

North Somerset Council **Parking Management Strategy 2024**

(Further Information)



Our Vision

- Well-managed, well-maintained parking facilities that meet our current and future needs, support local economies, respond to the challenges of the climate emergency, and uphold our ambitions for healthy communities, which are safe and attractive places for residents and visitors to use.
- Finding the right balance of parking provision to meet community and economic needs whilst discouraging unnecessary car journeys or blighting neighbourhoods.
- Parking that is self-funding where possible or which creates surplus that the Council can invest back into improved parking, transport, infrastructure and maintenance.



Strategic Objectives

The strategic objectives demonstrate how the Parking Management Strategy contributes to the council's Corporate Plan;

1. Establish a **fair and consistent** approach to parking and charges which is mindful of local considerations across North Somerset
2. Ensure car parking contributes to effective traffic management and **thriving local economies**, while reducing congestion and air pollution
3. **Invest to maintain** and improve the quality and safety of parking
4. Ensure car parking provision and network management **encourages sustainable** travel and supports climate emergency goals
5. Minimise the potentially negative **impacts of parking** on residential communities and outside our schools

Our Aims

This strategy sets out how North Somerset Council will manage the areas of parking provision that it has direct influence over, namely on-street parking, council owned carparks and other council owned land. It acknowledges diverse demands for parking space, not just cars but also bicycles, motorcycles and mopeds, taxis, buses, coaches, and goods vehicles.

The council's policy objectives and the Corporate Plan aim for both the council and the North Somerset area to become carbon neutral by 2030. As our population grows, we need to manage our parking stock to ensure demand is balanced fairly across different users. This means that different users and uses (for example, residents, visitors, mobility impaired, bike/e-bike/cargo bike users and car club members, etc.) should still be able to access the parking they need rather than a first come first served approach where those who could find alternatives are using spaces that others really need. The management principles we use need to support the move towards carbon neutrality, whilst supporting our local economies.

Most journeys, even short ones continue to be made by car. Managing parking can be a useful tool in transferring journeys from the private car, where

alternatives are available, and free up spaces for those who have little choice but to use their cars, such as people who live in rural communities who may have more limited or no public transport links and those who are more reliant on car travel due to mobility or physical impairment. Currently the cost of maintaining free car parks is paid for by all taxpayers via council budgets; we believe it would be fairer that those who use the parking most should make more of a contribution.

The strategy aims to:

- support our town economies and employment sites by delivering fair charges across the district, which help fund much needed maintenance and reduce congestion



- allocate space on our streets more fairly, taking into account the range of different uses to be consistent with the updated **Highway Code's** new hierarchy of road users
- support healthy and safe neighbourhoods by ensuring that parking does not affect the safety or attractiveness of the range of options for people to travel other than just by car
- meet our obligation to contribute to the management of the traffic network to help the movement of traffic, including people walking/ wheeling, cycling and using our enhanced bus network, as required under the **Traffic Management Act 2004**
- reduce car commuting and car use, and align with other strategies and action plans that provide alternative ways to travel that are healthier, cheaper and more sustainable
- meet the needs of people with disabilities, with some people unable to use public transport and depend entirely on the use of a car
- allocate space across North Somerset Council owned land to ensure that demand is managed fairly

How will we deliver these objectives?

We recognise that introducing changes in one area can have knock-on effects on surrounding streets. To manage this, we will develop proposals in phases, allowing us to monitor any displacement impacts where new charges are introduced and apply mitigating measures where appropriate.

- Managing parking to help **make our streets safer** – in line with the street classifications in our North Somerset **Place and Movement Framework** and our hierarchy of road users as per our **Active Travel Network Action Plan** (consistent with the updated **Highway Code**).
- Mechanisms to manage parking in **town centres and places of high demand**, including parking charges and supporting the introduction of **residents permit parking** alongside or following new **parking charges** where appropriate, to manage displacement and achieve fair access to the available spaces.
- Managing **commuter parking** to encourage those with alternatives not to commute by car. The needs of **commercial/workspace/employment** users should be taken into consideration, and stakeholders consulted when designing proposals

for change. In addition to pay and display charges, future parking management measures could be considered, such as workplace parking levy. On-street measures such as residents parking schemes will be considered to manage displacement following any proposals that would introduce charges.

- Managing parking to **support retail centres**. Through the trial or development of schemes such as flexible permits, variable pricing (for example charging more at busier car parks), and discounted parking in selected car parks where occupancy is low.



