

# How to solve nuisance parking problems



# Is nuisance parking driving people away?

As a business you want to provide hassle-free parking for your customers and visitors, so they can leave their vehicles in a convenient and safe space. If unauthorised vehicles are taking up your valuable spaces, genuine users may be unable to park and go elsewhere, potentially affecting your bottom line.



Convenient parking provides a positive experience for your customers and visitors



Parking availability leads to improved footfall and revenue for your business

# About Creative Car Park, the UK's parking experts

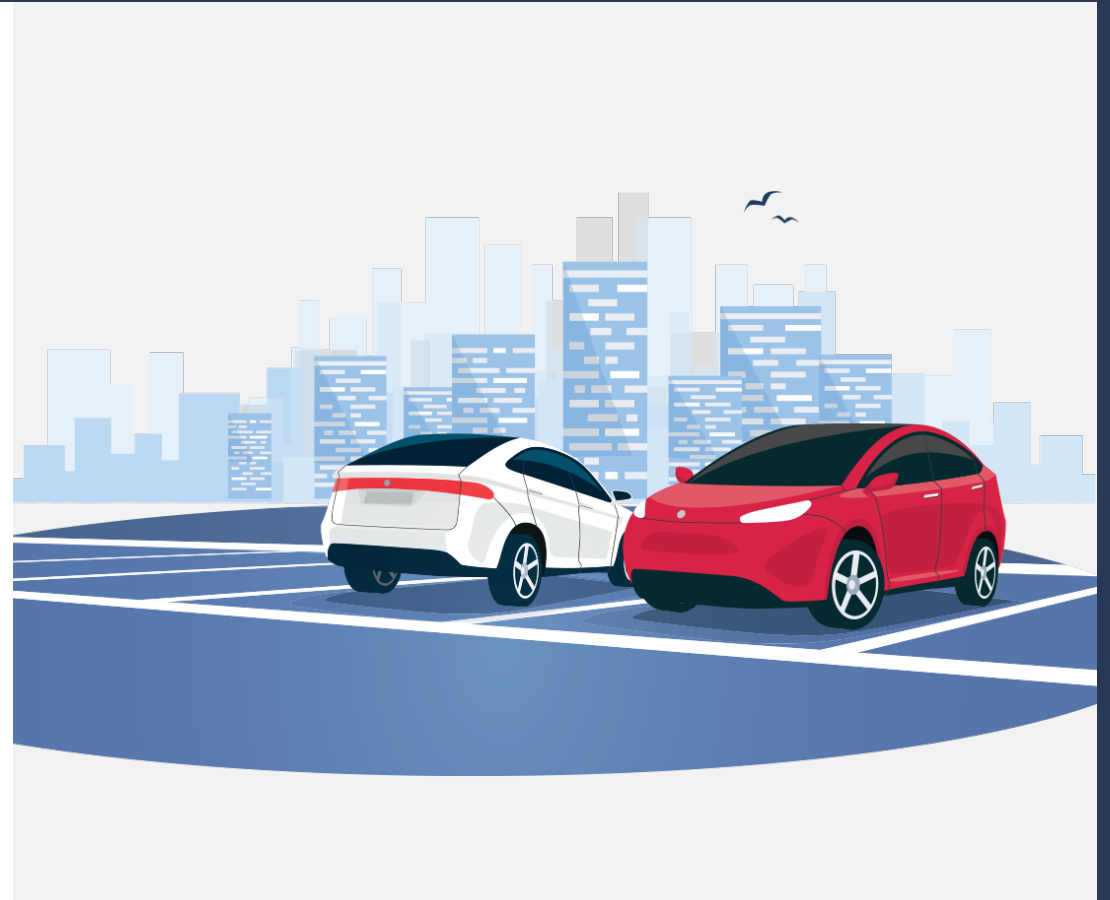


We're the UK's leading provider of car park management solutions to small and medium businesses. Established in 1995, we have many years of hands-on experience when it comes to dealing with parking problems.

