thanet.gov.uk/your-services/parking/parking-charges/fees-and-charges-car-parks/</p>
5.	Consultation Feedback
5.1	<p>Conclusion</p> <p>A public consultation was held in 2013 involving more than 700 local people,</p>

	<p>business and visitors.</p> <p>This consultation was not just about parking charges, it also sought our customers' views on car parks, the signage in place, the number of spaces available and where people actually wanted to park.</p> <p>Feedback revealed that car parking charges were the biggest priority for people when deciding where to park and where to shop, with the availability of parking and the range of shops on offer.</p> <p>When asked for their top priority when choosing where to park, the top three responses were that charges are reasonable (51%), it is close to where they are going (35%) and that it is easy to find a parking space (26%).</p> <p>Top priorities for people when choosing where to shop were free parking (45%), the availability of parking (33%) and the overall range of shops available (22%).</p> <p>When asked what they would like the council to focus on, the top priority for most respondents (37%) was the free flow of traffic – ensuring all restrictions are monitored to help with the free flow of traffic and to ease congestion.</p> <p>In terms of the income raised, most people (68%) felt that surplus income raised from parking charges should be used to improve the parking service, (62%) would like income to be used to improve roads and road safety.</p> <p>Following the consultation the proposals below from Cabinet and fully agreed by full council in March 2014 have taken place:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Almost all of the car parking charges have been frozen for 2014/15 and 2015/16. • Free Saturday parking schemes have continued. • Changed all off street car park charges to a linear system • Reduced the charging period on street from 7pm to 6pm. • Closing of Mill Lane multi-storey and the partial closure of Leopold Street multi-storey car parks from 7pm to 7am every day. • Bought the hourly on street charge at Lawn Road, Broadstairs in line with the other on street charges. <p>In addition, the scheme in Albion Road car park in Birchington has continued, but with a 10p charge for the first 30 minutes of parking to prevent the anti-social use of the existing free ticket scheme.</p>
6.	Partnership Working
6.1	<p>Parking Liaison Group</p> <p>This internal group is set up to help consider all involved departments and takes their needs into account. This group is made up of members from the following departments and areas, waste and recycling, tourism, planning, economic development, Kent county council highways team. The group works together in developing schemes, helping with planning and transportation issues and taking the service forward.</p>

6.2	<p>Kent District Engineers</p> <p>Members meet quarterly and endeavour to improve new restriction processes for the highways to engage with the Department of Transport on law and signing processes.</p>
6.3	<p>South East Parking Managers and Operation Group</p> <p>In an endeavour to improve operations and service across the south east, parking managers and operational staff meet 3 times a year. They work together so that there is consistency of process as well as clarity and transparency for users across the district involved. Councils will work together to help set policy and operational guidelines. This approach will result in greater public understanding of and confidence in the enforcement processes across the districts.</p>
6.4	<p>British Parking Association</p> <p>Are the largest professional association in Europe and are considered the recognised authority on parking. They represent, promote and influence the best interests of the parking and traffic management professions throughout the UK and Europe. The BPA holds regional and national meetings at which all members are welcome.</p>
6.5	<p>Traffic Penalty Tribunal</p> <p>The Traffic Penalty Tribunal is the final stage of appeal for motorists or vehicle owners against a penalty issued by a council in England (outside London) and Wales.</p> <p>The Traffic Penalty Tribunal decides appeals against parking and bus lane penalties issued by Civil Enforcement Authorities in England (outside London) and Wales and against moving traffic penalties issued by Civil Enforcement Authorities in Wales.</p>
6.6	<p>Emergency Services</p> <p>Thanet Council along with Kent County Council meet with all emergency services and other bodies to discuss traffic related problems that have been suggested by members of the public, councillors, traders, visitors, emergency services and other bodies when any new restrictions or schemes are in their early stages of planning.</p>
6.7	<p>Kent County Council</p> <p>Kent County Council is the highway authority for the district. TDC work in partnership with KCC on all parking related matters.</p>
7.	<p>Charging Policy</p>

