

PATROL

Parking and Traffic Regulations Outside London

An Introduction

2023/24

1. Welcome from the Chair



Dear Member

I am delighted to welcome your authority to the PATROL (Parking and Traffic Regulations Outside London) Adjudication Joint Committee.

Your authority has been nominated to this Joint Committee because it undertakes civil parking and other traffic enforcement, and there is a statutory requirement for authorities to make provision for independent adjudication of motorists' appeals against the traffic penalties they issue.

This statutory requirement is exercised by your authority joining the Joint Committee, which in turn provides resources for adjudication delivered by the Traffic Penalty Tribunal.

PATROL has over 300 member authorities, comprising each type of local authority, with a spectrum of political allegiances. It is seen as a representative voice on civil traffic enforcement outside London.

Ongoing business throughout the year is delegated to an Executive Sub-Committee, which is appointed at PATROL's Annual Meeting in July. Should your authority wish to put itself forward to sit on this committee at the next Annual Meeting, it would be very welcome. Additionally, PATROL appoints an Advisory Board comprising judicial expertise and consumer representation to assist and advise on the overall policies and strategies for administering the adjudication service, as well as on its responsibilities under the various enforcement regulations.

I trust this short introduction will answer some of your questions about PATROL and the Traffic Penalty Tribunal, and hope to have the opportunity to meet you before long.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Stuart Hughes".

**Councillor Stuart Hughes (Devon County Council),
PATROL Chair**

2. PATROL overview

PATROL comprises over 300 local authorities and charging authorities in England (outside London) and Wales that enforce parking and traffic restrictions.

The Joint Committee's regulatory function is to make provision for independent adjudication in respect of motorists' appeals against penalties issued by these authorities (this adjudication is delivered by the Traffic Penalty Tribunal: see Page 5).

This includes appeals arising from the civil enforcement of:

- Parking, Bus Lanes, Moving Traffic (England and Wales).
- Clean Air Zones (currently, England only).
- Littering from Vehicles (England only).
- Other Road User Charging Schemes, including:
 - Dartford-Thurrock River Crossing ('Dart Charge').
 - Mersey Gateway Bridge and Silver Jubilee Bridge Crossings ('Merseyflow').
 - Durham Road User Charge Zone.

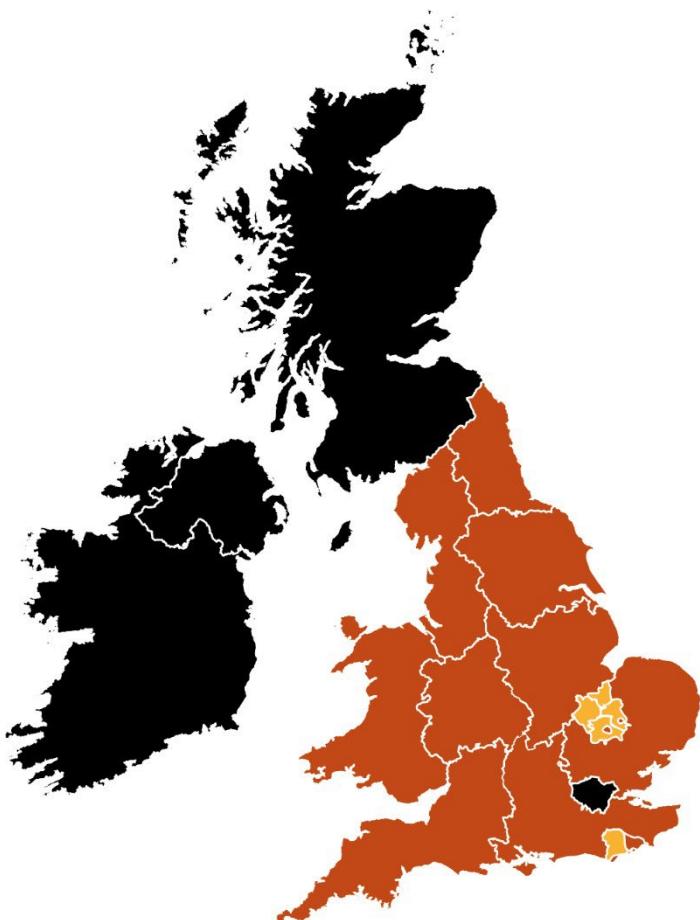
The roles of – and relationship between

– PATROL and the Tribunal, as well as the civil enforcement of traffic penalties in England (outside London) and Wales, are underpinned by the *Traffic Management Act 2004* and *Transport Act 2000*, as well as various regulations under these Acts.

