

Press release: Drivers to receive greater protection against rogue private parking operators

- Parking (Code of Practice) Act 2019 ends unfair parking fines by rogue private parking firms
- Private parking firms will need to follow new Code of Practice
- Drivers will be able to challenge unfair fines through new independent appeals service

Motorists across Britain will have greater protections against bogus parking fines as new measures to clamp down on rogue private parking firms become law.

The new Parking (Code of Practice) Act, which has received Royal Assent today, will bring in greater regulation of the private parking industry. Drivers will be able to more easily challenge unfair parking tickets through a new independent appeals service, and all private parking operators will also have to follow a new industry backed Code of Practice.

A new single Code of Practice will ensure parking is consistent, transparent and easier to understand. If private parking firms break it then they could be barred from asking for motorists' information from the DVLA to enforce tickets. The new independent appeals service will also give drivers greater support to challenge unjustified parking tickets.

Local Government Minister Rishi Sunak MP said:

Millions of us use private car parks every day, but for far too many drivers slapped with unjust fines this largely unregulated industry feels like the Wild West.

Too often, I hear of awful treatment at the hands of dodgy parking firms, from problems paying for parking to intimidating demands for payment and baffling appeals processes.

From today, we're able to cut out the rogue operators by creating a single Code of Practice and giving drivers greater protection through a new appeals service.

The government and motoring groups, including the AA and the RAC, back the law changes and will now begin work to write the Code of Practice.

Stakeholders have welcomed the news.

Steve Gooding, Director of the RAC Foundation, said:

Sir Greg is to be congratulated for his success in uniting MPs and peers alike to deliver the Parking (Code of Practice) Act the private parking industry so clearly needs.

The Act will tackle an issue which our figures show affects millions of motorists each year.

We look forward to supporting the Local Government Minister Rishi Sunak as he now moves to put in place the code of practice, appeals and scrutiny mechanisms that the Act provides.

Andrew Pester, the British Parking Association's Chief Executive, said:

We are delighted that Sir Greg Knight's Parking (Code of Practice) Bill has achieved Royal Assent which will deliver our call for a single standard setting body, single code of practice and a single independent appeals service.

This framework will enable greater consistency and consumer confidence. As a not-for-profit association we will continue to work closely with government and others, including consumer groups, to help develop a single Code of Practice that provides a fair outcome for motorists, landowners and parking operators alike.

Nicholas Lyes, the Head of Roads Policy at the RAC, said:

Motorists will warmly welcome this new Act. For too long, some unscrupulous private parking operators have made drivers' lives a misery with some questionable practices which has sent levels of trust in the sector plummeting.

The code will create more consistent standards across the board which should eliminate dubious practices and create a single, independent appeals process. The RAC has long called for changes to the way the private parking sector is regulated and this new code will undoubtedly make the lives of drivers easier.

The Act builds on action the government has already taken to tackle rogue private parking firms, including banning wheel clamping and towing and stopping over-zealous parking enforcement by councils and parking wardens.

The [Parking \(Code of Practice\) Bill 2017-19](#) has today (15 March 2019) received Royal Assent so it is now law.

The Parking (Code of Practice) Bill was a Private Members Bill introduced by Sir Greg Knight MP, supported by the government.

The Parking (Code of Practice) Bill will cover England, Wales, and Scotland – creating consistency for motorists everywhere in Britain.

Currently there are two parking trade associations, the British Parking Association and the International Parking Community. Each has a Code of Practice that their members are required to abide by, but there is no single set of rules, so motorists are vulnerable to bad private parking practices such as deliberately poor signage and unfair parking fines.

The new Code of Practice will be drafted later this year with industry stakeholders, and will provide the clarity of a single set of rules for private parking, with clearer processes of appeals.

The Secretary of State will also have the power to raise a levy on the sector to fund the production, publishing and enforcement of the code. That levy will also cover the costs of appointing and maintaining a single appeals service.

A single code is intended to set a higher standard across the sector, especially in the area of appeals against parking tickets.