This handy guide will help you and your business:

- Take steps to deal with instances of nuisance parking
- Reduce the time spent dealing with parking issues
- Provide the best experience for your car park users

For further help and guidance visit our website at [creativecarpark.co.uk](https://creativecarpark.co.uk)



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# Common parking problems

Nuisance parking can take various forms, all of which can lead to frustration for business owners. Here are the most common examples



# Common parking problems

## Illegal parking

Let's begin by clearing up a common misconception when it comes to parking problems: illegal parking and unauthorised parking are not the same thing.

Illegal parking occurs when a motorist contravenes laws on public land – i.e. land that is owned by the government. This includes roads and pavements, and also car parks operated by local authorities. Breaking parking restrictions on public land will result in a penalty notice, issued to the driver by either the police or the local authority.

However, flouting parking rules on private land, including parking without authorisation on your business car park, is not classed as a criminal offence. Rather it's akin to trespassing, which is a civil dispute and in most cases the police and council can't help (there are some exceptions, which we'll cover later). In summary, the same rules do not apply to your car park as they do for the roads and pavements that surround it.

## Unauthorised parking

If you're experiencing parking problems on your private car park, we regard this as unauthorised or nuisance parking.

For many businesses this presents itself as drivers abusing your car parking provision. They may use your car park because it's free to use, instead of paying to park on public land (this is very common in towns and cities, where parking is at a premium). Or their actions may be more subtle – legitimately using your car park for a short while, but then leaving their vehicle to go elsewhere. The end result is the same: there's less space availability for genuine users, which means they may not be able to park.

Here at Creative Car Park, unauthorised parking is the number one issue we hear about when talking to businesses. Owners are rightfully frustrated that their hands are seemingly tied when it comes to this everyday occurrence. But there are solutions, as we'll reveal in this guide.



# Common parking problems

## Special bay misuse

Unauthorised parking is annoying, but when motorists blatantly park in special bays, such as loading bays, or worse, designated disabled driver spaces, their actions can prompt even deeper anger.

Unfortunately, the rules relating to parking on private land do not change if it involves special bays. It doesn't matter if you've properly marked out your bays with painted lines, or erected clear signage, anyone can park in them without penalty. Morals and principles don't matter on private car parks, it would seem.

A more recent issue involves the misuse of electric vehicle charging bays. If you provide these for your staff or customers, you may find that EV drivers hog them (i.e. they leave their vehicle plugged in all day and take advantage of the free parking space). Or drivers simply park in the space without charging, preventing genuine users from accessing the facility.



# Common parking problems

## Abandoned vehicles

A less common but more problematic issue is when vehicles are left on your car park for an indefinite period of time.

Not only does this block out one of your parking spaces for days, possibly weeks, but an abandoned vehicle is an eyesore and may also attract antisocial and criminal behaviour.

The first thing is to determine whether the vehicle is genuinely abandoned. Start by asking yourself the following questions:

- Does it look like it has been involved in an accident?
- Is there anything suspicious about it (broken windows, missing number plates), suggesting that it may be stolen?
- Are there telltale signs of neglect? Flat tyres, heavy rust etc?

If you genuinely believe a vehicle has been abandoned there are steps you can take, which we'll cover in the next chapter.





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# Support from the authorities

Poor parking is essentially poor driving, so surely the authorities can help you resolve issues? Let's look at what support is available



# Support from the authorities

## The police

As we've mentioned, parking on private land is regarded as a civil dispute and as such the police can't assist when it comes to nuisance parking.

But there are instances when you can call on the police for help. They should be contacted if you believe a vehicle has been abandoned on your car park – but only if it's in "dangerous condition". This definition is open to interpretation, but it's generally accepted to include things like leaking fuel, or potentially dangerous items are visible inside the vehicle.

You can also contact the police if a vehicle is blocking access to your parking area (i.e. it's on the public highway or pavement outside your premises and it's parked in such a way that people cannot drive in and out of your car park). The Highway Code dictates that motorists should "not park in front of an entrance to a property", so the police should be able to assist you.

## The council

As with the police, your local council's powers are limited when it comes to unauthorised parking on private land.