The regulations require civil enforcement authorities to form a joint committee to provide resources to support the independent adjudicators and their staff, who together comprise the Traffic Penalty Tribunal.

PATROL, like other joint committees, appoints a lead or 'host' authority. This role has been undertaken by Cheshire East Council (CEC) since 2013. CEC has considerable experience of supporting arms' length organisations and respects the importance of independence for the Tribunal.

With such an extensive local authority membership, PATROL is uniquely placed to understand the authority perspective on civil enforcement matters, while at the same time having regard to the issues that matter to motorists through the experience of appeals to the Traffic Penalty Tribunal.



**(Above right) PATROL authorities shown in orange on map;
lighter shade reflects authorities where civil enforcement is not in operation**

Consequently, the organisation undertakes a series of initiatives to support its member authorities and raise awareness of the objectives of civil enforcement, including:

1. The promotion of local parking and traffic management Annual Reports through the **Promoting Awareness of Civil Enforcement through Reporting (PACER) Awards** programme, together with the delivery of an online local authority toolkit to promote best practice in reporting (<https://annualreporttoolkit.patrol-uk.info/>).

The PACER Awards celebrate those authorities who go beyond the mandatory reporting requirements and provide an accessible account of local traffic management objectives, enforcement information and matters of concern to local residents and businesses.



Authorities shortlisted for the PACER Awards are recognised with a reception at the House of Commons each summer, hosted by Huw Merriman, MP for Bexhill and Battle, and Minister of State at the Department for Transport.

2. Provision of public information on civil enforcement through the PATROL website – <https://www.patrol-uk.info>, and the provision of information on the Tribunal and its process on its own website – <https://www.trafficpenaltytribunal.gov.uk>.
3. Taking forward traffic management issues of mutual interest for member authorities through public affairs activity. A recent example has included exploring the issue of pavement parking with local authority officers and members to provide written and oral evidence to the Transport Select Committee, and contribute to a Welsh Government Task Force Group.
4. Convening a range of local authority User Groups, as well as circulating information and updates to authority stakeholders relating to emerging traffic management and transport themes.



3. Traffic Penalty Tribunal overview

The Traffic Penalty Tribunal (TPT) decides motorists' appeals against Penalty Charge Notices (PCNs), issued by the 300+ PATROL local authorities and charging authorities in England (outside London) and Wales, for parking and other traffic contraventions.

Appeals to the TPT are decided by 22 adjudicators: all wholly independent lawyers, whose appointments are subject to the consent of the Lord Chancellor. The adjudicators are supported by administrative staff, who provide customer support to appellants and help manage appeals. For convenience, the adjudicators and administrative staff are described collectively as the Traffic Penalty Tribunal.

The Chief Adjudicator is Caroline Hamilton (right), a barrister called in 1989, who joined the TPT in 2022 from London Tribunals, where she had been Chief Environment and Traffic Adjudicator since 2010.

Neither the Chief Adjudicator nor any adjudicator is answerable to the PATROL Joint Committee in any way as regards the performance of their judicial functions, and they are not employees of PATROL. The Joint Committee also has no remit to consider or influence decisions of adjudicators or the function of the adjudication service as an independent tribunal.



The TPT usually decides appeals against ~35,000 PCNs each year. More than 90% of all appeals submitted to the Tribunal are completed end-to-end through an online appeals management system. PATROL has recognised the importance of providing an accessible, intuitive online system to increase the effectiveness and transparency for all parties.

This system ('Fast Online Appeals Management', or FOAM) and associated business processes represent a 'digital-by-design' approach to dispute resolution, held up as an international exemplar by senior members of the judiciary, leading academics and legal commentators. They include Professor Richard Susskind, the world's most cited author on the future of legal services, who has described the TPT as having 'the longest standing online public dispute resolution system.'

A computer monitor displaying the Traffic Penalty Tribunal (TPT) website. The website has a teal header with the TPT logo and 'About us' link. The main content area has a teal header 'Your Appeal'. It includes a sub-header 'Traffic Penalty Tribunal England and Wales', a paragraph about appealing, and a section for entering appeal details: 'PIN/Online/Appeal code: ', 'Vehicle Registration Number: ', and 'PIN Code: '. The monitor is silver and black.