7.1	<p>Short Stay Car Parks</p> <p>We have a small number of short stay car parks within the district which allows users to have access to car parks located near to the town centres. The car parks have a maximum stay of 3 hours at a higher charge than the longer stay car parks which allows a higher turnover of vehicles than longer stay car parks. Giving visitors and residents the opportunity to park close to the amenities for a short period of time. It is important that we keep prices within these car parks consistent across the district.</p>
7.2	<p>Long Stay Car Parks</p> <p>The majority of our off street car parks are long stay, some being close to the town centres and others being further afield. The charge within the car park depends on its proximity to amenities. Car parks located near beaches, town centres and attractions are higher than those car parks that are further away. This gives visitors, residents and workers the opportunity to park for long periods of time at a fair rate. It is important that we keep prices within these car parks consistent across the district and that we take usage of these car parks into consideration when setting the charges.</p>
7.3	<p>Seasonal Charging</p> <p>Higher charges are set in some car parks during the summer months with some long stay and seasonal car parks located near the beach and attractions. These long stay car parks are then adjusted back to cheaper charges during the winter months. A few car parks are open all year round but are only charged during the summer months.</p>
7.4	<p>Charging Periods</p> <p>On street charging periods are between the hours of 9am and 6pm every day including bank holidays.</p> <p>Off street charging periods are between the hours of 7am and 10pm every day including bank holidays.</p> <p>The council can waive charges at certain times of the year for events which can help the economy. However, this could have a negative effect by having a reduction in the turnover of vehicles.</p> <p>Charging on a Sunday is enforced both on and off street to encourage shoppers and deter all-day parkers. Keeping traffic moving and parking spaces turning over is essential for the economy.</p>
7.5	<p>Waivers and Dispensations</p> <p>A waiver authorises a vehicle to be able to temporarily park in an agreed location in contravention of a Traffic Regulation Order. It does not grant exemption from any other traffic order.</p>

	<p>An application form has to be completed, and is assessed by the parking officer before it can be issued.</p> <p>There is a weekly charge for this waiver and is mainly purchased by building companies doing work on properties where parking is impractical.</p> <p>A dispensation authorises a vehicle to be able to temporarily park in contravention of a Traffic Regulation Order. It does not grant exemption from any other traffic order. The dispensation allows parking on a single or double yellow line (not pay and display, loading/taxi bays, bus clearways or kerb markings). The permit allows a maximum stay of 2 hours in a street with no return for 24 hours.</p> <p>An application form has to be completed, and is assessed by the parking officer before it can be issued.</p> <p>The dispensation is not for use as a residential parking permit near their home or place of work. It can only be used when the vehicle is being used for commercial or business purposes other than at home or work. There is an annual charge for businesses and the NHS and free of charge for charities.</p>
7.6	<p>Suspension Of Parking Bays</p> <p>Suspension of parking bays can be applied through parking services by anyone that is holding an event or may want to use a parking bay for a particular reason such as placing a skip or to park a removal vehicle etc.</p> <p>The council is permitted to temporarily suspend parking places including residents and other permit bays. The suspension does not permanently remove the legal status of the parking place. The effect of the suspension is to remove it from use during the prescribed suspension period.</p>
7.7	<p>Permits and Season Discs</p> <p>Parking permits are available for residents that live in a road that is within a zone. The permit will cover time limited parking bays and some pay and display areas depending on the location of the zone. All other restrictions apply. Residents and businesses can purchase a permit but must supply proof of residency and vehicle ownership which ties them to the property or business within a zone.</p> <p>Permits can be purchased on an annual basis and are pro-rata quarterly over the year. Refunds can also be made when the permit is returned on any full unexpired months.</p> <p>Season discs are available for parking in all of the off street council car parks. A disc can be purchased on an annual, six month or monthly basis.</p> <p>Full details on the types of discs that are available can be found on the web site on the following link:</p> <p>http://thanet.gov.uk/your-services/parking/</p>

