

**HUNTINGDONSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL
PARKING STRATEGY 2026-2046**

**Better parking for a more accessible and
sustainable Huntingdonshire**



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INTRODUCTION

Ethos Consultants have been commissioned by Huntingdonshire District Council to prepare a new Parking Strategy for its off-street car parks. The strategy establishes a long-term framework for managing, maintaining and investing in the Council's parking assets, ensuring they continue to support residents, businesses and visitors while responding to future growth, evolving travel patterns and changing customer expectations.

The Parking Strategy has been developed to support the Council's wider priorities and ambitions for Huntingdonshire. Parking is an essential part of the transport network, providing access to employment, retail, leisure, community facilities and services across the district. The way parking is planned and managed can also influence travel choices, support the local economy, improve the customer experience and ensure valuable public assets are used effectively.

The Council has previously adopted a Parking Strategy, however, the parking landscape has continued to evolve in response to changing travel patterns, customer expectations, technological innovation and wider Council priorities. This refreshed strategy builds upon previous work to provide an updated strategic framework that will guide future decision making, ensuring parking is managed consistently and continues to support the Council's ambitions over the lifetime of the strategy.

The strategy has been informed by a comprehensive evidence base, including parking surveys, utilisation data, stakeholder engagement and user surveys. Rather than repeating this evidence, the Parking

Strategy builds upon the accompanying Evidence Base Report and translates its findings into a clear vision, four strategic themes and 20 objectives that will guide the future management of the Council's parking service.

While Huntingdonshire District Council owns and manages a significant off-street parking portfolio, the wider parking network also includes on-street parking managed by Cambridgeshire County Council, together with privately operated car parks. This strategy therefore focuses on those areas where the District Council has direct responsibility and influence, whilst recognising that successful parking management will continue to rely on partnership working with the County Council, neighbouring authorities, transport operators, businesses and other stakeholders.

Over recent decades, increasing reliance on private car travel has contributed to higher levels of traffic congestion, carbon emissions and poorer air quality, particularly within busy town centres and at peak times. While travel patterns have evolved since the Covid-19 pandemic, private vehicles continue to play a vital role for many residents, businesses and visitors, particularly in a predominantly rural district such as Huntingdonshire where travel choices can vary significantly between communities.

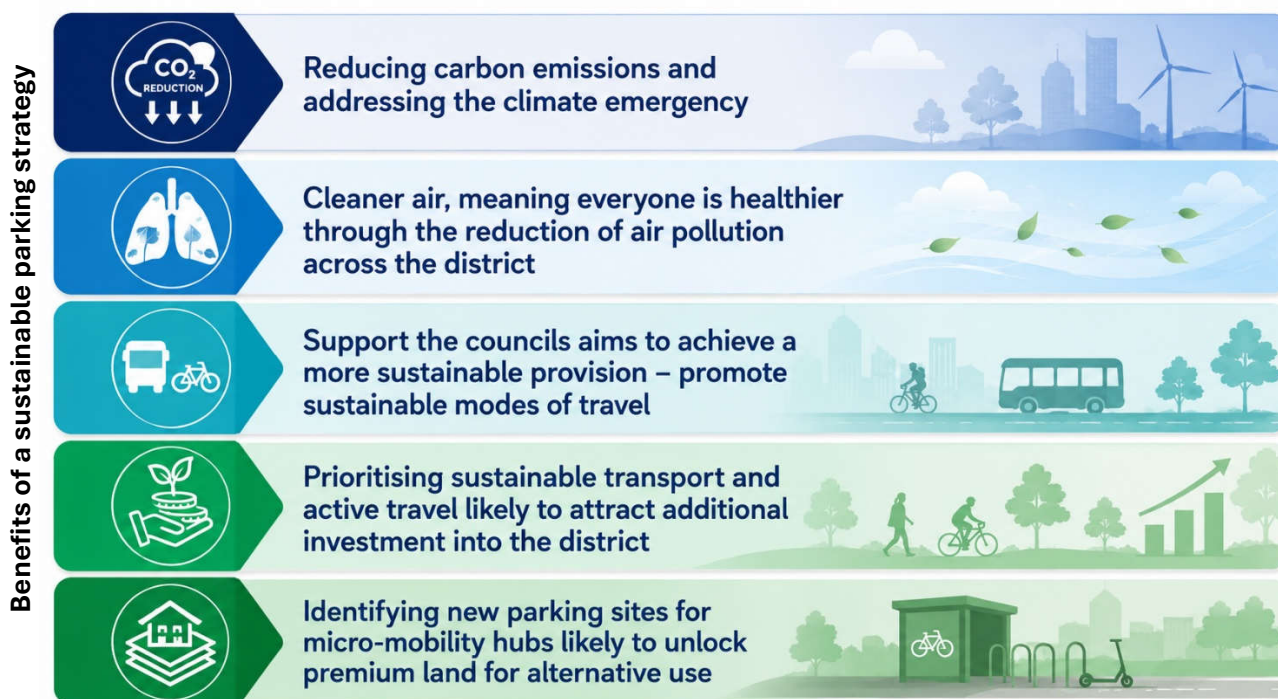
This strategy recognises that the private car will remain an important mode of transport for many journeys. However, it also acknowledges that parking should be planned as part of a wider, integrated transport system. As travel behaviour, technology and customer expectations continue to evolve,

parking must adapt to support greater travel choice whilst continuing to provide convenient and accessible parking where it is needed.

A key principle of the strategy is to integrate parking with active and sustainable transport, along with the existing EV Strategy previously developed. This does not mean discouraging people from driving where the car remains the most appropriate option. Instead, the strategy seeks to ensure that the right parking is provided in the right locations, managed in a way that supports local economic activity whilst encouraging walking, cycling and public transport wherever practical.

Measures such as improved active travel connections, enhanced public transport integration, electric vehicle infrastructure and, in the longer term, integrated transport hubs will all contribute towards a more balanced, resilient and sustainable transport network.

There are many benefits in Huntingdonshire District Council taking the proactive approach to deliver a sustainable parking strategy. Some of these benefits include:





DELIVERING CHANGE

The Parking Strategy sets out a long-term vision for the future management of Huntingdonshire District Council's off-street parking provision. The vision is supported by four strategic themes, each containing a series of objectives that together establish the direction for how parking will be managed, maintained and developed over the lifetime of the strategy.

The themes and objectives should not be viewed in isolation. They have been developed as a complementary framework, with each supporting the delivery of the Council's wider priorities. Collectively, they provide an approach that recognises the important role parking plays in supporting residents, businesses and visitors, whilst responding to changing travel patterns, customer expectations and future opportunities.

Supporting the strategy is an Implementation Plan that translates the strategic objectives into a programme of actions and initiatives. The Implementation Plan identifies the measures required to deliver the vision,

together with indicative timescales, priorities and responsibilities. Actions are grouped into short, medium and longer-term priorities, recognising that some improvements can be delivered quickly whilst others require further planning, investment or partnership working.

The Parking Strategy provides the framework for future decision making rather than detailed solutions for every location. As individual projects come forward, further feasibility work, technical assessments and stakeholder engagement may be required to ensure proposals are appropriate, deliverable and represent value for money.

Successful delivery of the strategy will also depend upon continued collaboration with a range of partners. While the Council has direct responsibility for its off-street parking assets, achieving the wider vision will require ongoing partnership working with the County Council, transport operators, businesses, developers and communities to ensure parking supports wider transport, and economic objectives within Huntingdonshire.



WHY DO WE NEED A STRATEGY?

Parking is one of the Council's most important public assets. Well-managed parking supports thriving town centres, enables access to employment, retail, leisure and community facilities, and contributes to the overall attractiveness of Huntingdonshire as a place to live, work and visit.

At the same time, parking is a finite resource that must be managed carefully to balance the needs of residents, businesses, visitors and the wider community.

The way people travel is continually evolving. Changes with technology, customer expectations, vehicle ownership, patterns of development and environmental priorities are influencing how parking is used across the district. A long-term strategy provides a clear framework for responding to these changes, ensuring decisions are made consistently, supported by evidence and aligned with the Council's wider priorities.

The Parking Strategy recognises that parking is about much more than providing spaces for vehicles. It is an important tool that can support economic growth, improve accessibility, encourage sustainable travel, enhance the customer experience and ensure

the Council's parking assets continue to meet the needs of future generations.

SUPPORTING A THRIVING ECONOMY

Parking plays a vital role in supporting the vitality and viability of Huntingdonshire's market towns, local centres and visitor destinations. Convenient, well-managed parking helps people access shops, services, employment, leisure facilities and community venues, supporting both local businesses and the wider economy.

The strategy promotes an approach that balances the availability of parking with effective management of demand, helping ensure that parking continues to support regeneration, investment and economic growth while responding to the differing needs of individual towns and locations across the district.

SUPPORTING ACTIVE & SUSTAINABLE TRAVEL

For many journeys, particularly within Huntingdonshire's rural communities, the private car will continue to be an essential mode of transport. However, parking also has an important role in supporting wider

transport objectives by integrating with walking, cycling, public transport and emerging travel options.

The strategy promotes a balanced approach that seeks to provide convenient parking where it is needed while encouraging greater travel choice where practical. This includes supporting infrastructure such as electric vehicle charging, improved cycling facilities and, where appropriate, opportunities to better integrate parking with sustainable transport networks.

INVESTING IN HIGH QUALITY PARKING

The Council's car parks represent valuable public assets that require ongoing investment to remain safe, attractive and fit for purpose. Maintaining these assets protects their long-term value, improves the customer experience and ensures parking continues to meet the needs of residents, businesses and visitors.

The strategy promotes a planned approach to maintenance, renewal and investment, recognising that improvements should be prioritised using evidence, customer feedback, asset condition and future demand to maximise the value delivered by the parking service.

PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE

Huntingdonshire will continue to change over the lifetime of this strategy. Population growth, new development, advances in technology, changing travel behaviour and environmental commitments will all influence future parking requirements.

This strategy provides a flexible framework that enables the Council to respond positively to these changes, ensuring parking remains an integral part of a connected, accessible and sustainable transport network. Through regular monitoring and periodic review, the

strategy will continue to evolve alongside the district and the communities it serves.





OUR VISION

The Huntingdonshire Car Park Strategy will enable a well-managed, balanced and future-focused parking service that supports vibrant town centres and sustainable economic growth, ensuring parking is appropriately located, efficiently operated and integrated with active and sustainable travel, whilst providing a safe, accessible and positive parking experience for residents, businesses and visitors.





We have developed a clear and ambitious vision that establishes the long-term direction for the management of Huntingdonshire District Council's off-street parking assets.

The vision recognises the important role that parking plays in supporting residents, businesses and visitors, whilst responding to changing travel patterns, evolving customer expectations, technological innovation and future growth across the district.

