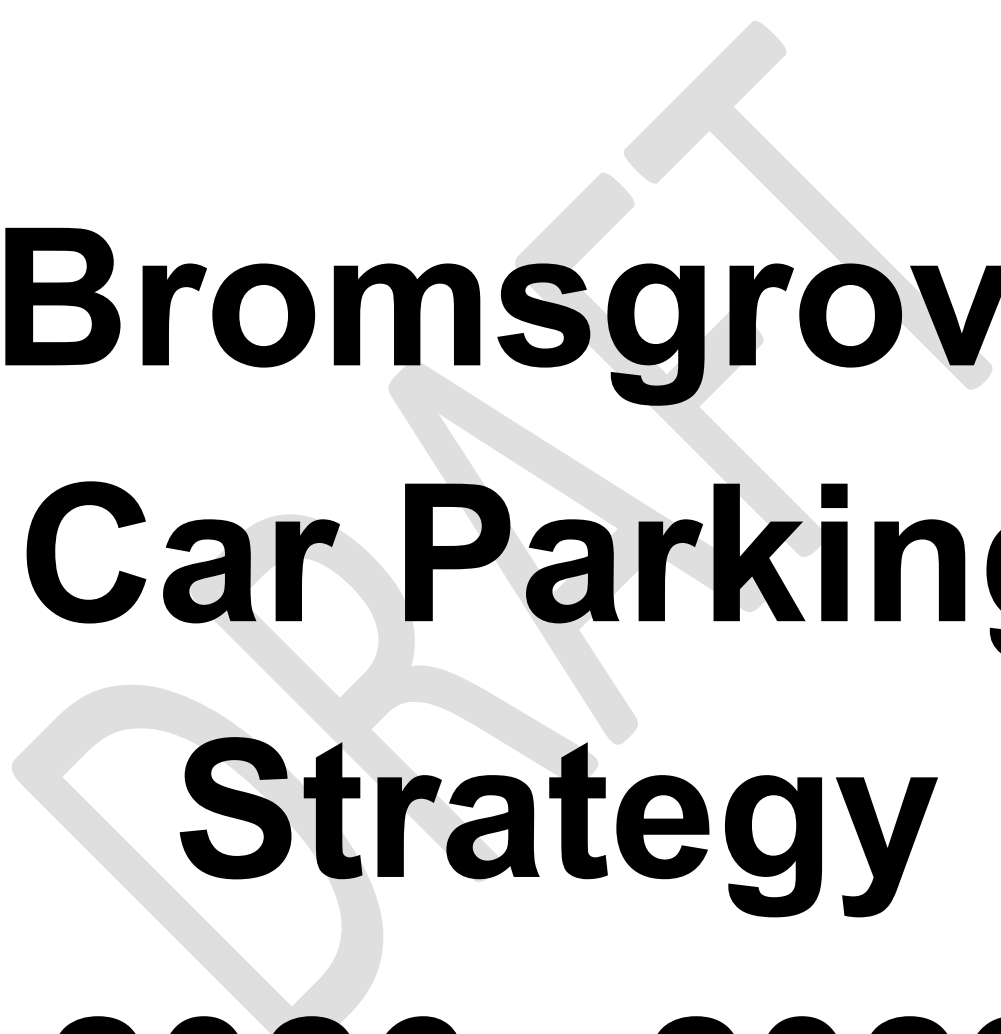




Bromsgrove Car Parking Strategy 2026 - 2029

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1. Vision

- 1.1 To provide a well-managed, accessible and sustainable parking network that supports Bromsgrove's economy and regeneration ambitions. The strategy will help ensure that residents, businesses and visitors have access to appropriate parking in locations that meet their needs. It will also support future growth, maintain accessibility and encourage more sustainable travel choices where practical.

2. Policy Alignment

- 2.1 This Parking Strategy has been prepared in the context of wider local policy, including the Bromsgrove Council Plan, Bromsgrove District Plan, Bromsgrove 2040 Vision, Bromsgrove Town Centre Strategic Framework and Worcestershire Local Transport Plan. It takes account of the priorities set out in these documents, particularly in relation to economic growth, regeneration, accessibility, sustainability and effective use of public assets.