8.	Legislation
8.1	<p data-bbox="432 264 655 293">Individual Laws</p> <p data-bbox="432 327 1046 356">Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 (RTRA 84)</p> <p data-bbox="432 389 1441 658">The RTRA 84 enables authorities to make Traffic Regulation Orders (TROs) to restrict, regulate and control traffic including parking, both on and off street. Section 122 of the act places a duty on local authorities to exercise their functions under the Act so as to secure the expeditious, convenient and safe movement of traffic, so far as practicable having regard to matters such as amenity and need for access to premises. The Act also requires local authorities to keep account of income and expenditure from on-street parking places and the collection of additional parking charges.</p> <p data-bbox="432 692 927 721">The Road Traffic Act 1991 (RTA 91)</p> <p data-bbox="432 754 1441 887">The RTA 91 brought in the Decriminalisation of Parking Offences which made a number of changes to traffic law and enabled local authorities to take responsibility in respect of parking offences and enforcement. The act allowed local authorities to carry out enforcement rather than the Police.</p> <p data-bbox="432 920 1398 1021">Thanet District Council applied to the Secretary of State for permission for powers provided to Local Authorities under the Road Traffic Act 1991 in 1999. Thanet was designated a Special Parking Area in 2000.</p> <p data-bbox="432 1055 1310 1084">The Traffic Signs Regulations and General Directions Act 2002</p> <p data-bbox="432 1117 1394 1184">This legislation set out how lines and signs should appear on the highway and could only be amended by approval of The Secretary of State.</p> <p data-bbox="432 1218 935 1247">Traffic Management Act (TMA) 2004</p> <p data-bbox="432 1281 1414 1382">The TMA 04 has been set out in seven parts with the different parts coming into force at different times. It sets out additional powers and requirements for Local Authorities regarding Parking and Enforcement.</p> <p data-bbox="432 1415 1433 1583">Part 6 came into force from 31st March 2008 and increased the scope for local authorities to enforce traffic contraventions and replaces Part II and Schedule 3 of the Road Traffic Act 1991. It includes powers to tackle double parking and parking at dropped footways as well as the enforcement of bus lanes by cameras.</p> <p data-bbox="432 1617 1425 1718">It also advises that local authorities should publish parking policies, information about parking provision, parking restrictions shown on web sites as well as other financial and statistical information.</p> <p data-bbox="432 1751 1422 1852">This also included differential penalty charges, for example a higher penalty for parking on a double yellow line and a lower charge for over staying in a pay and display bay.</p> <p data-bbox="432 1886 1433 1953">Part 7 amends duties in the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 regarding how surplus income from parking management can be spent.</p> <p data-bbox="432 1986 1390 2054">All of the above legislation is done under an agency agreement with Kent County Council who are the highway authority.</p>

