

DIY penalties offer landowners an alternative to wheelclamps

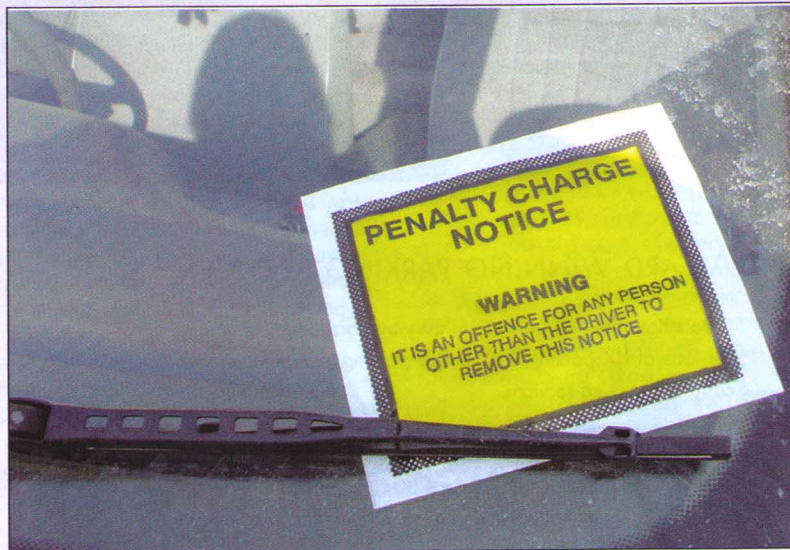
Parking enforcement company Vehicle Clamping Securities (VCS) is offering a ticket-based enforcement system, giving landowners an alternative to the traditional, and contentious practice of wheel clamping. VCS contract director Costas Constantino said: "We provide plastic covered, weather-proof warning notices for parking areas," he says. "These warning notices are designed and worded for maximum effect in deterring illegal parking."

Should a car park without authorisation on a private site, the client then completes a numbered 'Fixed Penalty Charge' form, ticking the appropriate offence. Besides failure to park within a marked bay and unauthorised parking, the offences on the form include parking on yellow lines or Red Routes and non-display of orange badge in a disabled bays.

The form states that the fine is £85, dropping to £40 if paid within 14 days. A payment coupon enabling cheque and credit card payment is part of the form. The client places the penalty form on the unauthorised car in a plastic cover featuring the words "Penalty Charge Notice: It is an offence for any person other than the motorist to remove this notice".

The client then sends VCS a carbon duplicate of the form.

"Where a fine is not paid, the DVLA will supply us with the registered owner's name and address so that non-payment of fines can be enforced," says Constantino. "This



Clients get hand written penalty forms and plastic wallets to place them in

may result in the registered owner of the offending vehicle being taken to a small claims court."

In the event of an error in the issuing of a penalty notice, this can be cancelled by the client sending VCS a fax on letterhead, quoting the vehicle registration mark and the date of the offence, says Constantino.

VCS was formed in 1989 and its clients include companies such as Legal & General, EMU, BUPA Care Services, Odeon and HM Prison Service.

VCS works with Southampton-based law firm Trethowans, which has set up a parking services team under Sue Gowling. Remedies against trespass which are open to the landowner, are

expulsion, a claim for damages or seeking an injunction, says Terthowans.

"In practical terms, the effective management of the parking area coupled with the application of penalty charges usually acts as a suitable deterrent," says the law firm. "However a landowner should be aware that if a penalty charge fee is levied and paid to the land owner by someone who has parked without authorisation, then the landowner is effectively waiving any claim that they may have for damages."

Vehicle Clamping Services
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