But – it is the responsibility of local councils to remove vehicles that have been abandoned, and this covers private land. So if you genuinely believe that a vehicle has been abandoned on your car park (as in, it has been there for multiple days and is perhaps in obvious poor/damaged condition), and you cannot trace the owner, you can report it to your local council and they'll advise on the next steps. The procedure begins with the landowner placing a dated notice on the vehicle's window stating that it will be taken away in seven days if it is not removed, but always contact the council in the first instance.

You can report an **abandoned vehicle** online. Note that the council will need to locate and give notice to the vehicle's registered keeper, so the process may take some time to resolve

# Support from the authorities

## The DVLA

Along with the police and your local authority, the DVLA (Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency) can intervene and remove a vehicle from private land.

But again, there are strict conditions. Typically, the DVLA will only act if the vehicle is untaxed. You can [check if a vehicle is taxed](#) online, by entering its registration number, and then report it directly to the DVLA if it isn't taxed.

If you're unable to trace the owner of the vehicle, you can request registered keeper details from the DVLA. But in order to do so you must be a member of a relevant trade association (the British Parking Association or International Parking Community, for example). Unaccredited operators are not permitted to request registered keeper details from the DVLA.

Creative Car Park can help in this area – more on this shortly.



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## Preventative measures

There are simple steps any business can take to try and reduce instances of nuisance parking – and you may be surprised by the results



# Preventative measures

## Determine the cause

If unauthorised vehicles are regularly abusing your parking provision, ask yourself if there's a specific reason why? Is it as simple as people can park for free on your car park, while surrounding car parks require payment, or is there more to it?

We recommend observing your car park for a few days and seeing if there are any noticeable patterns. Do people use your car park when visiting a neighbouring business? Perhaps their car park is always full, so they're using yours as an overflow? Is your car park typically full at certain times of the day? Again, it may be linked to the operating hours of another local business – a pub or restaurant maybe?

If you can trace the activity to a specific business, we'd suggest speaking to them and seeing if they're willing to help you resolve the problem. They'll likely be sympathetic to your situation.

## Speak to the driver

We appreciate this may be difficult under the circumstances, but often the best policy is to try and speak to the driver if you're able to.

Ask them to politely move their vehicle and refrain from parking without authorisation in the future. Explain that their misuse of your car park is denying genuine users a parking space. You may discover they didn't even know they were doing anything wrong.

If you're unable to confront the driver, why not leave a short note on their window screen? Just keep it polite and civil. You don't want to create an issue that escalates beyond the initial parking problem.

If the driver's response is aggressive or abusive, you should report this as **antisocial behaviour** to the local police.



# Preventative measures

## Display signage

If you'd prefer a non-confrontational approach, think about the ways you could highlight your parking conditions.

This could be simple signage in your car park to advise drivers, stating "Parking strictly for customers only", or similar. If you have a problem with people using your business briefly and then leaving their vehicle to go elsewhere, why not place a sign inside your premises in a prominent position? For example: "Onsite parking is limited – please do not abuse this provision".

If you have social media channels, or if you're part of an online local community group, you could use these to remind people of your parking conditions and highlight any recurring issues. Local online groups will typically support businesses on their patch so you should receive plenty of support.



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## Permanent solutions

If you've tried all suggestions and nuisance parking remains an issue, here are the solutions that will eliminate the problem once and for all



# Permanent solutions

## Towing and clamping

As tempting as it might be, it is unlawful to clamp or remove any vehicle parked on your private land without the “lawful authority” to do so. Lawful authority means the police, the council or the DVLA – not your mate with a tow truck.

And not just that: it’s also an offence to block-in or immobilise a vehicle on purpose. It has been this way in the UK since 2012, when the government enacted the Protection of Freedoms Act.

When it comes to private car parks, the law is the same regardless of whether it’s free to park or a fee is payable.

In summary, wheel clamping, towing away, or tampering with vehicles in any way could backfire and expose you and your business to criminal proceedings.

## Install barriers

When you first think about car park management and controlling entry, you’re likely to consider barriers.

By effectively installing a gate in front of your car park, you will stop any unwanted, unauthorised cars from entering. Or, for those users who do enter and use your car park, it’s a guaranteed way to ensure they pay what they owe in order to exit.