9.	Enforcement and Assisting Traffic Flow
9.1	<p>What we enforce</p> <p>To ensure professional and adequate enforcement takes place, an average of 8 Civil Enforcement Officers (CEOs) are deployed per day. The hours of enforcement are primarily between 9.00am to 5.15pm when most restrictions are in force. However, enforcement during the evenings/nights and early mornings are also undertaken to ensure a comprehensive service is provided. CEOs use up to date technology to issue Penalty Charge Notices (PCNs) and record photographic images of contraventions.</p> <p>We receive many requests for enforcement at specific locations in the District from residents and businesses. CEO's are then tasked with patrolling the area. We are pleased to be able to provide this service and endeavour to respond to requests as quickly as possible, normally within an hour. If there is an on-going problem, the feasibility of more regular enforcement will be investigated.</p> <p>There is a list on our website:</p> <p>http://thanet.gov.uk/your-services/parking/</p> <p>This shows which parking contraventions are enforced by Thanet District Councils Civil Enforcement Officers and which are enforced by the Police. We also carry out joint patrols with the Police in areas where there is either a large volume of illegal parking or where there are several traffic offences being committed. Partnership working of this nature has proved successful at large events where there are a large number of vehicles descending on a particular area quickly.</p> <p>Patrolling areas include: Town Centre's, Sea front locations, and residential areas. Vehicle's parking on school safety restrictions are a particular problem in the area and compromises the safety of children and so the enforcement team has a designated CEO to enforce the safety restrictions at schools. There are also some occasions where CEO's are deployed to specific locations to assist with traffic management, usually when there is a large event in the area.</p> <p>By law, all challenges to Penalty Charge Notices must be made in writing, which can be by e-mail using an online form, or by sending a letter in the post. Payment of a PCN constitutes acceptance of liability.</p> <p>There are a number of stages to the challenge process, including an informal appeal, a formal appeal and an appeal to a traffic penalty tribunal.</p> <p>Persistent Offenders are a particular problem for parking enforcement as some drivers repeatedly and willfully disregard parking regulations. A key issue with persistent offenders is that they are often unregistered vehicles, vehicles with non-UK license plates and vehicles with duplicate registration plates. However, every effort is made to combat this issue including sharing information with other agencies and targeting hotspot areas of Thanet where they are likely to contravene the regulations.</p> <p>Abandoned vehicles are an environmental nuisance and a hazard wherever</p>

	<p>they have been dumped. They also impact on the resident's quality of life and their perception of crime levels in the local area.</p> <p>Thanet District Council is responsible for the investigation and removal of abandoned vehicles. Every year Thanet District Council investigates hundreds of reports of abandoned vehicles. Some of these turn out to be abandoned and are removed, stored and then destroyed.</p>
9.2	<p>Working with police</p> <p>Thanet District Council work with the police to help the local community events. Civil Enforcement Officers work in partnership with Kent Police on joint operations to ensure parking compliance in particular problem areas where illegal parking occurs alongside other traffic offences.</p>
9.3	<p>Parking Offences</p> <p>A full list of contraventions that can be enforced by the council and police can be found on our website at:</p> <p>http://thanet.gov.uk/your-services/parking/</p>
9.4	<p>Using technology</p> <p>Exploration of digital solutions to support parking services will become an on-going action within the service to continue delivering a more cost effective and efficient service for the public. These will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New smartphone handhelds • Virtual permits • Residents visitors permits purchased on line • Mobile CCTV/ ANPR camera technology for enforcement • Extending our online permits system to online renewals
9.5	<p>Traffic Flow</p> <p>The structured use of car parking controls is an essential tool in helping to balance competing demands for road space, restraining non-essential traffic, and in encouraging a shift towards more sustainable modes of travel. The enforcement of on and off-street parking regulations and restrictions are a key element of parking management.</p> <p>The established benefits of providing parking enforcement are to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To improve the safety of road users; • To assist the free flow of traffic and reduce traffic congestion, especially for emergency services; • To assist and improve bus movement; • To ensure effective loading/unloading for local businesses; • To provide a turnover of available parking spaces in areas of high demand; • Increase protection of disabled spaces, bus stops, loading bays, taxi ranks and residents parking areas;