Alongside this, the strategy promotes greater integration between parking and the wider transport network. By considering parking alongside walking, cycling, public transport and emerging technologies, the Council will seek to provide greater travel choice, improve accessibility and support more sustainable travel where practical.

The aim is not to discourage the use of the private car where it remains the most appropriate option, but to ensure that parking contributes positively to creating attractive, well connected and prosperous communities that support economic growth and enhance quality of life.

The vision is supported by four strategic themes that reflect the Council's priorities for the future of parking in Huntingdonshire. Each theme is underpinned by a series of objectives that establish the strategic direction for the parking service and provide a consistent framework for future decision making in both the short and longer term.

Delivering these themes and objectives will be the focus of the strategy over its lifetime. Together with the supporting Implementation Plan, they provide a clear programme for investment, management and continuous improvement, ensuring the Council's parking assets continue to support the district's economic, environmental and community ambitions for many years to come.



OUR STRATEGIC PARKING THEMES



SUPPORT THRIVING TOWN CENTRES AND ECONOMIC ACTIVITY

Vibrant town centres rely on convenient, accessible and well managed parking. Whether people are travelling to shop, work, access services, visit attractions or spend time with family and friends, the availability and quality of parking plays an important role in shaping their experience.

Parking therefore makes a significant contribution to the vitality and long-term viability of Huntingdonshire's market towns and local centres.

Managing parking effectively is about more than simply providing enough spaces. The Council must ensure parking is available in the right locations, is easy to find and is managed in a way that supports an appropriate turnover of spaces.

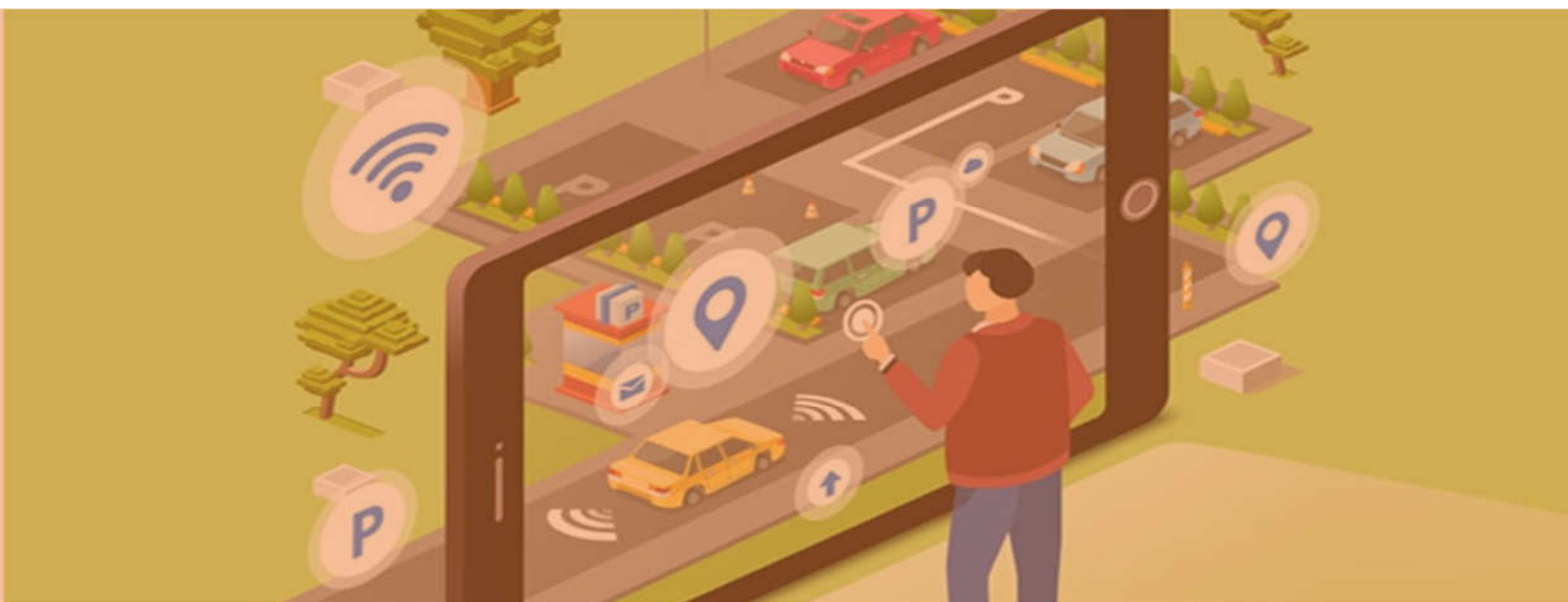
Clear information, effective wayfinding, appropriate tariffs and consistent management help maximise the efficient use of existing parking assets while supporting local businesses and encouraging repeat visits. As customer expectations continue to evolve, parking facilities must also adapt.

This includes maintaining safe, attractive and accessible car parks that meet the needs of a wide range of users, whilst embracing technology that makes parking simpler and more convenient. Investment in the customer experience will help ensure the Council's parking assets continue to meet future needs.

Parking is also a valuable public asset. Decisions about investment, management and future provision should balance economic prosperity with the efficient use of land, ensuring parking continues to support regeneration, town centre vitality and changing patterns of demand.

While opportunities will continue to emerge to encourage more sustainable travel, the private car will remain an important mode of transport for many journeys across Huntingdonshire.

The Council will therefore seek to ensure parking continues to support residents, businesses and visitors, helping create attractive, prosperous and successful town centres for current and future generations.



DELIVER A MODERN, EFFICIENT, AND CUSTOMER FOCUSED PARKING SERVICE

Customer expectations continue to evolve, and the Council's parking service must evolve with them. Delivering a modern parking service means providing facilities that are easy to use, well maintained and supported by technology that improves convenience, efficiency and overall customer experience.

At the same time, the Council must ensure that investment in new technology delivers genuine value, improves the visitor experience, operational performance and supports informed decision making.

Digital technology is becoming increasingly important in the operation and management of parking services. Modern payment systems now offer customers greater flexibility through contactless payments, mobile applications and cashless transactions, making parking quicker and more convenient.

These technologies can also reduce operational costs, improve reliability and minimise the need for cash handling and maintenance of ageing equipment.

Technology also provides opportunities to improve the management of parking assets. Real time information, digital permit systems, occupancy monitoring and data driven management can help make more efficient use of available parking, improve customer information and support evidence-based decisions.

As technology continues to develop, the Council will remain open to innovations that enhance both the customer experience and operational efficiency.

Alongside technological change, the transition to electric vehicles and other emerging forms of mobility will continue throughout the lifetime of this strategy.

The Council will ensure that its parking service remains adaptable, responsive and capable of supporting changing travel behaviour, whilst maintaining a high quality service that meets the needs of residents, businesses and visitors.



INTEGRATE PARKING WITH ACTIVE AND SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORT

Parking should not be considered in isolation but as part of Huntingdonshire's wider transport network. While the private car will continue to play an important role for many journeys, particularly within the district's rural communities, parking also supports walking, cycling, public transport and other sustainable travel options.

By integrating parking with these modes, the Council can improve accessibility, increase travel choice and create a more connected and resilient transport network.

Encouraging sustainable travel requires a coordinated approach across transport planning, infrastructure and parking management. Continued collaboration with Cambridgeshire County Council, the Combined Authority, developers and neighbouring authorities will ensure parking complements wider transport investment and supports local and regional objectives.

Car parks can also help enable more sustainable journeys, providing opportunities for improved cycle parking, better public transport connections and infrastructure that makes sustainable travel more convenient.

In the longer term, there may be opportunities to develop integrated transport hubs where parking, active travel and public transport come together to improve connectivity and support seamless end-to-end journeys. These locations could incorporate facilities such as EV charging, secure cycle parking, mobility hubs and high-quality passenger facilities, making it easier for people to switch between different modes of transport.

The transition to electric vehicles will continue throughout the lifetime of this strategy. Huntingdonshire District Council has already established an Electric Vehicle Strategy, and this Parking Strategy supports its continued delivery by recognising that appropriately located charging infrastructure within Council car parks will be an important part of meeting future demand.

By integrating parking with active and sustainable transport, the Council can improve accessibility, support cleaner journeys and ensure the parking service continues to evolve alongside changing travel behaviour, technological innovation and the wider ambitions for Huntingdonshire.



MANAGE PARKING ASSETS RESPONSIBLY AND PLAN FOR THE FUTURE

The Council's off-street car parks are valuable public assets that support residents, businesses and visitors whilst making an important contribution to the local economy.

Managing these assets responsibly means ensuring they continue to meet the needs of communities today while remaining adaptable to changing travel behaviour, technological innovation, population growth and future development across the district.

Providing the right amount of parking in the right locations is essential. Too little parking can reduce accessibility, constrain economic activity and discourage investment, whilst an oversupply can result in underused land, unnecessary maintenance costs and missed opportunities to support wider regeneration objectives.

The Council must therefore take a balanced, evidence-led approach that considers current demand alongside future needs, enabling informed and appropriate decisions that support long-term economic, environmental and community objectives.

Parking assets should also be viewed within the wider context of place making and sustainable growth. As travel patterns evolve, some locations may require additional investment, whilst others may present opportunities for alternative uses, redevelopment or more efficient operation.

Decisions should be informed by robust evidence and aligned with the Council's ambitions for housing, regeneration, economic growth, sustainability and creating successful places that meet the needs of current and future generations.

The supply, management and pricing of parking must continue to support the long-term success of Huntingdonshire's market towns whilst complementing wider transport and planning objectives.

Through regular monitoring, ongoing review and proportionate investment, the Council will ensure its parking assets remain financially sustainable, resilient and capable of meeting the changing needs of future generations.



OUR OBJECTIVES:

The four strategic Themes are supported by a series of Objectives that establish the long-term direction for the Council's parking service. Together, these Objectives provide a clear framework for future decision making, setting out the Council's priorities, the rationale behind them and the outcomes they are intended to achieve.



The 20 Objectives within this strategy are grouped under the four strategic Themes that together support the Council's long-term vision for parking. Whilst each Objective has a distinct focus, many contribute to more than one Theme, reflecting the interconnected nature of the parking service. It is important to recognise that no Objective should be considered in isolation. Delivering the vision will require the Themes and Objectives to be implemented collectively, ensuring the greatest benefits for residents, businesses, visitors and the wider district.