The online system allows a wide variety of evidence types to be uploaded, in order to help explain and demonstrate a case – from photographs and screenshots to audio and video files, to scanned documents, emails and social media messages from smartphones (e.g. from WhatsApp and Facebook).

The majority of cases are decided by Adjudicators on the basis of uploaded evidence, with telephone and video hearings available (taking place over Microsoft Teams) if necessary. Instant messaging and Live Chat are available for communication by the parties throughout a case. Appellants not able to get online receive Assisted Digital support from the TPT's customer liaison team by phone.



Typically, around half of cases submitted are completed within 14 days, with over 80% within 28 days. As many as 10% are closed within a day. The efficiency of the online system, combined with a dedicated and hardworking team, have inevitably also brought about significant savings for local authorities and the Tribunal.

Watch an overview video of the Tribunal appeal process and online system at:
<https://bit.ly/3RJ8hHT>.

4. Joint Committee Meetings

The PATROL Adjudication Joint Committee Annual Meeting takes place in July. Members may also volunteer to sit on the PATROL Executive Sub-Committee, which meets in January and October*.

Members will be advised of the location of meetings via email.

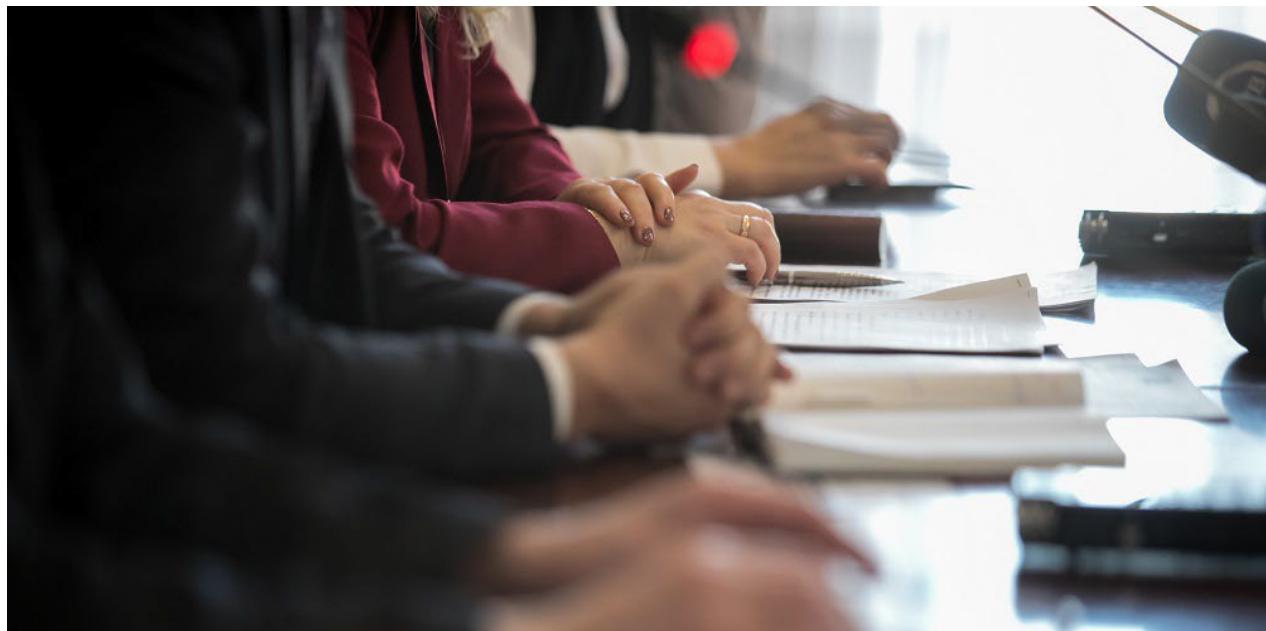
Meetings typically commence at 11:00, with business normally concluded by 13.00. At the close of business, a lunch is provided, offering members an opportunity to network.

Agenda items for meetings include:

1. Financial decision making.
2. Governance decisions.
3. Emerging issues and government policy.
4. TPT updates, performance and new initiatives.
5. Best practice.

Agendas are published electronically and can be found at <https://cpapers.patrol-uk.info>, alongside past meeting papers.