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To promote and enhance the health of the local economy. <p>It is acknowledged that parking enforcement is controversial and sensitive but is also widely recognised that without enforcement of parking regulations, these restrictions would be abused and as a consequence the following would occur:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Injury to road users; • Congestion and obstructions; • Lack of parking for shoppers / visitors; • Abuse of disabled spaces, bus stops and taxi ranks; • Nuisance parking creating anti-social behaviour; • Gridlock and traffic jams. <p>Civil Enforcement Officers enforce parking restrictions in two ways-</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Issuing a Penalty Charge notice (PCN) <p>There are two levels of penalty charge, with the level of charge dependent on the seriousness of the contravention.</p> <p>Higher Level – for more serious offences i.e. parking on double yellow lines. This offence carries a £70 charge.</p> <p>Lower level – for less serious offences i.e. overstaying time. This offence carries a £50 charge.</p> 2. If the driver of the vehicle is located then they are asked to move on from their current location and the CEO will attempt to educate the driver on why the restrictions are in place and the problems that parking on the restrictions can cause. This practice is in line with the Traffic Management Act and ensures fair and consistent enforcement. <p>There is a 50% discount if payment of a PCN is received by the council within 14 days.</p> <p>PCN's are generally issued and affixed to the windscreens of the vehicle. If a driver returns to the vehicle the PCN can be handed to the driver by the CEO.</p> <p>However, in some circumstances it is no longer necessary for a Penalty Charge Notice to be placed on the vehicle or handed to the driver in order for it to be properly served. If the Civil Enforcement Officer was unable to serve the Penalty Charge Notice for the following reasons the Penalty Charge Notice can be sent by post:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prevention of Issue - If the Civil Enforcement Officer has been prevented by force, threats of force, obstruction or violence, from serving the Penalty Charge Notice either by affixing it to the vehicle or by giving it to the person who appears to be in charge of the vehicle • Drive away - If the Civil Enforcement Officer had started to issue the Penalty Charge Notice but did not have enough time to finish or serve it before the vehicle was driven away <p>A postal Penalty Charge Notice (Regulation 10 PCN) will be sent to the registered keeper/owner of the vehicle within 14 days of the contravention taking place.</p>
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10.	How to introduce new parking schemes
10.1	<p>The role of the Joint Transportation Board</p> <p>The board meets three times a year and is made up of Council Members from KCC and TDC. Items are brought to the meeting by officers and members from KCC and TDC in relation to transportation matters. The meeting allows members discuss any proposals and give input and suggestions.</p>
10.2	<p>New Pay and Display parking bays</p> <p>New schemes will be introduced to help residents and businesses to be able to get a turnaround of visitors using the bays close by. Parking services will explore a number of sites around the district for pay and display parking schemes.</p> <p>Council Officers shall design a scheme before consulting with residents, members and businesses affected by the proposals. Consultation will be in the form of a letter, questionnaire, leaflet and plan detailing the boundaries of the proposed scheme and the restrictions that will be implemented within that boundary.</p>
10.3	<p>Residents' schemes</p> <p>The purpose of a residents' parking scheme is to provide a priority for residents where on-street parking is a necessity and where non-residential parking is sufficient for residents to experience substantial problems parking in the vicinity of their homes. They are not normally used to control localised residential parking demand only.</p> <p>The aim of a scheme is to balance the needs of residents, their visitors and support businesses whilst keeping traffic moving.</p> <p>New schemes arise where more than 40% of the households of a given area of at least 1000 households request a residents' parking zone in any 12 month period. A survey of the households of that area shall be carried out subject to agreed priorities. Exceptions may be considered where the Joint Transportation Board agrees that a residents' parking scheme is both appropriate and desirable for any area not meeting the normal criteria.</p> <p>Requests for amendments to an existing residents' parking scheme should be supported by a petition consisting of signatures from more than 60% of properties in any road. This will give a clear indication of sufficient support from others in the vicinity before a survey is undertaken.</p> <p>The extent of a possible residents' parking zone will be determined by officers in consultation with local and County members and ratified by the Joint Transportation Board at their next meeting.</p> <p>At least 50% of properties in a road must have no off-street parking facility to be considered for inclusion within a scheme. Furthermore, a survey of existing parking arrangements must indicate that at least 75% of available</p>