		Support Thriving Town Centres & Economic Activity	Deliver a Modern, Efficient, & Customer Focused Parking Service	Integrate Parking with Active & Sustainable Transport	Manage Parking Assets Responsibly & Plan for the Future
Objective 01-1	Support Town Centres: We will manage parking to support thriving town centres, local businesses and visitors.	✓	✓		✓
Objective 01-2	Fair Parking Charges: We will review parking charges regularly to ensure they remain fair, appropriate and based on local needs.	✓			✓
Objective 01-3	The Right Parking in the Right Places: We will provide the right type of parking in the right locations, such as short-stay parking near shops and long-stay parking further away.	✓	✓		✓
Objective 01-4	Parking for Events and Visitors: We will ensure parking can respond to busy periods, events and increased visitor demand.	✓	✓		✓
Objective 01-5	Better Signs and Car Parks: We will improve car park signs, directions and the overall appearance of council car parks.	✓	✓	✓	✓
Objective 02-1	Easy and Accessible Parking: Provide a safe, accessible and easy-to-use parking service for everyone.	✓	✓		✓
Objective 02-2	Looking After Our Car Parks: Maintain council car parks so they remain safe, reliable and in good condition.	✓	✓		✓
Objective 02-3	Fair Parking Enforcement: Ensure parking rules are applied fairly and consistently.	✓	✓		✓
Objective 02-4	Using Parking Data: Use parking data to help improve how council car parks are managed.	✓	✓		
Objective 02-5	Using Technology: Use technology to make parking easier and improve the parking service.	✓	✓		✓
Objective 03-1	Support Sustainable Travel: Support walking, cycling, buses and other sustainable ways to travel.	✓		✓	✓
Objective 03-2	Walking and Cycling Facilities: Improve facilities for people walking and cycling to and from council car parks.	✓	✓	✓	✓
Objective 03-3	Future Transport Hubs: Identify locations for future transport hubs with parking, cycling, walking and public transport connections.	✓	✓	✓	✓
Objective 03-4	Electric Vehicle Charging: Provide electric vehicle charging where there is demand.		✓	✓	
Objective 03-5	Working with Partners: Work with partners to encourage more sustainable travel and reduce parking demand.	✓		✓	✓
Objective 04-1	Planning for the Future: Plan ahead for future parking needs as towns and communities grow.	✓		✓	✓
Objective 04-2	Monitoring Parking Demand: Monitor parking demand to ensure enough parking is available as the district grows.	✓			✓
Objective 04-3	Supporting Future Growth: Ensure parking supports new development and future growth across the district.	✓	✓		✓
Objective 04-4	Making Better Use of Car Parks: Review underused car parks to see how they could be used more effectively.	✓	✓	✓	✓
Objective 04-5	Considering Alternative Uses: Consider alternative uses whilst ensuring that the required car parking capacity required as demonstrated by data is maintained or replaced within close proximity or in situ.	✓	✓	✓	✓

SUPPORT THRIVING TOWN CENTRES AND ECONOMIC ACTIVITY

01-1: Support Town Centres: We will manage parking to support thriving town centres, local businesses and visitors.

WHY THIS OBJECTIVE?

Convenient, accessible and well managed parking is fundamental to the continued success of Huntingdonshire's market towns. Council car parks provide access to retail, employment, leisure, healthcare and community facilities, making them an important contributor to the local economy and the attractiveness of town centres.

Different towns and locations perform different roles and experience varying levels of parking demand. A consistent approach across every location would not recognise these differences or support the diverse needs of residents, businesses and visitors.

Instead, parking provision, duration of stay and tariffs should reflect the function of each town centre, encouraging an appropriate turnover of spaces whilst maintaining convenient access for those who need it.

As travel behaviour, economic conditions and town centres continue to evolve, parking policies must remain responsive.

Decisions should be informed by evidence, customer demand and wider regeneration ambitions, ensuring the parking service continues to support prosperous, vibrant and accessible town centres throughout the lifetime of this strategy.

HOW WILL IT BE DELIVERED?

The Council will regularly review parking demand, utilisation, duration of stay and customer behaviour to ensure parking arrangements remain appropriate for each location.

Future decisions relating to tariffs, charging periods, time limits and parking management will be informed by evidence and considered alongside the role each car park plays in supporting local economic activity.

The Council will continue to monitor the performance of its parking assets throughout the lifetime of the strategy, allowing policies to evolve in response to changing travel patterns, customer expectations, technological innovation and future growth.

This will ensure the parking service continues to provide a positive customer experience whilst supporting thriving town centres across Huntingdonshire.

01-2: Fair Parking Charges: We will review parking charges regularly to ensure they remain fair, appropriate and based on local needs.

WHY THIS OBJECTIVE?

Parking tariffs are one of the Council's most effective tools for managing demand and ensuring parking is used efficiently. Appropriately set tariffs help encourage an appropriate turnover of spaces, improve parking availability in the busiest locations and support access to town centres for shoppers, visitors and those accessing local services, amenities, and open spaces.

Tariffs should therefore be viewed as an important part of the overall management of the parking service, helping to balance the needs of different users whilst supporting the continued vitality and viability of Huntingdonshire's market towns.

Parking tariffs should not remain static over the lifetime of this strategy. Changes in travel behaviour, customer expectations, inflation, operating costs and wider economic conditions mean that charging arrangements must be reviewed periodically to ensure they remain appropriate.

Equally, different car parks perform different roles within the parking network, and tariff structures should continue to reflect these differences rather than adopting a one-size-fits-all approach.

Evidence must remain at the heart of future tariff decisions. Parking occupancy surveys, duration of stay information, benchmarking against comparable authorities, customer feedback and an understanding of local economic conditions all provide valuable insight into how parking is being used and whether existing tariffs continue to achieve their intended purpose. This evidence-led approach will enable the Council to make

informed, transparent and appropriate decisions that reflect local circumstances rather than applying changes uniformly across the district.

Income generated through the parking service also plays an important role in maintaining and improving the Council's parking assets. Revenue supports the ongoing operation of the parking service and enables investment in maintenance, technology, accessibility improvements and customer facilities.

By balancing demand management, economic vitality and financial sustainability, the Council can ensure that parking continues to provide value for residents, businesses and visitors while supporting the long-term management of its parking assets.



HOW WILL IT BE DELIVERED?

The Council will undertake regular reviews of parking tariffs using a robust evidence base that includes parking occupancy and duration of stay surveys, benchmarking against comparable authorities, customer feedback, operational costs and local economic conditions. This information will help ensure tariffs remain proportionate, reflect local circumstances and continue to support the role of each car park within the wider parking network.

Future tariff reviews will consider a range of factors, including the location and function of each car park, parking demand, the availability of alternative parking, the needs of residents, businesses and visitors, and the potential impact on town centre vitality.

Where changes are proposed, the Council will seek to ensure they are justified by evidence and aligned with wider transport, regeneration and economic objectives rather than being considered in isolation.

The Council will also continue to review the consistency and simplicity of its charging structure, recognising that clear and understandable tariffs improve the customer experience and make the parking service easier to use.

Opportunities to simplify tariff structures, introduce greater consistency across similar car parks and respond to changing customer expectations will be considered where these support the wider objectives of the strategy.

Tariffs will continue to be monitored throughout the lifetime of the strategy, allowing the Council to respond to changing travel patterns, economic conditions and future growth.

This will ensure the parking service remains financially sustainable whilst continuing to support thriving town centres, positive customer experiences and the long-term management of the Council's parking assets.



O1-3: The Right Parking in the Right Places: We will provide the right type of parking in the right locations, such as short-stay parking near shops and long-stay parking further away

WHY THIS OBJECTIVE?

Not all car parks serve the same purpose. Some primarily support short visits to shops and services, whilst others accommodate employees, commuters, leisure users or longer-stay visitors.

Managing every car park in the same way can reduce the overall effectiveness of the parking network and limit the availability of spaces where demand is greatest.

Car parks located closest to town centre destinations are often the most convenient and therefore the most valuable for supporting retail, hospitality and other businesses that rely on regular customer turnover.

Ensuring these locations remain available for short-stay parking, where appropriate, can improve accessibility, increase parking availability and support the continued vitality of Huntingdonshire's market towns.

At the same time, longer-stay parking remains an important part of the overall parking offer. Providing appropriate long-stay parking in suitable locations can help meet the needs of employees, commuters and visitors while reducing pressure on the most centrally located car parks.

Managing the parking network in this way enables different car parks to perform complementary roles that maximise the efficient use of available capacity.

HOW WILL IT BE DELIVERED?

The Council will continue to review the role and performance of each car park using occupancy data, duration of stay information, customer demand and local knowledge.

This evidence will inform decisions on parking duration, tariffs, charging periods and other management measures, ensuring each car park operates in a way that best supports its intended function.

Future changes will be considered alongside wider town centre strategies, regeneration projects, transport initiatives and local circumstances, recognising that parking requirements may differ between Huntingdonshire's market towns.

The Council will also work with businesses, local communities and key stakeholders to ensure that parking management reflects the needs of each location.

Regular monitoring and periodic reviews will enable the Council to respond to changing travel patterns, customer expectations and future growth, ensuring the parking network remains balanced, flexible and capable of supporting both economic activity and wider transport objectives throughout the lifetime of the strategy.

01-4: Parking for Events and Visitors: We will ensure parking can respond to busy periods, events and increased visitor demand.

WHY THIS OBJECTIVE?

Huntingdonshire's towns host a wide range of events throughout the year, including markets, festivals, cultural activities, seasonal celebrations and sporting events, all of which generate temporary increases in parking demand. The evidence base demonstrates that while the Council's overall parking portfolio has sufficient capacity to accommodate typical levels of demand, some car parks can experience significantly higher occupancy during busy periods, creating localised pressure and reducing the availability of convenient parking.

Supporting the visitor economy is an important role of the Council's parking service. Well managed parking helps ensure that residents and visitors can access town centres easily, supporting local businesses, markets, hospitality venues and community events. Equally, poor parking management during busy periods can lead to unnecessary congestion, inefficient use of available capacity and a poorer visitor experience.

Rather than providing additional permanent parking to accommodate occasional peaks in demand, the Council should seek to make better use of its existing parking assets through effective management, clear communication and flexible operational arrangements.

This will enable the parking network to respond to changing patterns of demand whilst continuing to support the economic vitality and attractiveness of the towns across the Huntingdonshire district.

HOW WILL IT BE DELIVERED?

The Council will continue to monitor parking demand associated with major events, seasonal trading periods and markets, using occupancy surveys, transaction data and operational experience to understand how demand varies throughout the year.

This evidence will be used to identify locations where temporary management measures may improve the operation of the parking network.

Where appropriate, the Council will consider a range of measures to manage peak demand, including temporary signage, customer information, revised parking arrangements, enhanced wayfinding and improved communication directing motorists towards available parking. Opportunities to utilise spare capacity within nearby car parks, where available, will also be explored to reduce pressure on the busiest locations.

The Council will work closely with stakeholders to ensure parking arrangements are considered as part of the planning process for major events.

This collaborative approach will help maintain accessibility, support the visitor economy and provide a positive experience for residents and visitors whilst making the most effective use of the existing parking portfolio.

O1-5: Better Signs and Car Parks: We will improve car park signs, directions and the overall appearance of council car parks.

WHY THIS OBJECTIVE?