- Managing **parking for leisure** (including sport and leisure facilities) to support alternatives to

car travel and to help manage demand while providing sufficient parking provision for residual trips. For example, using time limits, limiting overnight parking, or applying charges where appropriate. Parking for major events should be dealt with by a parking management plan which should include secure, attractive, and well-located cycle parking.

- Reallocation **of highway space** to public transport, active travel, car clubs or public realm particularly where other action plans, such as the **Active Travel Action Plans** identify a need. Our streets include kerbside parking that might not always be the most appropriate use of public space, which needs to prioritise the movement of people, goods, and services and not the personal storage of vehicles. These measures will help reduce congestion by providing attractive alternatives to using the car, and are consistent with our **Place and Movement Framework**.
- Redesigning, reducing, or managing usage of on-street parking (with charges or time limits) on **bus routes** where this negatively affects bus journey times and reliability will be prioritised in line with our adopted **Bus Service Improvement Plan** and **Enhanced Partnership** commitments. Faster, more reliable buses are cheaper and more commercially

viable, which is vital to achieve a lasting legacy following the Bus Service Improvement Plan investment in better bus services.

- Reducing or managing car parking, particularly on our **primary distributor roads**¹ in our urban hubs where the priority is for the movement of people, goods and services, as well as delivery loading/unloading and blue badge parking needs.



- Providing more **cycle and e-bike parking**. The allocation of some on-street or kerbside space to cycle parking, including secure storage options both at destinations and in certain residential streets where space for private cycle parking is not readily available (these enable one car parking space to be replaced with secure cycle parking

¹ As defined in our place and movement framework: **Place and Movement Framework**.

for up to eight bikes). Facilities could include recharging facilities for e-bikes where appropriate.



- Providing more **motorcycle, moped and e-moped parking**. The allocation of on-street or kerbside space for moped and e-moped will be considered. Provision could include recharging facilities for e-mopeds and e-bikes. Mopeds and e-mopeds create fewer greenhouse gas emissions over the lifecycle of the product including manufacture and usage, than many other transport modes. We want to ensure that infrastructure is in place to make these modes a viable choice for those who wish to use them.
- Developing options for **future parking management measures**, for example, workplace parking levy and work with partners in West of England and Western Gateway Strategic Transport

Body to develop a coordinated approach to such longer-term measures

- **Blue badge holder parking**. Ensuring there are enough spaces in locations that are most convenient to access goods and services. An ageing population will increase the pressure on existing blue badge spaces.

We will also explore the following **district-wide** interventions:

- **Reinvesting new income** to help progress existing initiatives and introduce new measures to bring us closer to carbon neutrality, for example, public transport discounts/ticketing incentives. The use of **technology** such as booking systems to optimise usage of spaces on-street and in car parks.
- **Applying policies and design guidance in new developments** to ensure places are designed and equipped to prioritise sustainable travel modes and look at future uses for car parks. In some locations, it may be appropriate to add mobility hub functions to car parks, and also, in the right places, underutilised carparks can be turned into cafe seating, parklets, and community assets.
- Extending **bus lane camera enforcement** to enable bus journeys to become more reliable and attractive than journeys by car where possible.

Surplus income generated will be reinvested to fund transport improvements including resourcing and delivery of walking, cycling, bus provision or the installation of new enforcement equipment.

- A network of small local **transport hubs** and larger, centrally located **interchanges** will facilitate alternatives to cars. Rather than traditional Park and Ride sites we will create multiple sites in and around town centres and in new developments to facilitate reduced car travel in our urban areas. These hubs will integrate various modes of transport including cars, bikes, e-bikes, buses, mopeds, EV charging and car clubs and potentially in the future, e-scooters. These hubs will need to connect to railway stations and the core bus network.
- **Reviewing parking charges annually**. Pricing will be set at a level to balance demand and achieve fairness whilst still allowing those without alternatives to park at an appropriate rate. Consideration will be given to the cost of public transport alternatives when setting prices. Prices must also be set to encourage parking off-street in car parks rather than on our streets. The full cost of providing parking, should be factored into how we decide what to provide and at what cost. Any proposals for changes to charging times should have regard to the terms/obligations

associated with grant funding for EV charging provision where appropriate.