	<p>kerbside space is regularly used for parking during the normal working day. The amount of residents' priority parking provided will be dependent on the parking volume in each road. Should 100% of available space be used for parking, the maximum amount of residents' priority parking will be 75%.</p> <p>The hours selected for parking control will have regard to the availability of the Council's Enforcement team and the level of parking demand throughout the week. Limited waiting and timed restrictions will be used where appropriate, particularly when close to retail areas.</p> <p>Whilst every attempt will be made to maximise the available parking space, parking restrictions will remain or be imposed where it is considered that parking would cause a danger or significant obstruction to other road users.</p> <p>Council Officers shall design a scheme before consulting with residents, members and businesses affected by the proposals. Consultation will be in the form of a letter, questionnaire, leaflet and plan detailing the boundaries of the proposed scheme and the restrictions that will be implemented within that boundary.</p>
10.4	<p>New restrictions (Yellow Lines, Loading Bays, Bans)</p> <p>Traffic Regulation Orders (TROs) provides a legal framework of measures which manage the movement and parking of vehicles on the highway. TROs for parking controls are usually used for prohibition purposes i.e. no waiting/loading or management purposes. TROs control parking both in terms of time (e.g. no waiting at any time) and by use (residents parking, bus stops, pay and display etc.) These controls can be simple such as double yellow lines at a junction, through to more complex schemes across a wider area.</p> <p>Restrictions and controls are implemented at locations such as junctions or where parking would cause safety or congestion problems. The restrictions also ensure that emergency vehicles and bus stops are free from obstruction and delays. Inconsiderate or illegal parking may cause a delay to emergency service vehicles responding to calls or impact on their ability to deal with an incident due to access problems. The council will work with the emergency services to ensure that inconsiderate or illegal parking does not create obstructions.</p> <p>The Council receives many requests for TROs and reviews them on a regular basis with Kent County Council and the emergency services. Each request is investigated under a set criteria and those that meet the highest priority are placed before the Joint Transportation Board. Members will then decide whether to make the order as proposed, amend it or abandoned it. However, the priority ranking system does not include residents parking (see section 10.3.)</p> <p>The Council will undertake the appropriate measures to deal with parking based upon clear criteria. Whilst it should be clear that residents cannot always expect to be able to park directly outside their property it is reasonable that they should be able to park within a reasonable distance. Parking schemes can also contribute to local environmental and community agendas.</p> <p>Council Officers will consult with residents, members and businesses affected by the proposals. Consultation will be in the form of an advert within the local</p>

	<p>free newspaper, by on street notices, copies of the proposals on deposit at the local libraries and on our website.</p> <p>As TROs develop out of specific requests or from changing traffic circumstances a list of possible schemes is not included in the Policy.</p>
10.5	<p>Disabled persons parking bay</p> <p>In residential areas the Council provides designated on-street parking bays for use by drivers with mobility impairments.</p> <p>New disabled bays can be applied for by a resident of a street to the parking services. There is a set criteria and if the application meets them then a bay, is marked out as an interim bay directly outside or as close to the applicants residential premises as possible (where the road layout permits) to enable easier access to the property. These spaces are not allocated for a specific user and can be used by any vehicle displaying a valid Blue Badge.</p> <p>After the interim bay has been in for a period of time a report will then be taken to JTB before going out to public consultation to make a TRO which enables the bay to be enforceable.</p>
11.	Related work streams:
11.1	<p>KCC Transportation Strategy</p> <p>This policy will work alongside the Transportation Strategy which covers all transport related matters. To provide an efficient transport system, delivering the transport infrastructure required to support existing communities and new development across the district.</p> <p>This would include the development of park and ride facilities, but no specific proposals are being made in the Policy at present until the completion of the current review of the Transportation Strategy by KCC in association with TDC.</p>
11.2	<p>Local Plan</p> <p>If setting local parking standards for residential and non-residential development, local planning authorities should take into account:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the accessibility of the development; • the type, mix and use of development; • the availability of and opportunities for public transport; • local car ownership levels; and • an overall need to reduce the use of high-emission vehicles. <p>Local authorities should seek to improve the quality of parking in town centres so that it is convenient, safe and secure, including appropriate provision for drivers with different needs and a range of vehicles. They should set appropriate parking charges that are affordable and do not undermine the vitality of town centres. Parking enforcement should be proportionate.</p>
11.3	Environmental Health