A well-designed parking experience begins before a vehicle enters a car park. Clear directional signage, intuitive wayfinding and an attractive public realm help visitors find parking quickly and confidently, reducing unnecessary circulation, congestion and driver frustration. Once parked, safe and welcoming pedestrian routes encourage people to continue their journey on foot and create a positive first impression of the town.

For many visitors, a Council operated car park represents their first interaction with a town. The quality, appearance and ease of use of the car park can therefore influence perceptions of the wider area. Well maintained parking facilities, high-quality signage and attractive pedestrian environments contribute to a more welcoming experience, encouraging repeat visits and supporting local businesses and the visitor economy.

Improving legibility and the public realm also benefits residents, businesses and those with accessibility needs. Providing clear information, safe walking routes and inclusive design principles helps create facilities that are easier to use, more accessible and better connected to surrounding destinations.

HOW WILL IT BE DELIVERED?

The Council will review existing signage, wayfinding and pedestrian connections across its parking estate to identify opportunities for improvement.

Future investment will seek to provide clear and consistent directional signage, intuitive information for users and high-quality pedestrian links between car parks and nearby destinations, making it easier and more enjoyable to access key destinations.

Opportunities to improve digital parking information and online mapping will also be considered where these enhance the customer experience.

Improvements to the public realm will be considered alongside wider town centre regeneration projects, public realm enhancements and transport initiatives, ensuring parking facilities complement the character and function of each location.

Where appropriate, the Council will also consider opportunities to improve landscaping, lighting, accessibility and the overall appearance of its car parks as part of planned maintenance and investment programmes.

The Council will continue to monitor customer feedback, condition assessments and evolving best practice to ensure parking facilities remain safe, welcoming and easy to use, supporting a positive customer experience and reinforcing Huntingdonshire's reputation as an attractive place to live, work and visit.



DELIVER A MODERN, EFFICIENT, AND CUSTOMER-FOCUSED PARKING SERVICE

Objective O2-1: Easy and Accessible Parking: Provide a safe, accessible and easy-to-use parking service for everyone.

WHY THIS OBJECTIVE?

For many people, the car park provides their first and last impression of a town centre. A well-managed, welcoming and easy-to-use parking environment encourages repeat visits, supports local businesses and creates confidence in the Council's parking service.

Huntingdonshire's parking portfolio has developed over many years and reflects different periods of investment. As a result, there are variations in signage, facilities, accessibility and customer information. Whilst individual car parks will continue to perform different roles, there is value in providing a more consistent customer experience across the parking estate.

Accessibility is fundamental to good parking management. Car parks should be safe and convenient for everyone, including disabled users, older people, families with young children and those with temporary mobility impairments. This includes parking provision, safe pedestrian routes, good lighting, high-quality surfaces and clear signage.

Customers also expect parking to be simple and convenient. Straightforward payment options, clear information and easy-to-understand parking arrangements all contribute to a positive experience. By delivering a consistent and customer focused approach, HDC can improve satisfaction and ensure its parking service continues to support residents, businesses and visitors.

HOW WILL IT BE DELIVERED?

The Council will seek to establish consistent standards across its parking estate, covering signage, customer information, accessibility, lighting, maintenance and the overall quality of the parking environment.

Whilst individual car parks will continue to reflect their specific role and location, customers should experience a recognisable standard of service wherever they park.

Investment programmes will continue to improve accessibility where opportunities arise, including reviewing accessible parking provision, upgrading pedestrian routes, enhancing lighting and improving surfaces as part of planned maintenance programmes.

The Council will continue to modernise the customer experience through clear information and flexible, reliable payment options, whilst ensuring that inclusive payment methods remain available for those who do not wish to use digital services.

Customer feedback, parking data and emerging best practice will inform future improvements, ensuring Huntingdonshire's parking service remains safe, accessible, efficient and responsive to changing customer expectations.

Objective O2-2: Looking After Our Car Parks: Maintain council car parks so they remain safe, reliable and in good condition.

WHY THIS OBJECTIVE?

The Council's car parks represent valuable public assets that require ongoing investment to remain safe, accessible and fit for purpose. Surfaces, drainage, lighting, signage, payment equipment and other infrastructure will deteriorate over time, and without planned maintenance relatively minor defects can develop into significant and costly problems.

A structured approach to asset management provides an opportunity to move away from predominantly reactive maintenance towards planned intervention based on condition, risk and expected asset life. This enables investment to be anticipated and prioritised, helping the Council make more efficient use of available resources and reduce the potential for unexpected expenditure.

The condition of car parks also directly influences customer experience. Well-maintained surfaces, reliable equipment, lighting and quality infrastructure contribute to facilities that feel safe, welcoming and professionally managed. Maintaining these standards is therefore important both operationally and in supporting the attractiveness of towns and key destinations.

Lifecycle planning is particularly important given the long-term horizon of this strategy. Understanding when significant components are likely to require repair, renewal or replacement will enable the Council to plan future budgets and coordinate improvements rather than considering individual assets in isolation.

HOW WILL IT BE DELIVERED?

The Council will develop a maintenance and lifecycle programme for its parking estate, supported by periodic condition assessments and an up-to-date inventory of key assets.

This will identify maintenance requirements, anticipated replacement periods and indicative costs, allowing investment to be prioritised according to condition, safety, operational importance and funding.

Where possible, maintenance will be coordinated with wider car park improvements so that resurfacing, lighting, accessibility, signage, technology and other works can be delivered efficiently as part of planned investment programmes.

Priority will be given to interventions necessary to maintain safety, accessibility and compliance, while preventative maintenance will be used where appropriate to extend asset life and reduce longer-term costs.

The programme will be reviewed periodically to reflect changing asset condition, costs and operational requirements.

This lifecycle approach will provide the Council with greater certainty over future investment requirements, helping maintain the quality of its parking estate while ensuring expenditure remains planned, proportionate and financially sustainable over the lifetime of the strategy.

Objective O2-3: Fair Parking Enforcement: Ensure parking rules are applied fairly and consistently.

WHY THIS OBJECTIVE?

Effective enforcement is an important part of a well-managed parking service. Parking restrictions and conditions are introduced for specific reasons, including maintaining availability, encouraging turnover, protecting accessible bays and ensuring car parks operate safely and efficiently.

Without appropriate enforcement, these objectives can be undermined, and responsible users may be disadvantaged.

Enforcement should be fair, consistent and appropriate. Customers should be able to understand where they can park, how long they can stay, what they are required to pay and any restrictions that apply. Clear signage, straightforward terms and reliable payment systems are therefore as important to achieving compliance as enforcement itself.

The purpose of enforcement should primarily be to encourage compliance rather than generate revenue. A successful parking service is one where customers understand and follow the requirements, allowing available capacity to be used effectively and ensuring spaces intended for particular users or purposes remain available.

Enforcement also needs to respond to changing parking behaviour. Different car parks experience different levels and types of non-compliance, meaning resources should be applied according to evidence and operational need rather than applying the same level of enforcement across every location. Providing a reactive service to customers can often improve relationships.

HOW WILL IT BE DELIVERED?

The Council will continue to operate a consistent approach to enforcement across its parking estate, ensuring restrictions and parking conditions are clearly communicated and appropriately enforced.

Enforcement activity will be informed by compliance data, customer feedback and operational experience, enabling resources to be focused on locations and times where non-compliance has the greatest impact.

Particular consideration will be given to behaviours that affect accessibility, safety, turnover or the availability of spaces for legitimate users.

The Council will periodically review signage, parking conditions and customer information to identify opportunities to make requirements clearer and reduce inadvertent non-compliance.

Where recurring issues are identified, consideration will be given to whether changes to management arrangements could address the underlying problem before increased enforcement is considered.

Technology and parking data will also be used where appropriate to improve the efficiency and targeting of enforcement activity.

This balanced approach will help maintain public confidence in the parking service while ensuring enforcement remains fair, transparent and focused on supporting the effective operation of Huntingdonshire's car parks.

Objective O2-4: Using Parking Data: Use parking data to help improve how council car parks are managed.

WHY THIS OBJECTIVE?

Effective parking management requires a clear understanding of how car parks are being used and how demand changes over time. Occupancy, duration of stay, turnover, payment and compliance data can provide valuable insight into where pressure exists, where capacity is underutilised and how individual car parks are performing.

The evidence gathered to support this strategy demonstrates that parking demand varies considerably between locations, times of day and different periods of the year.

Town wide averages can also mask significant differences between individual car parks. Regular monitoring is therefore important to ensure future decisions respond to actual patterns of use rather than assumptions about parking demand.

Improved data can support decisions relating to tariffs, investment, maintenance and the function of individual car parks. It can also help the Council identify emerging trends and evaluate whether changes to parking management are achieving their intended outcomes.

A data-led approach does not mean that decisions will be determined by parking data alone. Customer feedback, economic conditions, accessibility, town centre priorities and wider transport objectives will continue to be considered alongside quantitative evidence to provide a balanced basis for decision making.

HOW WILL IT BE DELIVERED?

The Council will establish an appropriate and effective approach to monitoring its parking portfolio, using available information such as occupancy surveys, duration of stay, parking transactions, payment data and compliance information. The frequency and level of monitoring will reflect the role of individual car parks and the decisions that need to be informed.

Where appropriate, existing and future digital systems will be used to improve the quality and accessibility of parking data, enabling trends to be identified more efficiently and reducing reliance on periodic manual surveys.

Parking data will be reviewed periodically to inform tariff reviews, investment priorities, operational changes and the future role of individual car parks.

Particular attention will be given to identifying locations experiencing sustained capacity pressure or underutilisation rather than responding to isolated peaks.

The Council will also use monitoring to evaluate the impact of interventions delivered through this strategy, creating an ongoing evidence base that allows parking management to adapt as demand, travel behaviour and customer expectations change. It is recommended to review the Implementation Plan approximately 24 months post strategy approval to determine how much progress has been made.

Objective O2-5: Using Technology: Use technology to make parking easier and improve the parking service.

WHY THIS OBJECTIVE?

Technology is transforming the way parking services are managed, providing opportunities to improve the customer experience whilst making the parking service more efficient and responsive.

Digital payment systems, real-time information, remote monitoring and improved data collection can all help simplify parking for users whilst supporting more effective management of the Council's parking portfolio.

However, technology should be introduced where it provides a clear benefit rather than being adopted for its own sake. Huntingdonshire's car parks perform a variety of functions and operate at very different levels of demand. As a result, the level of technological intervention required will vary between locations. In many cases, simpler and lower-cost solutions may provide better value than more complex systems.

A proportionate approach allows investment to be targeted where it delivers the greatest operational, financial and customer benefits. It also provides flexibility to respond to future technological advances and changing customer expectations without committing to unnecessary infrastructure or expenditure.

HOW WILL IT BE DELIVERED?

The Council will continue to review emerging technologies and assess opportunities to improve customer experience, operational efficiency and the quality of parking data.