Barrier do work for businesses, but they can present some issues:

- **Cost:** Barriers can be expensive to install, and you typically need two – one in and one out of your car park.
- **Reliability:** Barriers are mechanical and therefore prone to failure, meaning they need to be maintained (at extra cost).
- **User error:** Even if barriers work 100% of the time, users will fail to read the instructions and get stuck at the barrier. Happens all the time.

# Permanent solutions

## Introduce enforcement

A popular solution to nuisance parking is to introduce car park enforcement measures. This involves employing a 'warden' to patrol your car park, or alternatively using Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) cameras to monitor every vehicle that enters and exits your site.

In order to enforce car parking rules, the landowner needs to display clearly visible signs around their property. This enables them to set out the terms of the contract that a driver enters into when they decide to park on private land. If broken, the car park owner is at liberty to take steps to enforce any of the broken rules and can place a Parking Charge Notice (PCN) on the offending vehicle, handing the ticket to the driver, or posting the ticket to the address of the vehicle's registered keeper.

Parking enforcement on private land can be a complex area, especially when it comes to compliance. For more information read our [handy blog post](#).



# Permanent solutions

## Find a parking partner

If you're looking for a permanent solution to the problem of nuisance parking, we recommend working with an accredited car park management company like [Creative Car Park](#).

We use ANPR cameras to capture the registration number of every vehicle that enters your site at any time, day or night. Genuine users can then claim free parking by entering their vehicle details, or alternatively pay to park. Anyone who breaches your parking terms will be automatically issued with a PCN, sent through the post, to deter future misuse.

The main benefit of using a car park management company is that we'll take care of everything – installing the equipment, erecting the signage and dealing with PCNs – so you can get on with the job of running your business, rather than dealing with parking hassles.





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# Your parking partner

At Creative Car Park we partner with UK businesses to provide innovative and ethical solutions to everyday parking problems



# The Creative benefit for your business – and your visitors

## Benefits your business

- Keeps your car park running securely, 24/7, typically at **zero cost** to your business, while freeing up parking spaces for people who genuinely need them
- Avoids confrontation and removes the daily need to manage parking issues and hassles – and gives you **full control** over who can park
- Unlocks maximum value from your car park by boosting footfall/revenue, while also creating **potential for new revenue streams** with pay to park and innovative 'add-on' options

## Improves the parking experience

- Provides visitors with **more available parking spaces** close to your business – especially important for users with accessibility needs
- Gives them **peace of mind** due to the secure nature of your car park, thanks to the presence of on-site cameras
- Informs them of your parking conditions via **clear, concise and compliant signage** at your car park's entry and exit locations



# The difference our car park enforcement solution makes

## Before ANPR



Your car park is a free for all. People leave their vehicles – often poorly parked – and go elsewhere. There are no spaces for genuine visitors and they drive away.

## After ANPR



Order and common sense is restored. Drivers follow your parking terms and there are spaces available, improving the visitor experience and boosting footfall/revenue.

# A client's success story



Woolston Lodge Surgery

One client who recently contacted us for help with unauthorised parking was Woolston Lodge, a GP surgery based in Southampton.

Their car park was typically full before they even opened their doors each morning! Shortly after installing our ANPR cameras, Claire from the surgery was amazed by the results.

*“This morning we had 20 spaces free in the car park at 9.15am, and 15 spaces free at 10.30am. This is amazing! We are so impressed this has had such a huge impact already.”*

We helped them and now we want to help you. Get in touch today and let's work together to solve your parking problems. Contact details are over the page.



# Who else Creative works with and supports

We partner with everyone from small local businesses to high street names





# Why businesses choose us as their parking operator

**28**

years of  
industry  
experience

**1,750+**

UK car parks  
managed...  
and growing!

**94%**

of our clients  
choose to  
renew with us

# Need a helping hand with your car park?

If you would like to discuss any problems you're currently facing or require more information about our car park enforcement solutions, please get in touch. One of our friendly team members is ready to help.

[GET IN TOUCH](#)