

# Cost effective enforcement of mandatory cycle lanes



Since 22nd June, councils in England have had the power to use CCTV to issue penalty charge notices to drivers who park or load illegally in mandatory cycle lanes. This was ratified by the government's Civil Enforcement of Parking Contraventions (England) General (Amendment) Regulations 2020 which allows approved camera devices to be used for the enforcement of parking contraventions.



This new legislation adds cycle lanes to the list of parking offences enforceable by CCTV included in the Civil Enforcement of Parking Contraventions (England) General (Amendment No. 2) Regulations 2015 (S.I. 2015/1001). This list of parking contraventions includes bus lanes, bus stops, bus stand clearways, keep clears outside schools and red routes.

Councils can now take action against illegal parking on cycle lanes which creates an obstruction that forces cyclists into the main carriageway. According to the DfT, this accounts for around 15% of all cyclist casualties. Improving road safety will also increase the number of people taking up cycling and facilitate a modal shift from vehicles to bicycles, thereby reducing congestion and air pollution in our cities.

Enforcing parking contraventions in mandatory cycle lanes should therefore become a key element of the planned clean air and low emission zones in some of our

worst polluting cities. Sustrans, a walking and cycling charity, has previously stated that clean air zones will not solve air pollution on their own and that a behavioural shift away from vehicles is needed. What is now clear is that improving air quality requires a variety of approaches including encouraging people to see cycling as a real alternative to their cars, particularly travelling to and from the workplace.

This has been brought into sharp focus during the COVID-19 pandemic when the reduction in traffic, combined with a drop in industrial and commercial activities, resulted in a significant decline in air-polluting emissions. The images of empty city centres, roads and motorways gave us an unprecedented glimpse into how air quality is improved when emissions are drastically cut.

## Technology Solutions

Councils wanting to deploy CCTV enforcement can use DfT Manufacturer Certified hosted solutions that are quick and easy to install as they do not require

the procurement and deployment of any equipment within council IT infrastructures or software on local PCs for evidence pack review. Importantly, this type of service requires no ICT involvement from councils and can be delivered through a variety of flexible commercial models, including fixed monthly rental cost per location or fixed fee-per-PCN, to improve efficiency, increase income and deliver greater budget control.

Videalert's fully managed Civil Enforcement as a Service (CEaaS) solution covers the planning, supply, installation, commissioning and ongoing maintenance of all necessary on-street equipment with the latest digital cameras and associated communications connectivity.

It includes the installation of ONVIF-compliant digital HD CCTV cameras, which operate in unattended mode to capture high quality images to minimise discard-rates, increase productivity and help reduce the number of appeals. These cameras can be redeployed to other locations as compliance improves. Mobile enforcement vehicles can also be used tactically to enforce multiple locations identified as having low levels of driver compliance. Captured evidence packs are stored on the hosted platform for secure access and review over the internet. Validated evidence packs are sent to the council's back office system to issue penalty charge notices.

Importantly, Videalert's hosted platform is multi-tasking and supports all parking

contraventions enforceable by CCTV simultaneously. It also supports the enforcement of moving traffic contraventions including banned turns, box junctions, weight restrictions and bus gates as well as the monitoring and management of clean air and low emission zones. The platform additionally enables councils to cross correlate the impact of improved driver compliance with the improvements in air quality using Air Quality Monitors that provide real-time data on the level of airborne particulates and harmful gases such as nitrogen dioxide and carbon dioxide at different times throughout the day and night. The air quality data can be combined with CCTV data to strengthen and validate the business case for the adoption of moving traffic enforcement restrictions to improve the effectiveness of clean air and low emission zones.

However, installing CCTV cameras to enforce parking contraventions in mandatory cycle lanes is just the start and significant change will only happen as a result of behavioural change in motorists, whether this is to get on their bikes or adopt a more considerate approach when parking. Simultaneously, to increase compliance, enforcement technologies such as those provided by Videalert will enable councils to play their part in further reducing the unacceptably high level of accidents involving cyclists.

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