The strategy recognises that parking plays an important role in supporting:

- Economic growth and investment.
 - Town centre vitality and resilience.
 - Housing and employment growth.
 - Regeneration and placemaking.
 - Accessibility and inclusion.
 - Climate resilience and sustainable transport.
 - Efficient use of public assets.
- 2.2 The strategy also supports wider transport objectives by encouraging better use of existing parking capacity, improving information and wayfinding, supporting active travel and public transport where practical, expanding electric vehicle infrastructure where appropriate and using pricing and permit arrangements to manage demand effectively.
- 2.3 The key test for future parking decisions will be whether they help create a vibrant and accessible town centre, support planned growth and regeneration, improve customer experience and maintain a financially sustainable parking service.

3. Strategic Context

- 3.1 Parking plays an important role in supporting Bromsgrove's economy, regeneration priorities and wider transport network. Historically, Bromsgrove has benefited from a substantial supply of conveniently located parking, which has helped support retail, leisure, employment and community activity while maintaining competitiveness with neighbouring centres and out-of-town destinations.
- 3.2 As town centre living, regeneration priorities and financial pressures continue to evolve, the strategic management of parking becomes increasingly important. This strategy therefore considers parking not simply as an operational service, but as part of the wider infrastructure that supports access, local activity, regeneration and community life.
- 3.3 The strategy builds upon the findings of the 2024 Waterman Strategic Parking Review and parking surveys undertaken by Wychavon Parking Services during 2025 and 2026.
- 3.4 The evidence shows that Bromsgrove's primary parking challenge is not an overall shortage of spaces. Instead, demand is concentrated within a small number of centrally located car parks, while significant spare capacity exists elsewhere within the Council's town centre parking estate.
- 3.5 Whilst the Waterman Strategic Parking Review concluded that sufficient parking capacity existed to meet future demand subsequent counts identified higher demand within several centrally located car parks than previously recorded. This underlines the need for regular monitoring to ensure that future parking decisions reflect changing demand patterns across the town centre.
- 3.6 The evidence indicates that future parking management should focus on improving utilisation across the existing town centre parking network through measures such as wayfinding, permit management, pricing and customer information before any consideration is given to additional parking provision.
- 3.7 The strategy also recognises the role parking will play in supporting major projects and planned growth, the Town Centre Strategic Framework, Nailers Yard and future housing and employment development.
- 3.8 Whilst this strategy focuses primarily on Bromsgrove Town Centre, the Council also owns and manages parking facilities within a number of district centres and villages across the district. Parking challenges, travel patterns and community needs vary significantly between locations and may require locally tailored responses. The Council will therefore undertake place-based parking reviews, subject to available funding, where appropriate and will use the findings to inform future investment, parking management and infrastructure decisions

4. Strategic Objectives

4.1 Objective 1: Support Economic Growth and Town Centre Vitality

Ensure parking continues to support retail activity, leisure destinations, employment, community facilities and town centre living.

4.2 Objective 2: Optimise the Use of Existing Parking Capacity

The Council will maximise the efficiency and utilisation of existing parking assets, ensuring available capacity is used effectively across the network before considering any additional parking provision.

4.3 Objective 3: Support Regeneration and Growth

The parking estate should help deliver the Council's regeneration ambitions by balancing operational parking requirements with future development opportunities.

4.4 Objective 4: Improve Customer Experience, Accessibility and Inclusion

The Council will provide a modern, accessible and easy-to-use parking service that is safe, convenient and meets the needs of residents, businesses and visitors.

4.5 Objective 5: Support the Transition to Sustainable and Low-Emission Travel

The Council will manage its parking assets to support wider environmental and transport objectives, including the expansion of electric vehicle charging infrastructure, while encouraging sustainable travel choices and maintaining access for those who rely on private vehicles.

4.6 Objective 6: Deliver Effective Parking Management and Enforcement

Enforcement activity will focus on improving compliance, supporting accessibility, maintaining parking turnover and addressing issues that affect road safety and traffic movement.

4.7 Objective 7: Ensure the Long-Term Sustainability of the Parking Network

The Council will manage its parking assets and services in a financially responsible manner, ensuring they remain well maintained, fit for purpose and capable of supporting residents, businesses and visitors over the long term.