Decisions on future investment will be based on evidence of need, operational benefits, affordability and value for money.

Where appropriate, the Council will consider technologies such as improved payment systems, digital customer information, remote monitoring, occupancy data collection and other smart parking solutions that simplify parking and support more efficient management.

The type of technology adopted will reflect the role and function of each car park rather than applying a single solution across the entire parking estate.

The performance of new technologies will be monitored throughout the lifetime of the strategy, ensuring investment continues to deliver measurable benefits for customers and the Council whilst remaining flexible to future innovation and changing service requirements.



INTEGRATE PARKING WITH ACTIVE & SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORT

Objective O3-1: Support Sustainable Travel: Support walking, cycling, buses and other sustainable ways to travel.

WHY THIS OBJECTIVE?

Parking should not be considered in isolation. Every journey begins and ends with parking, whether travelling by car, public transport, walking or cycling. The way car parks are planned, managed and connected to surrounding destinations can therefore have a significant influence on how people choose to travel, particularly for shorter journeys and trips within Huntingdonshire's market towns.

Historically, parking has often been viewed simply as a destination in its own right. Increasingly, however, there is recognition that car parks form an integral part of the wider transport system.

Well located, well connected and accessible parking can encourage people to complete part of their journey on foot, by cycle or by public transport, whilst poorly integrated parking can reinforce unnecessary car dependency and reduce the attractiveness of more sustainable travel options.

The evidence base demonstrates that Huntingdonshire generally benefits from sufficient off-street parking provision across its principal towns. Rather than continually increasing parking supply, there is an opportunity to maximise the value of existing car parks by improving how they connect with surrounding streets, public spaces, public transport facilities and active travel routes.

Better integration can improve accessibility without requiring significant increases in parking capacity.

This approach also supports the Council's wider ambitions around sustainable growth, healthier communities and reducing transport related carbon emissions. Whilst the private car will remain an essential mode of transport for many residents, particularly within a predominantly rural district, many shorter journeys have the potential to be undertaken, either wholly or in part, by walking, cycling or public transport where attractive alternatives are available.

Importantly, this objective is not intended to discourage car use. Instead, it seeks to ensure that parking complements the wider transport network, enabling people to choose the most appropriate mode of travel for each journey.

By improving connectivity between car parks and other transport modes, the Council can create a more resilient, efficient and accessible transport system that supports residents, businesses and visitors alike.



HOW WILL IT BE DELIVERED?

The Council will consider parking as an integral component of the wider transport network when planning future investment and improvements across its parking portfolio. This will include ensuring that car parks provide safe, direct and attractive walking connections to town centres, public transport interchanges, employment areas, visitor attractions and key community facilities wherever practicable.

Future investment programmes will seek opportunities to improve links between parking facilities and active travel infrastructure, including walking routes, cycle networks and secure cycle parking. Where appropriate, car parks may also provide locations for supporting infrastructure such as cycle parking, mobility hubs, electric vehicle charging and facilities that encourage multi-modal journeys.

The Council will continue to work closely with Cambridgeshire County Council, the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority, neighbouring authorities, public transport operators, developers and other partners to ensure parking is considered alongside wider transport and development proposals.

Integrating parking with the Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP), public transport improvements, town centre regeneration and new development will help ensure that future investment delivers multiple benefits rather than treating parking as a standalone asset.

As travel patterns and technology continue to evolve, the Council will also remain responsive to emerging opportunities that improve integration between different modes of transport.

This may include the future development of mobility hubs, enhanced interchange facilities, shared mobility services and smarter parking management technologies that make it easier for users to combine different modes within a single journey.

The Council will use parking occupancy surveys, customer feedback and wider transport evidence to monitor how parking supports access to town centres and key destinations.

This evidence-led approach will enable future investment to be targeted where it delivers the greatest benefit, ensuring parking continues to support sustainable travel whilst maintaining convenient access for those journeys where the private car remains the most appropriate choice.



Objective O3-2: Walking and Cycling Facilities: Improve facilities for people walking and cycling to and from council car parks.

WHY THIS OBJECTIVE?

Car parks provide more than simply a place to leave a vehicle. They are often the starting point for onward journeys on foot or by cycle and should provide safe, convenient and attractive facilities that encourage active travel where appropriate. Improving these facilities can make it easier for residents and visitors to complete part of their journey without relying solely on the private car.

Many Council operated car parks are well positioned to support access to town centres, employment areas, visitor attractions and community facilities.

However, the availability and quality of supporting infrastructure varies between locations. Opportunities exist to improve pedestrian routes, provide secure cycle parking and strengthen links with existing and proposed walking and cycling networks.

Providing active travel infrastructure can deliver multiple benefits. Secure cycle parking encourages more people to cycle, whilst high-quality pedestrian routes improve accessibility for all users, including those with mobility impairments, parents with pushchairs and visitors unfamiliar with the area. These improvements also contribute to a safer, more welcoming environment and a better customer experience.

Not every car park will be suitable for every type of intervention. Improvements should therefore be based on the role, location and function of each site, ensuring investment is targeted where it delivers the greatest benefit.

HOW WILL IT BE DELIVERED?

The Council will review its parking estate to identify locations where active travel facilities would provide the greatest benefit.

Priority will be given to car parks serving town centres, transport interchanges, visitor destinations and locations that connect directly with existing or proposed walking and cycling routes.

Future investment will consider facilities such as secure cycle parking, improved pedestrian routes, dropped kerbs, wayfinding, seating and lighting, alongside other measures that improve access to and from car parks.

Where appropriate, complementary facilities such as cycle repair stations or lockers will also be considered.

These improvements will be coordinated with wider transport, public realm and regeneration projects wherever possible, whilst external funding opportunities will be pursued to support delivery.

As the parking estate evolves, significant refurbishment projects and new parking provision should also consider how active travel facilities can be incorporated from the outset, creating more accessible, attractive and inclusive parking facilities that support a wider range of travel choices.

Objective O3-3: Future Transport Hubs: Identify locations for future transport hubs with parking, cycling, walking and public transport connections.

WHY THIS OBJECTIVE?

Travel patterns are expected to continue evolving over the next 20 years. Advances in vehicle technology, customer expectations, improvements to public transport and active travel infrastructure, and the continued growth of low emission vehicles all have the potential to reshape how Huntingdonshire's towns and key destinations are accessed.

Whilst HDC's existing parking portfolio provides sufficient capacity to meet current demand, there is an opportunity to consider how parking provision may evolve over the longer term. Rather than accommodating all parking demand within town centres, future investment may encourage a more balanced distribution by providing alternatives on the edge of towns, well connected to walking, cycling and public transport.

Integrated Transport Hubs can play a key role in supporting this transition. These facilities would combine convenient parking with a range of sustainable travel options, allowing users to complete their journey by alternative modes where appropriate.

Depending on local circumstances, they could incorporate EV charging, secure cycle parking, cycle hire, shared mobility services and convenient public transport connections, providing greater travel choice while helping reduce pressure on central parking facilities.

The concept is not intended to replace town centre parking or discourage car use where it remains the most appropriate option. Instead, it recognises that some journeys may be better served by parking on the edge of town where onward travel by sustainable modes is

attractive, convenient and reliable. Over time, this could improve accessibility, reduce congestion and create greater flexibility in how parking assets are managed.

Given the long-term nature of this opportunity, the priority is not to deliver Integrated Transport Hubs immediately, but to identify and safeguard suitable opportunities where appropriate. This will allow the Council to respond to future changes in travel behaviour, funding opportunities and technological development without limiting future choices.

HOW WILL IT BE DELIVERED?

The Council will work with stakeholders to identify locations that could support future Integrated Transport Hubs. These should provide convenient access to town centres while connecting effectively with existing or proposed transport networks.

As part of future transport planning, regeneration projects and development proposals, the Council will consider opportunities to safeguard land capable of accommodating these facilities. Potential sites will be assessed against accessibility, surrounding land uses, transport connectivity, parking demand, environment and delivery.

Where opportunities arise, Integrated Transport Hubs could be introduced incrementally, allowing facilities to evolve alongside demand. Initial phases may focus on enhanced walking and cycling links, secure cycle parking and EV charging, with facilities such as cycle hire, and shared mobility added over time.

Objective O3-4: Electric Vehicle Charging: Provide electric vehicle charging where there is demand.

WHY THIS OBJECTIVE?

The transition towards low emission vehicles represents one of the most significant changes affecting the parking sector over the lifetime of this strategy. As electric vehicle ownership continues to increase, the availability of convenient and reliable charging infrastructure will become an increasingly important consideration for residents, businesses and visitors when choosing where to travel and park.

Huntingdonshire District Council has already adopted an [Electric Vehicle Strategy](#), which provides the strategic framework for the rollout of charging infrastructure across the district. This Parking Strategy supports that wider strategy by recognising the important role that council operated car parks will play in accommodating future charging demand.

Rather than duplicating the objectives of the EV Strategy, this objective focuses on ensuring that parking infrastructure evolves alongside changing vehicle technology and customer expectations.

Council operated car parks provide many of the characteristics required for public charging infrastructure. They are located close to town centres, employment areas, community facilities and visitor destinations, often with dwell times that are well suited to destination charging.

They also provide opportunities to support residents without access to private driveways, enabling equitable access to charging infrastructure across the district.

The transition to electric vehicles must, however, be carefully managed. Installing charging infrastructure requires significant investment, electrical capacity and ongoing maintenance, whilst excessive provision risks underutilising valuable parking spaces during the earlier stages of market growth.

Equally, insufficient infrastructure may discourage electric vehicle adoption and reduce the attractiveness of town centres and visitor destinations.

For these reasons, investment should be evidence-led and appropriate, responding to changes in vehicle ownership, charging behaviour and technological development.

This will ensure that infrastructure is delivered where it is needed most, whilst maintaining an appropriate balance between charging provision and general parking capacity.

HOW WILL IT BE DELIVERED?

The Council will continue to deliver charging infrastructure in accordance with its adopted Electric Vehicle Strategy, ensuring that investment within council operated car parks complements the wider rollout of charging facilities across Huntingdonshire.

Future provision will be informed by parking demand, utilisation of existing charge points, local patterns of electric vehicle ownership, available electrical capacity and emerging technologies.

Objective O3-5: Working with Partners: Work with partners to encourage more sustainable travel and reduce parking demand.

WHY THIS OBJECTIVE?

Many of the factors that influence parking demand sit beyond the direct control of HDC. The availability of public transport, the quality of walking and cycling infrastructure, the location of new development, and wider travel patterns are shaped by a range of organisations. Delivering a successful parking strategy therefore requires close partnership working.

The evidence demonstrates that parking demand varies a lot between locations and time of year. Whilst effective management can optimise the use of existing capacity, longer-term reductions in unnecessary parking demand are most likely to be achieved by improving the attractiveness and availability of alternative travel options, particularly for shorter journeys where sustainable travel choices are realistic.