	<p>Air pollution and quality is an issue at key junctions around the district which include The Square in Birchington, High Street St Lawrence and the junction of Hereson Road with Boundary Road Ramsgate.</p> <p>Unlawful and indiscriminate on-street parking exacerbates the traffic flow constraints and resulting air quality problems in the Air Quality Management Areas by obstructing the highway and causing congestion. Parking services are working with the Environmental Health section and KCC to help improve air quality where possible.</p> <p>Through partnership working with the Environmental Health and KCC 4 electric charging points have been installed within the two multi-storey car parks.</p>
12.	Looking forward
12.1	<p>Future Parking Control Proposals</p> <p>It is necessary for this policy to provide consistency across the district and to support future developments to ensure that we always have adequate space to meet demands.</p> <p>We will take forward proposals for providing further off and on-street paid for parking in areas that are currently unrestricted in accordance with the consultation approach set out in section 10. This could be in the way of pay and display bays, residential parking schemes or a mixture of both, and will aim to manage demand to the benefit of local residents and businesses.</p> <p>The Parking Service will work with Regeneration, Tourism, Planning and KCC to ensure we have an infrastructure in place to deal with displacement where it is necessary to reduce parking spaces.</p>
12.2	<p>Coach Parking</p> <p>Visitors coming to Thanet by coach are a vital part of the visitor economy. Parking services are investigating enhancements to existing facilities or alternative locations for coach parking across the district with other interested stakeholders, including visiting coach companies, local tourism businesses including language school providers.</p> <p>The number of coaches that currently visit Thanet cannot be measured exactly, but feedback from local people, local businesses and operators indicate that there are not enough spaces in the district currently to cope with the demand at peak times. This demand is currently greater in Broadstairs and Margate due to nature of visits to the area, but the approach will be to develop and improve facilities across Thanet to support the Decimation Management Plan aims.</p>
12.3	<p>Car Park Asset Disposal</p> <p>At present Harold Road in Margate is under consideration due to the very low levels of usage (despite the free Saturday parking) and regular anti-social behaviour. Alternative on-street parking is available to service businesses in Northdown Road.</p>

12.4	<p>Service Development</p> <p>The following areas are under consideration by the parking service to improve information to members of the public and increase shopping parking as part of supporting of local businesses:</p> <p>Car Park Signage Working with KCC on improving car park signage on the approaches to Thanet and within town centres, and introduce improved signage within car parks to allow redirection to less used sites. Variable message signing is currently not seen to be cost effective due to the very high cost of introducing this across the 5 main towns.</p> <p>Shopping Car Parking It is proposed to consider alternative means to increase shopping visits during 2015 through consideration of the following alternatives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduced charges for parking between 9am and 11am or 3pm and 5pm Monday to Friday or reduced charges between 10am and 3pm Monday-Friday • Shoppers car park in each town with a cheap rate for up to 3 hours and then normal charging for more than 3 hours • Reduced parking permit charges for residents in under used car parks between 4pm and 10am Monday to Friday and all weekend.
13.	<p>Review</p>
	<p>Monitoring and reviewing</p> <p>Monitoring and reviewing Thanet District Parking Policy annually is key to ensuring that it is keeping in line with the local plan, the corporate plan and any relevant national change in policy.</p> <p>Elements of the policy that shall be considered when reviewing include the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Existing and predicted levels of demand for both on and off street parking • Accuracy and quality of existing signs and plates • Nature and extent of restrictions for both on and off street parking • Availability and pricing for both on and off street parking for residents and visitors, deliveries and coach parking • Levels of compliance to the policy • Level of fear of crime, environmental and economic issues, statutory guidance and effective practice <p>There is a range of evidence to be considered during a review such as consultation and statistical data.</p> <p>The performance data is built from income sources such as business permits,</p>

	<p>bay suspension, pay and display and PNC's, which is then compared with the previous year and the targets set for the current year. This information is invaluable due to its ability to highlight the detail of the parking demand, for example the length of time people stay, and the most popular areas to park; therefore highlighting the trends or issues (more coach/green car spaces needed etc.) that allow for the emerging policy options.</p>
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