



Parking strategy



FOREWORD

I am delighted to bring forward this Parking Strategy, which sets out our vision and ambitions for parking in Buckinghamshire in the years ahead.

The parking service operates across Buckinghamshire to manage supply of parking, reduce congestion, promote safety and encourage use of alternative transport options. Our parking service provides, enforces and manages on street, off street and multi storey car parks in towns and villages across the county.

We must continue to seek opportunities to use our parking assets and enforcement powers to support our corporate objectives to increase prosperity, improve the environment, strengthen communities and protect the vulnerable – all the while keeping customers central to our offering.

Driver behaviour and demand for car parking has significantly changed in recent years, and so it is right to take a considered, strategic and data led approach to our parking offer going forward. Members and Officers at the Council grapple with the complexities that this entails and the themes included in this strategy provides a

framework upon which to inform decisions that will accommodate the further anticipated changes that people, places and technology will bring.

Parking generates significant income to the Council and we must ensure that our parking offer is right for the future, our communities and is financially sustainable and does not place an undue burden on the Council and taxpayers. The parking service should be paid for by users, rather than subsidised, and those users should receive a good quality offering and a consistent service.

This strategy sets out our ambitions to achieve this through focus on technology and innovation, review of our charging schedules and of our assets and through efficient and effective use of our enforcement powers.



Councillor Steven Broadbent

Deputy Leader and
Cabinet Member for Transport

Aligning to our corporate plan and priorities

The parking service must continue to support our corporate aims and objectives, and actively collaborate with other service areas to achieve our shared goals and ambitions for residents, businesses and visitors to Buckinghamshire.

- Our **Opportunity Bucks** flagship programme to improve opportunities for people in Buckinghamshire provides a local response and focus for levelling up ambitions. Our parking offer will support the ambitions of that programme by facilitating free flow of traffic, road safety and access to services

- Supporting our older, disabled and vulnerable residents to move around Buckinghamshire through provision of **blue badge** parking spaces.
- We will work with partners and continue to work towards **Safer Car Park Awards** to discourage crime and anti-social behaviour in our car parks enhancing our customer experience.



- Through review of our parking assets, we will support the **Climate Change and Air Quality Strategy** by enabling opportunities to consider installation of solar car ports (Action 20)
- The Parking Strategy will support our **Electric Vehicle Action Plan** vision to expand the EV Infrastructure network in Buckinghamshire and to provide 1,000 spaces by 2027.

- The parking service will harness technology and innovation to support our vision for how transport plays a part in making Buckinghamshire a great place to live and work as set out in the emerging **Local Transport Plan**.
- Our parking assets will be critical to enabling ambitions for our town centres as set out in **Regeneration Framework and Strategies** to create places where people want to be, drive local revitalisation and create vibrant spaces to live and work.

Parking Strategic Priorities



Technology
and
Innovation



Parking
Charges



Enforcement



Parking
Assets



Looking to
the future

Technology and Innovation



We want to offer our customers a high-quality parking service in Buckinghamshire. Technology and innovation offer our customers more consistency and helps us to ensure that our enforcement teams can act effectively and are protected.

Since COVID, 79% of customers who previously chose to pay with cash now opt to use digital methods. Our current set of parking payment machines are reaching the end of their economic life, and we must only invest in hard infrastructure such as payment machines where it is economically viable to do so. We must also continue to seek future opportunities for innovation where they exist in the future, for example demand management.



- We will reflect emerging societal trends and support financial sustainability of our parking service by:
 - Transitioning towards card payment and ultimately digital payment methods, as and when parking payment machines need to be replaced
- We will take opportunities for innovation to support our aims, while encouraging modal shift, by:
 - Piloting use of the National Parking Payment Platform initially in Wycombe, which gives customers a greater choice of who they choose to pay for parking
 - Continuing to make use of Moving Traffic Enforcement powers to support road safety
 - Actively bidding for funding and working with partners to deliver more Electric Vehicle charging points across Buckinghamshire in line with our EV Action Plan
 - Supporting active and sustainable travel through infrastructure and initiatives such as car clubs, car sharing and autonomous vehicles
 - Continuing to utilise solar charging to power our existing parking payment machines
- We will ensure our Parking Enforcement Officers have the right equipment to deliver a high quality and efficient service, for example body-worn cameras and handheld enforcement equipment.