5. Bromsgrove Car Park Estate

5.1 The Council currently manages a portfolio of car parks across the district providing approximately 1,013 spaces which will reduce to 942 with the closure of Stourbridge Road car park following its sale. All of these car parks

other than St John Street are owned on a freehold basis, St John Street car park is leased until 2032.

Car Park	Spaces
Recreation Road South	292
North Bromsgrove	195
School Drive	128
Parkside	94
St John Street	82
Windsor Street	65
New Road	58
Parkside offices	38

5.2 Other car parks in the town centre not owned or managed by the Council include Aldi (88 spaces) and Bromsgrove Retail Park (over 200 spaces).

5.3 The Council also owns and manages car parks outside the town centre:

Car Park	Spaces
Sanders Park (following expansion)	122
Alvechurch	45
Aston Fields	40
Catshill	15
All Saints Church Hall	33

5.4 These facilities provide important parking provision for local communities and support local centres.

6. Current Town Centre Demand

6.1 Parking surveys undertaken during 2025 and 2026 provide a clear picture of how the Council's parking estate is being used. The results demonstrate that while some centrally located car parks regularly operate close to capacity, significant capacity remains available elsewhere within the network.

6.2 Car Park Capacity and Utilisation

Car Park	Capacity	Peak Observed Occupancy	Peak Utilisation	Average Observed Occupancy	Average Utilisation
Recreation Road South	292	276	94.5%	130	44.5%
Stourbridge Road	71	71	100%	38	53.5%
Parkside	94	94	100%	80	85.1%
School Drive	128	128	100%	50	39.1%
North Bromsgrove	185	97	52.4%	35	18.9%
Windsor Street	65	65	100%	51	78.5%
New Road	58	58	100%	53	91.4%
St John Street	82	82	100%	67	81.7%

6.3 Network Capacity

- Total surveyed capacity: 975 spaces
- Peak observed demand: 718 vehicles
- Available spaces at peak demand: 257 spaces
- Spare capacity at peak demand: 26.4%

6.4 Key Findings

- Even during the busiest recorded survey period, over 250 spaces remained available across the Council's parking estate.

- Demand is concentrated within New Road, St John Street, Windsor Street and Parkside, all of which reached full occupancy during the survey period.
- North Bromsgrove retained substantial spare capacity, reaching a maximum of only 52% occupancy.
- School Drive reached capacity on occasion but averaged less than 40% utilisation.
- Recreation Road South, the largest car park in the network, averaged less than 45% utilisation despite approaching capacity during peak periods.
- There are key differences between weekday and weekend utilisation of some car parks. The evidence demonstrates that parking pressures are concentrated in specific locations despite significant spare capacity elsewhere within the network.

7. Future Growth and Capacity Assessment

- 7.1 Bromsgrove District is expected to continue growing over the period covered by this strategy. Population growth, new housing development, the delivery of town centre regeneration projects such as Nailers Yard, increased town centre living and future commercial investment are all likely to influence future demand for parking.
- 7.2 The Council's approach is not simply to provide additional parking spaces in anticipation of growth, but to ensure that the existing parking assets across the district are used as effectively as possible.
- 7.3 The Strategic Parking Review undertaken in 2024 concluded that sufficient parking capacity existed within Bromsgrove Town Centre to accommodate anticipated future demand without the need to bring Churchfields Multi-Storey Car Park back into operational use.
- 7.4 More recent occupancy surveys have shown higher utilisation levels within some centrally located car parks than those identified in the Strategic Parking Review. However, substantial spare capacity remains available elsewhere within the Council's town centre parking network, supporting the conclusion that existing capacity can continue to accommodate current demand as well as growth.
- 7.5 Future parking capacity requirements have therefore been assessed using both the findings of the Strategic Parking Review and the more recent occupancy surveys.
- 7.6 Since completion of the Strategic Parking Review, Stourbridge Road Car Park has been sold and will no longer form part of the Council's operational parking

estate. The loss of this site reduces the overall supply of public parking within Bromsgrove Town Centre by 71 spaces. However, analysis of current occupancy levels demonstrates that sufficient capacity remains available across the remaining operational car parks to accommodate current demand with room for growth in demand.

