



**Craig Whittaker MP**

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### **Private Parking Companies**

Thank you for contacting me about private parking companies.

I would like to reassure you that the Department for Transport is aware of the concerns about the activities of some private parking companies. I am pleased that the Conservative Party's manifesto at the recent General Election included a commitment to take steps to tackle rogue private parking operators.

To ensure motorists are treated fairly when any parking charge is pursued, vehicle keeper information is disclosed only to companies that are members of an Accredited Trade Association (ATA). The ATA carries out stringent checks on companies before allowing them to join and monitors compliance of their code of practice. This includes an independent appeals process. If a company fails to comply with the code, it can be suspended or expelled, during which time no data will be provided to it by the DVLA.

Parking on private land is essentially a private contractual arrangement between the car park owner and the motorist. Any disputes over unpaid parking charges would be pursued as civil matters through the relevant courts and so the Government could not be involved.

The Coalition Government amended the consumer protection regulations to make it simpler for consumers to bring their own actions to seek compensation when they have been the victims of misleading or aggressive debt collection practices. The new rights came into force on 1 October 2014 and apply to all types of debt collection including parking on private land.

Thank you again for taking the time to contact me.

Kind regards,

Craig Whittaker MP