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A city woman will have to pay £573 after being found guilty of fraudulently using a blue badge.

Rachel Farrin (28) of Richmond Avenue in Walton, Peterborough, appeared at Peterborough Magistrates Court yesterday (19 June) and was found guilty under the Fraud Act 2006. She was ordered to pay a fine of £293, court costs of £250 and a victim surcharge of £30.

The court heard that on 30 May 2017, Miss Farrin had parked her vehicle on double yellow lines in Broad Street, Lyme Regis, Dorset with a blue badge on display which had been issued by Peterborough City Council.

When Miss Farrin returned to her vehicle, a Civil Enforcement Officer asked to inspect the blue badge. Upon inspection the officer noticed the badge had been issued to someone else. Miss Farrin said the holder of the blue badge was in the shops with her husband, however, when she did not appear the officer retained the badge and it was returned to Peterborough City Council.

An investigation was undertaken by Peterborough City Council and it was established that the blue badge had been issued to a neighbour who lived on the same street as Miss Farrin in Richmond Avenue, Walton, Peterborough. The badge had been reported as lost 14 months previously.

Councillor Irene Walsh, cabinet member for communities, said: "Abuse of the blue badge scheme is not fair on genuine badge holders who need to park close to places they are visiting.

"A blue badge is for the sole use of the person named on it and must only be displayed if the badge holder is travelling in the vehicle as a driver or passenger, or if someone is collecting them or dropping them off.

"Regular checks are made on blue badges in the city and their usage to ensure that they are not stolen, forged or being misused and as this case has shown, offenders will be prosecuted if caught."

There is more information on the blue badge scheme on the council's website, including how to report suspected misuse.