Partnership working also provides opportunities to coordinate investment, secure external funding and ensure parking is considered alongside wider transport, regeneration and development proposals. By aligning priorities and sharing evidence, organisations can deliver more integrated solutions that improve accessibility whilst supporting economic growth, environmental objectives and healthier communities.

Importantly, this objective recognises that the private car will continue to play a vital role for many journeys across Huntingdonshire, particularly in rural areas where travel choices are more limited. The aim is therefore not to discourage car use, but to provide greater travel choice and reduce unnecessary parking demand where practical alternatives exist.

HOW WILL IT BE DELIVERED?

The Council will continue to work closely with stakeholders to ensure parking is considered as part of wider transport planning and investment decisions. This collaborative approach will help align parking with improvements to active travel, public transport and connectivity across the district.

Opportunities will be sought to coordinate parking management with new transport infrastructure, regeneration projects and major developments, ensuring future growth is supported by a balanced and integrated approach to access. The Council will also seek external funding opportunities to support projects that deliver wider transport and parking benefits.

Where appropriate, HDC will support initiatives that encourage sustainable travel choices, including workplace travel planning, public transport improvements and active travel programmes. Although many of these measures are led by partner organisations, the Council's parking service can play a supporting role by ensuring parking policies complement wider transport initiatives.

The Council will share evidence, monitor travel patterns and review parking demand alongside its partners, ensuring future parking decisions respond to changing travel behaviour and informed by an understanding of the districts transport needs.

MANAGE PARKING ASSETS RESPONSIBLY AND PLAN FOR THE FUTURE

Objective O4-1: Planning for the Future: Plan ahead for future parking needs as towns and communities grow.

WHY THIS OBJECTIVE?

Huntingdonshire is expected to continue to grow over the lifetime of this strategy, with new housing, employment and regeneration potentially changing the scale and distribution of parking demand. Although current evidence indicates generally sufficient capacity across the Council's portfolio, this may not remain the case in every location over the next 20 years.

Future demand will be influenced by development, population growth, changes in town centre activity and evolving travel behaviour. Some locations may experience increasing pressure, particularly where existing parking is already well utilised or opportunities to expand provision are constrained.

Planning for these changes does not necessarily mean providing additional car parks. Better management of existing capacity, changes to the function of individual sites or improved sustainable transport connections may provide more appropriate solutions.

However, where evidence indicates that additional provision could be required, potentially suitable opportunities should not be unnecessarily lost through development or changes in land use.

Considering future parking requirements alongside the planning process will therefore help retain flexibility as Huntingdonshire's towns continue to grow and evolve.

HOW WILL IT BE DELIVERED?

The Council will use parking demand data, development forecasts and other available evidence to identify locations where future growth could place additional pressure on parking provision. This will be considered alongside the Local Plan and relevant regeneration and development proposals.

Where future capacity constraints are identified, the Council will work with, stakeholders and partners to consider appropriate responses. These may include better management of existing capacity, changes to parking controls, shared parking options, sustainable transport measures or, where justified, additional provision.

Where there is a clear strategic case, opportunities to safeguard suitable land or retain flexibility within existing Council assets will be considered. This would not represent a commitment to additional parking, but would ensure that viable options remain available should future evidence demonstrate a need.

Requirements will be reviewed as development comes forward and travel patterns change, ensuring future decisions remain evidence-led, proportionate and aligned with wider planning, economic and transport objectives.

Objective O4-2: Monitoring Parking Demand: Monitor parking demand to ensure enough parking is available as the district grows.

WHY THIS OBJECTIVE?

Parking demand is not static. Over the 20-year lifetime of this strategy, Huntingdonshire will continue to experience population and housing growth, regeneration, changes in town centre activity and evolving travel behaviour. New development may create additional demand in some locations, while improvements to public transport, walking and cycling, changes in working patterns and new mobility technologies may reduce or redistribute demand elsewhere.

The evidence gathered through the parking surveys demonstrates that Huntingdonshire currently has sufficient parking capacity when considered at a district wide level. However, this overall position masks significant variation between towns and individual car parks. Some facilities experience sustained periods of high occupancy, while others retain considerable spare capacity. Demand also varies between weekdays and weekends and across different periods of the year.

The location and function of parking are therefore as important as the overall number of spaces provided. A town may have sufficient capacity in aggregate while experiencing pressure in the car parks closest to shops, services and other key destinations. Equally, apparently underutilised facilities may perform an important strategic, seasonal or leisure function that is not fully reflected by average occupancy.

A balanced approach will enable the Council to maintain sufficient parking capacity to support accessibility and economic activity, while avoiding unnecessary over provision. It

will also provide the flexibility to respond to future growth, development and changing travel patterns over the lifetime of the strategy. Importantly, decisions on future parking provision will consider the wider function and strategic value of each asset, rather than being based solely on current levels of utilisation.

HOW WILL IT BE DELIVERED?

The Council will maintain an evidence-led understanding of parking supply and demand across its portfolio. Occupancy, duration of stay, turnover and other available parking data will be monitored periodically to identify locations experiencing sustained pressure, as well as car parks where significant spare capacity exists.

Assessment will consider more than average occupancy. Peak demand, seasonal variation, the function and location of individual car parks, surrounding land uses and the availability of alternative parking will all be considered before changes to provision are proposed. This will help distinguish between genuinely surplus capacity and parking that performs an important function at particular times or for particular users.

Where sustained capacity pressure is identified, the Council will initially consider whether existing provision can be used more efficiently. This could include improved wayfinding, changes to the function of individual car parks, tariff or duration controls, better utilisation of nearby capacity or measures to encourage alternative travel choices.

Additional parking provision should generally be considered where there is clear evidence that existing capacity and management measures cannot accommodate demand.

Conversely, where car parks demonstrate persistent and substantial spare capacity, the Council may consider opportunities for consolidation, reconfiguration or alternative uses. This could include public realm, active travel infrastructure, electric vehicle charging, mobility facilities or other uses that support wider Council objectives. Any proposal would be subject to appropriate assessment of future parking requirements, displacement effects and the strategic value of retaining the site.

The Council will also seek to protect flexibility within its estate. Where uncertainty exists about longer-term demand, temporary or reversible uses may provide an opportunity to make better use of underutilised land without permanently removing strategically important parking capacity.

Through regular monitoring and periodic review, the Council will ensure that parking provision evolves alongside the districts towns rather than remaining fixed throughout the 20-year strategy period. This will support a parking estate that remains appropriately sized, efficiently used and capable of responding to future economic, development and transport needs.



Objective O4-3: Supporting Future Growth: Ensure parking supports new development and future growth across the district.

WHY THIS OBJECTIVE?

Huntingdonshire is expected to experience continued housing and employment growth over the lifetime of this strategy. New development can influence the level and distribution of parking demand, particularly where growth occurs close to existing town centres or Council operated car parks.

Parking provision therefore needs to be considered alongside the Local Plan and development process. Insufficient provision can result in displacement onto surrounding streets, public car parks or neighbouring communities, while excessive provision can encourage unnecessary car use and occupy land that could support more productive uses.

New development also provides an opportunity to influence travel behaviour from the outset. Locating development where people have realistic access to walking, cycling and public transport can reduce dependence on the private car, while appropriate parking ensures that remaining demand is effectively accommodated.

Aligning parking management with spatial planning will allow the Council to anticipate where future pressure may emerge and ensure decisions about existing parking assets take account of planned growth. This is particularly important over the strategy's 20-year horizon, during which parking requirements may change considerably.

HOW WILL IT BE DELIVERED?

The Council will consider emerging Local Plan allocations, major development proposals and regeneration opportunities when reviewing parking demand and future investment requirements. Existing parking evidence will help inform understanding of available capacity and the potential implications of growth.

The Council will work with developers and other partners to ensure new development achieves an appropriate balance between parking and sustainable transport provision. Consideration will be given to development scale and location, accessibility by different modes, existing capacity and potential displacement onto surrounding streets or public car parks.

Where significant growth occurs, parking demand will be monitored as development progresses, to allow arrangements to respond to actual patterns of demand and identifying whether further intervention is required.

Opportunities will be sought to coordinate development with improvements to walking, cycling and public transport, reducing additional parking demand where possible.

Aligning the Parking Strategy, Local Plan and development management process, parking provision can evolve alongside district growth while supporting development, protecting existing communities and promoting sustainable travel.

Objective O4-4: Making Better Use of Car Parks: Review underused car parks to see how they could be used more effectively.

WHY THIS OBJECTIVE?

The Council's car parks are valuable assets that support town centres, businesses, leisure facilities and local services. However, utilisation varies considerably across the estate, creating opportunities to make better use of available capacity.

Low utilisation does not necessarily mean that a car park is surplus to requirements. Location, signage, tariffs, accessibility, condition or customer awareness may influence demand, while some sites perform important seasonal, leisure or strategic roles that are not reflected by average occupancy alone.

Understanding reasons for underutilisation is therefore important. Relatively modest interventions may increase use and help redistribute demand from more heavily used town centre car parks, making better use of capacity across the parking network as a whole. Spare capacity could also support markets, events or other temporary uses where evidence demonstrates this can be accommodated without adversely affecting parking availability.

Where significant spare capacity persists and there is no strategic requirement to retain the existing level of provision, alternative uses may also be appropriate.

This could support regeneration, development, public realm, sustainable transport or other Council priorities while making more productive use of Council assets.

HOW WILL IT BE DELIVERED?

The Council will periodically review its parking assets using occupancy, duration of stay, financial performance, condition and other relevant evidence, alongside consideration of accessibility, seasonal demand and the wider strategic role of each site.

Where underutilisation is identified, the Council will first consider how available capacity could be used more effectively. This could include improved signage and wayfinding, tariff or duration changes, revised parking designations, physical improvements or better promotion of available capacity.

Opportunities to direct demand from more heavily utilised car parks or use spare capacity to support temporary events and town centre activities will also be considered.

Where underutilisation persists, consideration may be given to changing the function or configuration of part of a site. This could include EV charging, active travel or mobility facilities, public realm or other complementary uses including those which produce income while retaining sufficient parking capacity.

Development or disposal would only be considered where evidence demonstrates that parking capacity is no longer required and the wider implications have been assessed.

Detailed modelling would be undertaken to understand potential displacement and wider town centre capacity, ensuring decisions reflect the long-term strategic value of the asset rather than short-term utilisation alone.

Objective 04-5: Considering Alternative Uses: Consider alternative uses whilst ensuring that the required car parking capacity required as demonstrated by data is maintained or replaced within close proximity or in situ.

WHY THIS OBJECTIVE?

Car parks are important transport assets, but they also occupy significant areas of land, often in accessible and commercially valuable town centre locations.