*** Where members volunteer to sit on the Executive Sub-Committee, reasonable travel expenses will be met for attending meetings by PATROL**



5. PATROL Contacts

PATROL Adjudication Joint Committee

**Chair:**

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Devon County Council

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Vice Chair:

TBC

**Assistant Chair:**

Councillor Terry Douris,
Dacorum District Council

**Assistant Chair (Wales):**

Councillor Laura Lacey,
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**Democratic Services
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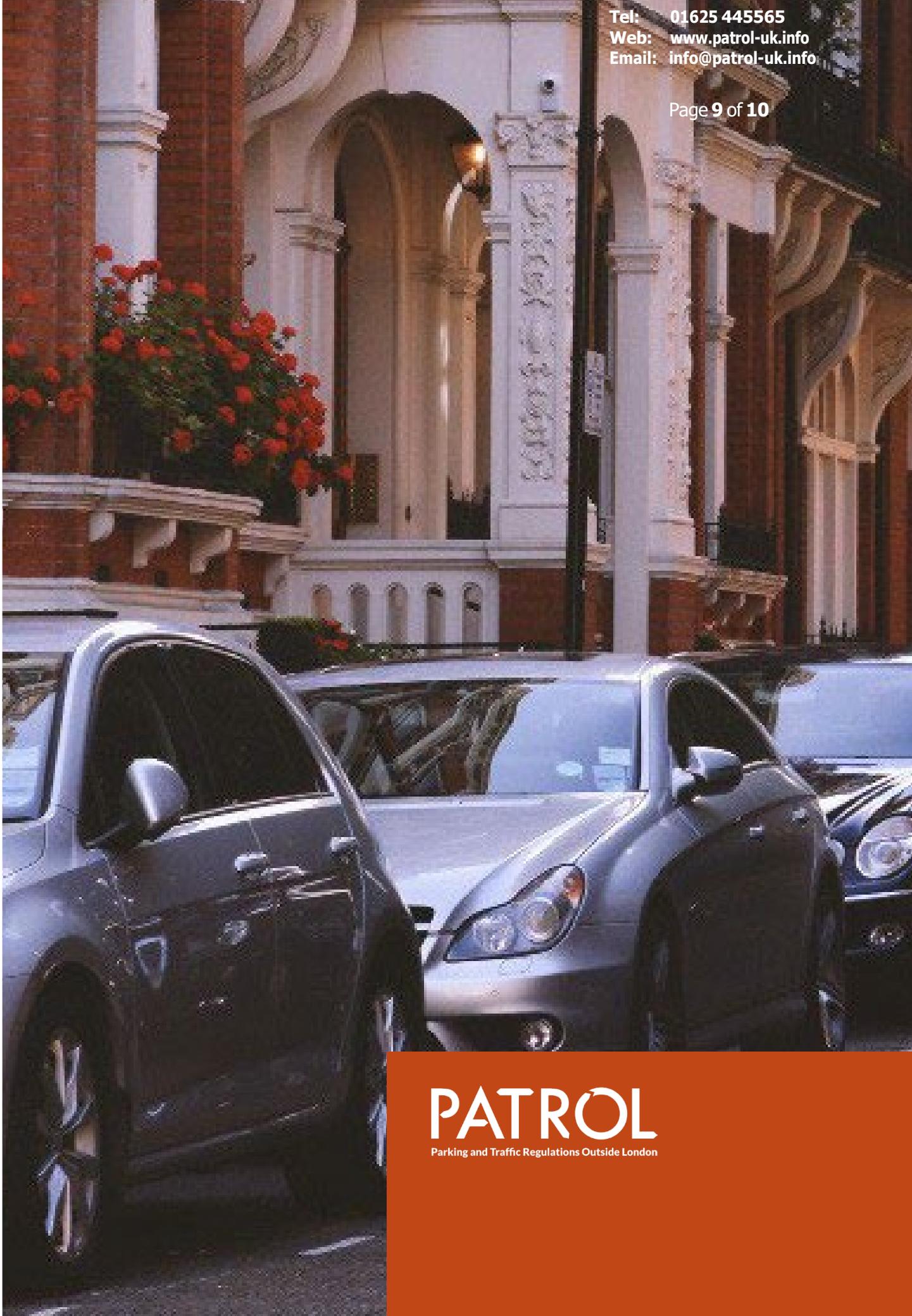
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