Parking charges



We want to implement a charging schedule across Buckinghamshire through which any changes must make a net revenue contribution towards the Councils running costs. We should ensure that our charges are comparable with nearby local authorities, and support the upkeep and enhancement of our valuable car park assets which benefit the whole community.

Through appropriate and considered charging, we can:

- support effective maintenance of the car parks
- encourage drivers to use car parks rather than on street, which in turn encourages network safety
- encourage turnover of spaces



- We will ensure the service is financially sustainable and reflect the needs of the local community by:
 - In this coming year, on a localised basis, reflect on our existing charges and make appropriate changes to charging schedules. This will include a review of permits and season tickets.
 - Continually assess parking behaviours across our car parks and on street parking areas
 - Enabling town and parish councils to fund free parking in their areas where this is cost neutral for Buckinghamshire Council
- We will continue to give our customers clarity and consistency on charging levels by:
 - Make careful and considered decisions about parking tariff charges to balance financial sustainability with customer and local needs following a consistent approach to parking provision within a given area and not simply each car park in isolation
 - Continue to offer consistency of approach for blue badge parking in our car parks
- We will encourage the use of car parks over on-street parking to free up kerbside space for other uses by:
 - Maintaining a price differential between on and off-street parking
 - Explore the introduction of differential pricing linked to occupancy and demand through the use of technology

ENFORCEMENT



We want to make sure that drivers park appropriately and do not overstay. Doing this relieves congestion by helping vehicles move around our highway network more easily, in turn this supports network safety, essential delivery of blue light services, reduces emissions and facilitates the passage of public transport.

We use our enforcement powers to support safety in car parks but also in on street parking locations, and to issue fines to vehicles that break moving traffic restrictions such as driving in a bus lane, taking a restricted turn and stopping in a hatched box. We also use our enforcement powers to support the use of designated bays such as Electric Vehicles, Blue Badge and loading bays.



- We will encourage modal shift and good driver behaviours by:
 - Continuing to use a variety of enforcement methods including Civil Enforcement Officers, Moving Traffic Contravention powers and enforcing against fraudulent use of Blue Badges
 - Enabling Town and Parish Councils to fund additional enforcement capacity for their local areas
 - Deliver a simpler process for local parking reviews and schemes to reduce the administrative burden and time taken to enact changes.
- We will ensure efficient use of our resource to drive compliance by:
 - Increasing resource and ensuring that we have a sustainable and skilled staffing model
 - Utilising intelligent and direct deployment of staff based on compliance levels, prioritising enforcement to keep traffic flowing on key routes.
 - Encouraging customers to report problem areas

PARKING ASSETS



We want to support the high street, leisure facilities and national landscapes (AONBs) and enabled residents and visitors to Buckinghamshire visit those locations. At the same time, we need to minimise any subsidy to our car parks and ensure that they make a net contribution to the Council while meeting maintenance requirements.

Car parks and on street parking locations are prized assets of community value, but where they are not well used or making a return we need to consider other uses for those sites. We want to make use of our parking estate to support our wider corporate ambitions around regeneration, housing and place shaping while also taking into consideration specific local needs.



- We will make an informed and balanced assessment of car parking assets over the coming financial year to release capital and realise opportunities. We will be informed by:
 - Financial sustainability of car parks – prioritising the disposal of car parks that are not making a return
 - Opportunities in our town centres linked to the Buckinghamshire Regeneration Framework and other corporate objectives
 - Usage trends for each car park, and considering supply of parking available in each town and village
- We will ensure our car parks are safe for our customers by:
 - Seeking to achieve a Safer Car Park Award for all our car parks
 - Maintaining our car parks for a fit for purpose standard
 - Engaging with partners, bluelight services and local communities about our car parks



LOOKING TO THE FUTURE - what's next?



We will work with members and partners to deliver against our strategic aims set out in this strategy.



We will continually review the best model for delivering parking services for the future and will seek opportunities to harness innovation and work with the wider industry to trial and pilot innovation.



We will continue to look for more opportunities to harness innovation and work with the wider industry to trial and pilot new innovative ways to deliver parking services.