The parking evidence demonstrates that utilisation varies considerably across the Council's estate. While some car parks experience sustained periods of high demand, others have significant spare capacity.

The objective was posed in the survey as *“Considering Alternative Uses - Consider alternative uses for suitable car parks where parking needs can still be met”*. Support was shown as was a similar level of disagreement, therefore this has been amended to offer assurance to its meaning.

Where this underutilisation is persistent, there may be opportunities to reconsider how part or all of a site is used, particularly where alternative uses could contribute to wider place-making or regeneration objectives.

Repurposing does not necessarily mean removing an entire car park. In many locations, partial redevelopment may allow parking to be retained while releasing surplus land for another use.

Opportunities could range from relatively small interventions, such as public realm, landscaping or community facilities, through to more significant mixed-use, commercial or residential development where the location and evidence support this.

However, parking occupancy alone should not determine whether a site is suitable for repurposing. Consideration must also be given to seasonal and peak demand, the function of the car park, future development, accessibility, alternative parking provision and the potential for displacement onto surrounding streets or other facilities.

A car park that appears underutilised during typical periods may still perform an important strategic or seasonal function.

The objective is therefore not to reduce parking provision for its own sake, but to ensure that Council owned land is used effectively.

Where parking capacity is genuinely surplus to current and foreseeable requirements, retaining all of that capacity may represent a missed opportunity to support other priorities and improve the contribution that the Council's assets make to Huntingdonshire's towns.

HOW WILL IT BE DELIVERED?

The Council will use the evidence gathered through this strategy, together with ongoing monitoring, to identify car parks that may have potential for partial or full repurposing.

Initial consideration will focus on sites demonstrating sustained spare capacity, alongside their location, condition, financial performance, strategic role and relationship with surrounding land uses.

Before any parking capacity is removed, the Council will assess the implications for the wider parking network. This will include consideration of peak and seasonal occupancy, future demand, displacement, accessibility and whether nearby car parks have sufficient capacity to accommodate any redistributed demand.

Where appropriate, opportunities to improve the use of existing alternative parking provision will form part of this assessment.

Potential alternative uses will be considered in the context of wider Council priorities and local needs. Partial repurposing will be considered where this provides an appropriate balance between retaining necessary parking and making better use of surplus capacity.

This could allow sites to evolve incrementally and retain flexibility should parking requirements change over the longer term.

Any significant proposals will be subject to appropriate feasibility assessment, business case development, planning considerations and stakeholder engagement.

Repurposing will only be progressed where there is a robust evidence base demonstrating that change can be accommodated without creating unacceptable parking displacement. This will enable the Council to make more effective use of its land and assets while maintaining sufficient parking to support accessibility, economic activity and the continued vitality of Huntingdonshire's towns.





PRINCIPLES OF PARKING CHARGES

Parking charges are an important tool for managing the Council's parking assets and influencing how available capacity is used. The approach to charging should recognise the role that tariffs can play in supporting access, encouraging turnover, managing demand and responding to the different functions of individual car parks.

This chapter establishes a set of Principles of Parking Charges that will guide the Council's approach to setting and reviewing parking charges across Huntingdonshire. The principles provide a consistent framework for future decision making while retaining sufficient flexibility to respond to the different characteristics, demand patterns and roles of individual car parks.

The principles are intentionally strategic and holistic. They do not prescribe specific tariffs or determine what should be charged at individual locations. Instead, they establish the considerations that will inform future tariff reviews and charging decisions, supported by evidence on occupancy, duration of stay, demand, location and the intended function of each car park.

This approach recognises that a single charging structure will not necessarily be appropriate across Huntingdonshire. Different towns, car parks and even different areas within the same car park may perform different functions and require different approaches. The following principles will therefore govern how parking charges are considered and developed throughout the lifetime of this strategy.

Our principles of parking charges are that:

- Car parks will be assessed on an individual basis considering location and desired usage which will inform the tariff structure.
- Tariff structures are not just models of pricing; they determine the available durations of stay and can be used as a mechanism to promote access and turnover of space.
- Where we look to implement incentives and schemes to promote use, these should be driven by evidence and data.
- Differential pricing by site is acceptable as is mixed use within an individual site.
- Demand and convenience will be considered and may inform available tariff structures.
- We will continue to offer "Pay for what you use" where appropriate to enable customers pay for a duration that closely matches how long they wish to stay.

These principles should be considered as part of the overall strategy, its vision, themes and objectives.

IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

The Parking Strategy establishes a long-term direction for the management and development of Huntingdonshire's off-street parking estate.

Delivering this vision will require a combination of immediate actions, ongoing management, further investigation and longer-term investment. The Implementation Plan translates the objectives of the strategy into a programme of practical actions that can be progressed over its lifetime.

The initial Implementation Plan is structured around the four strategic themes and identifies specific actions associated with each objective.

These range from relatively straightforward reviews of existing parking arrangements, signage, accessibility, tariffs and data, through to more significant interventions such as infrastructure improvements, Integrated Transport Hubs and the potential repurposing of parking assets.

Actions have been assigned an indicative delivery timescale reflecting their complexity, dependencies and likely priority:

Quick Wins - within 12-18 months: Actions that can be progressed relatively quickly, typically using existing resources or evidence. These include initial reviews, audits, monitoring programmes and the establishment of management frameworks.

Short Term - 1 to 2 years: Actions requiring further development, coordination or investment following completion of the initial quick wins.

Medium Term - 2 to 5 years: More substantial interventions that may require feasibility

work, funding, partnership working, procurement or phased physical delivery.

Long Term - 5 years or more: Strategic interventions that are likely to depend on future demand, development, funding or the outcome of earlier actions. Their inclusion safeguards future opportunities rather than representing a commitment to delivery.

Ongoing: Activities that will require periodic review or continued delivery throughout the strategy period, including monitoring parking demand and engagement with the planning and development process.

The sequencing of actions is important. In many cases, early reviews and evidence gathering will directly inform whether subsequent investment is required and the form that it should take.

For example, occupancy monitoring will inform future decisions on capacity, while condition assessments will help prioritise maintenance and renewal.

Similarly, feasibility work will be required before significant proposals such as repurposing car parks or developing Integrated Transport Hubs are progressed.

The Implementation Plan also recognises that delivery will take different forms. Some actions will primarily involve Council-led reviews, monitoring or policy development, while others will require further feasibility or technical studies, partnership working, or physical works and investment.

Several actions will require collaboration with Cambridgeshire County Council, the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority transport operators, developers, town and parish councils and other stakeholders.

The Plan should therefore be regarded as a live delivery framework rather than a fixed programme. Priorities will need to respond to changes in parking demand, development and regeneration proposals, available funding, emerging technology and wider Council priorities.

Actions identified for later phases should be reviewed in light of the outcomes achieved through earlier interventions.

Progress against the Implementation Plan should be reviewed periodically, allowing completed actions to be recorded, priorities to be updated and new interventions to be introduced where evidence demonstrates a need.

This will ensure that implementation remains proportionate, affordable and responsive throughout the 20-year strategy period, while maintaining a clear link between individual actions, the four strategic themes and the overall vision for parking in Huntingdonshire.



Ref	Objective	Implementation Actions	Delivery Timescale
THEME 1 - SUPPORT THRIVING TOWN CENTRES & ECONOMIC ACTIVITY			
O1-1	Support Town Centres	Review parking demand, turnover, and duration of stay across town centre car parks to ensure parking supports economic activity and visitor turnover.	Quick Win
		Develop town specific parking management principles reflecting the role and function of each location.	Short Term
O1-2	Fair Parking Charges	Establish a regular parking tariff review process informed by occupancy data, benchmarking, and local economic conditions.	Quick Win
		Undertake periodic benchmarking against neighbouring authorities and comparable market towns.	Ongoing / Short Term
		Review opportunities for seasonal, location based tariff structures where appropriate.	Medium Term
O1-3	The Right Parking in the Right Places	Review the balance of short-stay and long-stay parking provision across council car parks.	Quick Win
		Introduce revised time restrictions or operational arrangements where evidence demonstrates a need for change.	Short Term
O1-4	Parking for Events and Visitors	Review parking demand associated with key events, markets, and seasonal visitor activity.	Quick Win
		Develop temporary parking management arrangements and communication plans for major events where required.	Short / Medium Term
O1-5	Better Signs and Car Parks	Undertake a district-wide review of parking signage, gateway signage, and pedestrian wayfinding.	Quick Win
		Deliver phased signage and wayfinding improvements across the district, including the introduction of VMS at strategic locations where appropriate to improve parking visibility, circulation, and driver information.	Short / Medium Term
		Identify priority car parks requiring public realm enhancements, resurfacing, landscaping, or lighting improvements.	Short / Medium Term
		Deliver phased environmental and public realm improvements across priority sites.	Medium Term

Ref	Objective	Implementation Actions	Delivery Timescale
THEME 2 - DELIVER A MODERN EFFICIENT & CUSTOMER FOCUSED PARKING SERVICE			
O3-1	Easy and Accessible Parking	Undertake an accessibility review of council-operated car parks, including disabled parking provision and pedestrian accessibility.	Quick Win
		Review consistency of parking information, signage, payment systems, and customer communications.	Short Term
O3-2	Looking After Our Car Parks	Undertake condition assessments of car park infrastructure, equipment, lighting, and surfaces.	Short Term
		Develop a long-term planned maintenance programme for council parking assets.	Short / Medium Term
		Deliver phased maintenance and renewal works based on asset condition and risk.	Medium Term
O3-3	Fair Parking Enforcement	Review enforcement operations and compliance trends across the district.	Short Term
		Identify opportunities to improve operational efficiency and consistency of enforcement activity.	Short Term
O3-4	Using Parking Data	Establish a structured programme of parking occupancy and usage monitoring.	Quick Win
		Develop a centralised parking data management approach.	Short Term
O3-5	Using Technology	Review existing parking technology and digital systems across the parking estate.	Quick Win
		Identify opportunities for improved cashless payments, virtual permits, and back-office integration.	Short Term
		Investigate feasibility of smart parking technologies and real-time parking information systems.	Medium Term

Ref	Objective	Implementation Actions	Delivery Timescale
THEME 3 - INTEGRATE PARKING WITH ACTIVE & SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORT			
02-1	Support Sustainable Travel	Embed parking considerations within wider transport, regeneration, and active travel planning processes.	Short Term
		Work with transport partners to identify opportunities for improved integration between parking and sustainable transport modes.	Short / Medium Term
02-2	Walking and Cycling Facilities	Audit existing cycle parking and pedestrian facilities within council car parks.	Short Term
		Identify priority sites for upgraded cycle parking and improved pedestrian connectivity.	Medium Term
		Deliver phased active travel improvements across suitable locations.	Medium Term
02-3	Future Transport Hubs	Identify and assess potential edge-of-centre locations suitable for future Integrated Transport Hubs.	Long Term
		Safeguard suitable sites through planning and asset management processes where appropriate.	Long Term
		Explore opportunities for pilot mobility hub facilities including EV charging, cycle hire, and enhanced public transport integration.	Long Term
02-4	Electric Vehicle Charging	Identify priority sites for additional EV charging provision based on demand and grid capacity.	Short Term
		Deliver additional EV charging infrastructure across priority sites in accordance with the Councils EV strategy.	Medium Term
02-5	Working with Partners	Work with local transport operators and stakeholders to improve awareness of sustainable travel alternatives.	Short Term
		Explore opportunities for integrated ticketing, mobility hubs, or joint initiatives with transport partners.	Long Term