Transitioning from **traditional parking pay and display machines to payment via online app, phone or smart payment machines.** In order to maintain accessibility whilst acknowledging the need to move to cost-effective payment systems, a pragmatic approach will be applied to the reduction of traditional pay and display machines in favour of e-based payment systems where possible, as part of the council's 'Digital First' policy. Additionally paying by app or smart payment machines will enable more dynamic pricing structures to be applied in future. All new pay and display schemes will be cashless by default. Cash payment options may be retained where needed for operational reasons. We will continue to monitor the market for new developments in apps and software such as the national parking platform and consider the pros and cons with a view to adopting those that could be beneficial.



- Alignment between systems to pay for parking, those used to pay for **Electric Vehicle (EV) charging** and **Mobility As A Service (MAAS) app/systems** to make the use of these simple, and support the transition to non-fossil fuelled transport as set out in our **EV Strategy**.
- Utilising available powers to tackle nuisance parking. Parking on our footways prevents those that are blind/partially sighted, those using mobility vehicles and pushchairs to get around safely. We will continue to work with the airport through their planning obligations to coordinate discussions with local parish councils about parking restrictions in local roads and laybys at locations in the vicinity of the airport.

Whilst improved vehicle technology presents opportunities to reduce carbon impacts, moving freight by lorry remains the lifeblood for our communities and businesses, and it is important that we try to make **goods vehicle movements** as efficient as possible. There can be a lack of parking spaces including in urban areas and this can result in parking in inappropriate locations or having to waste fuel finding a space. Freight movements should be directed to the most appropriate routes, with adequate lorry parking provided at strategic locations along key routes where possible.



Where are we now, and why is this strategy needed?

Current parking arrangements in North Somerset evolved to serve a lower population with fewer cars. As car ownership has increased and population risen, pressure is growing on the limited number of parking spaces available in towns and on residential streets. Places where parking provision used to be adequate are now facing the challenge of parking pressures on roads and in car parks. The need to continue to support residents, local business and enable safe and efficient access to shops and services means that we need to revisit the way we provide and manage parking.

Funding for local councils continues to reduce each year making it more difficult to fund the repair and maintenance of existing parking facilities. In order to safeguard the continued use of our parking assets we need to ensure appropriate funding is in place to maintain and ensure car parks are safe for all users.

Car and vehicle traffic increased by 9% between 2009 and 2019 ([Gov.uk](https://www.gov.uk)), which means that more of our valuable town and village spaces, residential streets

and limited transport network space is being taken up by vehicles, either parked or moving traffic.

Climate change and the urgency to decarbonise has increasingly come into focus, and in the coming years the need to adjust the ways we travel will mean that parking provision will also need to adapt and support non-car modes leading to a healthier and still prosperous future.



What do we spend this on?

Our ambition is to reinvest to have a high-quality transport network including traffic management and parking, and this strategy enables us to move forwards with this. We need to maintain the infrastructure that we already have and think about re-investment to make improvements. In addition to helping us reach net zero carbon for transport, this strategy is also about maintaining parking facilities, roads, pavements, and cycle routes so they remain attractive and functional to support the local economy. Opportunities to enhance biodiversity could be considered where appropriate. Any surplus generated will be reinvested into initiatives that benefit all users, including bus passengers, motorists, pedestrians, and cyclists. In accordance with Section 55 (as amended) of the Road Traffic

Regulation Act 1984, any surplus parking income, after covering costs, will be allocated to provision and maintenance of off-street parking provision or if provision of further off-street parking is unnecessary or undesirable to: the costs of public passenger transport services; highway/road improvement or; environmental improvement.

In conclusion, this strategy outlines how proposals for local changes to parking and district-wide actions will be developed to manage our existing on-street and off-street parking provision as fairly as possible for the benefit of all users. The strategy sets out the considerations we will take when developing parking schemes, proposals and actions across the district.

Links to other useful documents

[Joint Local Transport Plan 4](#)

[Active Travel Strategy 2020-2030](#)

[Place and Movement Framework](#)

[Place and Movement Classifications](#)

[Vehicle dropped kerb policy](#)

[Highway Asset Management Plan and Strategy](#)

[Civil parking enforcement](#)

[Highway code and recent changes](#)

[Electric Vehicle Strategy](#)

[North Somerset Parking Standards](#)

This publication is available in large print, Braille or audio formats on request.

Help is also available for people who require council information in languages other than English.

For all enquiries please contact the Transport Policy Team
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