Ref	Objective	Implementation Actions	Delivery Timescale
THEME 4 - MANAGE PARKING ASSETS RESPONSIBLY & PLAN FOR THE FUTURE			
O4-1	Planning for the Future	Review future parking demand associated with planned growth and Local Plan allocations.	Short Term
		Identify locations where additional parking provision or management interventions may be required in future.	Medium Term
O4-2	Monitoring Parking Demand	Continue periodic parking occupancy and utilisation surveys across the district.	Ongoing / Short Term
		Identify locations where parking pressures or underutilisation may justify operational changes or future investment.	Medium Term
O4-3	Supporting Future Growth	Embed parking strategy principles within Local Plan and development management processes.	Short Term
		Develop parking guidance or expectations for major developments where appropriate.	Medium Term
		Continue engagement with planning officers and developers regarding parking impacts and sustainable transport integration.	Ongoing / Short Term
O4-4	Making Better Use of Car Parks	Develop a framework for assessing car park performance and utilisation.	Short Term
		Review underperforming sites to identify opportunities for operational improvements, alternative uses, or rationalisation.	Medium Term
O4-5	Considering Alternative Uses	Asses car parks against performance and utilisation framework to understand how they can be used to support wider outcomes.	Medium Term
		Bring forward redevelopment or repurposing proposals where supported by evidence and business case assessment.	Long Term

DELIVERING THE IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

The Implementation Plan demonstrates that delivery of the Parking Strategy will involve considerably more than investment in individual car parks. Across the four themes, the actions establish a coordinated programme of monitoring, operational review, infrastructure improvement, partnership working and longer-term asset planning.

Collectively, these actions are intended to ensure that Huntingdonshire's parking estate continues to support its towns while responding to changing demand, customer expectations, transport priorities and future growth.

A consistent feature in the Implementation Plan is the importance of establishing a stronger evidence base before significant changes are made. Several of the early actions involve reviewing occupancy, turnover and duration of stay, establishing structured monitoring arrangements and assessing the performance of individual car parks. This evidence will directly support decisions relating to tariffs, short and long-stay provision, enforcement, investment and the future role of individual sites.

Continued occupancy and utilisation surveys will also allow the Council to identify whether parking pressure or underutilisation is persistent rather than responding to isolated periods of high or low demand.

Within **Theme 1 – Support Thriving Town Centres and Economic Activity**, the emphasis is initially on making better use of the existing parking offer. Actions include reviewing demand, turnover and duration of stay, developing town specific parking management principles and considering whether the balance between short and long-stay parking remains appropriate.

This recognises that the role of parking differs between towns and that a single management approach will not necessarily produce the best outcome in every location.

Tariff management forms an important part of this approach. The Implementation Plan establishes both regular tariff reviews and periodic benchmarking, supported by consideration of occupancy, inflation, operating and maintenance costs, local economic conditions and wider market trends. The intention is therefore not simply to increase or decrease charges, but to establish a repeatable mechanism through which tariffs can remain appropriate to the role and performance of individual locations.

Over the medium term, this may extend to consideration of seasonal, location based approaches where evidence demonstrates that these would improve parking management.

Theme 1 also identifies a significant programme of improvements to the physical relationship between car parks and the places they serve. A district wide signage and wayfinding review is proposed, followed by phased implementation, potentially including Variable Message Signs at strategic locations.

This is complemented by identifying car parks requiring public realm, resurfacing, landscaping or lighting improvements. Together, these actions recognise that available capacity is only useful if customers can find it easily and move conveniently between the car park and their destination. Specific reviews of event, market and seasonal demand will also enable temporary arrangements and communication plans to be developed where exceptional activity places additional pressure on the network.



Example of improving the appearance of a HDC car park to make it more attractive

Within **Theme 2 – Deliver a Modern, Efficient and Customer-Focused Parking Service**, the actions concentrate on the quality and efficiency of the existing service.

Accessibility is an immediate priority, with a review of Council operated car parks covering disabled parking and pedestrian accessibility. This is accompanied by a review of the consistency of information, signage, payment systems and customer communications.

Technology is approached proportionately. The first requirement is to understand the systems already operating across the estate before considering improvements to cashless payments, virtual permits and back-office integration.

More advanced smart parking technologies and real time information are identified for subsequent feasibility investigation rather than automatic implementation. This ensures investment is driven by an identifiable customer or operational benefit. Data management and enforcement follow a similar approach.

A structured occupancy and usage monitoring programme will be complemented by a centralised approach to parking data and reporting, creating a stronger basis for future management decisions.

Enforcement operations and compliance trends will also be reviewed, with subsequent actions focused on improving efficiency and consistency. These measures reinforce the principle that enforcement should support effective parking management and compliance rather than operate independently from wider parking objectives.

Maintaining the physical estate is another significant delivery requirement. Condition assessments of infrastructure, equipment, lighting and surfaces will inform a long-term planned maintenance programme, followed by phased renewal according to condition and risk. This establishes a clearer lifecycle approach to investment and provides an opportunity to coordinate maintenance with accessibility, public realm, technology and other improvements rather than delivering works independently.



Example of how HDC car parks could benefit from technology and a more efficient service

The actions within **Theme 3 – Integrate Parking with Active and Sustainable Transport** progressively reposition car parks as part of the wider transport system.

An early requirement is to embed parking considerations within transport, regeneration and active travel planning rather than treating the parking estate as a standalone service. This will be supported by partnership working to identify opportunities to connect parking more effectively with sustainable modes.

There is also a clear infrastructure component. Existing cycle parking and pedestrian facilities will be audited, priority locations identified and improvements delivered on a phased basis. Additional electric vehicle charging will similarly be targeted towards priority sites according to demand and grid capacity, building on the Council's existing approach to EV infrastructure.

These actions allow investment to be concentrated where there is a demonstrated requirement rather than applying uniform provision across the estate.

The more transformational elements of Theme 3 sit towards the medium and long term. Opportunities for integrated ticketing, mobility hubs and joint initiatives with transport operators will be explored, alongside identifying potential edge of centre locations for future Integrated Transport Hubs.

Suitable sites could subsequently be safeguarded and, where justified, pilot facilities developed incorporating elements such as EV charging, cycle hire and improved public transport integration. These actions deliberately retain flexibility, allowing the Council to respond to future changes in travel behaviour and funding rather than committing prematurely to a particular model.



Example of utilising existing car park assets to integrate parking with active travel & sustainable transport

Finally, **Theme 4 – Manage Parking Assets Responsibly and Plan for the Future** takes the longest-term view of the parking estate. Continued utilisation surveys will identify locations experiencing pressure or persistent underuse, providing the evidence for operational changes or future investment.

A formal framework for assessing car park performance will further support this process and enable poorly performing assets to be considered consistently.

The Implementation Plan also explicitly connects parking with Huntingdonshire's future growth. Parking demand associated with Local Plan allocations will be reviewed, potential future capacity requirements identified and parking strategy principles embedded within the Local Plan and development management process.

Continued engagement with planning officers and developers will be particularly important in ensuring that new development does not

create unmanaged pressure on existing Council car parks or surrounding streets.

Where existing sites are consistently underutilised, the programme allows the Council to consider a broader range of outcomes. This begins with assessing whether operational changes could improve performance but can ultimately extend to rationalisation, partial repurposing or redevelopment.

Potential sites would be subject to feasibility work considering parking displacement, regeneration benefits, housing need and financial implications before any long-term proposals are brought forward.

This creates a clear progression from identifying underperformance to understanding alternatives and, only where justified by evidence and a business case, implementing a change of use.

Taken together, the actions establish a clear direction for the parking estate. In the near term, the emphasis is on understanding, reviewing and optimising what the Council already has. The short to medium term moves increasingly towards targeted physical investment, improved integration and modernisation.

Longer-term actions provide the flexibility to reconsider where and how parking is provided as Huntingdonshire grows and travel patterns evolve.

This ensures that investment is not undertaken in isolation, but forms part of a coordinated programme in which evidence gathered through earlier actions directly informs the scale, location and nature of subsequent interventions.



CONCLUSION

This strategy establishes a clear and ambitious direction for the future of parking across Huntingdonshire. It recognises that parking is an important part of the district's transport system, supporting access to town centres, businesses, services, leisure opportunities and communities, while also influencing how people choose to travel.

Through the four strategic themes and associated objectives, the strategy provides a framework for creating a parking service that is responsive to changing demand, supports thriving town centres, integrates more effectively with active and sustainable transport, provides a modern and accessible customer experience, and ensures that parking assets are managed responsibly over the long term.

The evidence gathered through the development of the strategy demonstrates that parking demand and the role of individual car parks vary considerably across Huntingdonshire. The strategy therefore avoids a one-size-fits-all approach.

Instead, future decisions will be informed by local demand, duration of stay, the function of individual car parks and the wider needs of each town. This will allow the Council to respond appropriately to areas of parking pressure while also considering opportunities presented by underutilised assets.

Importantly, the strategy looks beyond the immediate operation of the existing parking estate. Over its lifetime, changes in development, technology, travel behaviour and sustainable transport provision will influence how parking is used. The strategy provides the flexibility to respond to these changes, including opportunities for improved active travel facilities, EV charging,

integrated transport hubs, better use of technology and, where appropriate, the repurposing or redevelopment of parking land to support wider regeneration, housing and community objectives.

The objectives and actions within the strategy are also intended to complement wider Council and partner priorities. Successful delivery will therefore require collaboration across Huntingdonshire District Council and with Cambridgeshire County Council, the Combined Authority, town and parish councils, transport operators, businesses, developers and other stakeholders.

The Implementation Plan provides the mechanism for translating the strategy into action, with measures identified across quick-win, short, medium and longer-term timescales. This phased approach allows immediate improvements to be progressed while providing sufficient flexibility for more significant interventions to be developed as evidence, funding and opportunities emerge.

Ultimately, the strategy is about ensuring that Huntingdonshire has the right parking, in the right places, managed in the right way.

By balancing the continuing need for convenient access by car with opportunities to support sustainable travel, improve town centres and make better use of Council assets, the strategy provides a framework for a parking network that can continue to meet the needs of residents, businesses and visitors while supporting a more accessible and sustainable Huntingdonshire.



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