- 7.8 Whilst the disposal of Stourbridge Road reduces the overall margin between supply and demand, it does not create an immediate shortage of town centre parking spaces. School Drive and North Bromsgrove car park have over 200 vacant spaces on average. At their peak recorded use, there were 88 vacant spaces.
- 7.9 Whilst the primary focus of this strategy is Bromsgrove Town Centre, the Council recognises that parking pressures can arise in district centres and villages where local circumstances differ significantly from those in the town centre. Future place-based parking reviews will be considered where appropriate and, where evidence demonstrates a need for intervention, the outcomes will be used to inform future parking management, investment and capacity planning decisions.
- 7.10 The evidence gathered through the Strategic Parking Review, subsequent occupancy surveys and future growth assessment demonstrates that Bromsgrove's principal parking challenge relates to the distribution of demand rather than an overall shortage of parking spaces. Whilst some centrally located car parks experience consistently high demand, significant capacity remains available elsewhere within the network. The Council's priority should therefore be to improve utilisation of existing parking assets before considering the provision of additional capacity
- 7.11 On current evidence, there is no immediate operational requirement to bring Churchfields Multi-Storey Car Park back into use. The Council will focus on the early actions set out in this strategy, including improved wayfinding, fees and permit reviews, and measures to make better use of underutilised car parks.
- 7.12 Future parking requirements will be reviewed as the impacts of Nailers Yard, town centre regeneration projects and future housing growth become clearer. This assessment will inform any future decisions regarding additional parking capacity and strategic parking assets.

8. Parking Management Framework

Car Park Roles and Functions

- 8.1 To support more effective parking management, the Council will adopt a framework that assigns a clear role to individual car parks based on their location, demand profile and strategic function
- 8.2 Core Visitor Parking
- St John Street
 - Parkside
 - Windsor Street
 - New Road
- 8.3 These car parks are located closest to the town centre and should prioritise short-stay visitor parking, retail trips and leisure activity. The Council will seek to maximise turnover within these locations to support town centre businesses and visitor access.
- 8.4 Mixed-Use Parking
- Recreation Road South
- 8.5 This car park will accommodate a mix of users, including visitors, leisure users, permit holders and longer-stay parkers. Its location and capacity provide flexibility within the overall parking network and make it an important location for balancing demand across the town centre.
- 8.6 Long-Stay, Permit and Leisure Parking
- North Bromsgrove
 - School Drive
- 8.7 These car parks are well suited to longer-stay parking and permit holders due to their significant spare capacity and proximity to key destinations. North Bromsgrove will continue to play an important role in supporting leisure centre users, while both locations will be used to accommodate permit parking and longer-stay demand. Over time, season ticket provision may be focused increasingly within these car parks and Recreation Road South, subject to demand and operational requirements.

Permit and Pricing Strategy

- 8.8 Parking fees in Bromsgrove car parks were last reviewed in 2024, ending a 13-year period during which tariffs had remained unchanged since 2011. The review increased standard parking charges to £1.00 per hour and introduced free disabled parking and free parking for stays of up to 30 minutes, providing a balance between supporting town centre visits and generating income to maintain the parking estate.

- 8.9 There are currently approximately 210 season ticket holders using Bromsgrove town centre car parks providing an income of £67,200 per annum. Evidence from occupancy surveys indicates that a significant proportion of permit holders are concentrated within the most conveniently located car parks, particularly Parkside and New Road. This contributes to reduced availability for short-stay visitors and customers in locations that also experience the greatest demand throughout the day. At peak periods, the continued allocation of season ticket holders to these central car parks can limit turnover and reduce opportunities for visitor parking, despite substantial spare capacity existing elsewhere within the Council's parking estate.
- 8.10 Survey evidence shows that North Bromsgrove and School Drive consistently retain significant spare capacity. These locations are therefore well suited to accommodating a proportion of longer-stay parking demand, including town centre employees, Council staff, permit holders and other regular users. North Bromsgrove also performs an important role in serving Bromsgrove Sport and Leisure Centre and will continue to provide convenient parking for leisure centre users. Directing a greater proportion of long-stay parking demand towards these locations would help release capacity within the core visitor car parks while making more effective use of existing parking assets.
- 8.11 The Council will therefore review its season ticket arrangements and pricing structure during the lifetime of this strategy. Consideration will be given to differential permit pricing, with lower-cost permits offered in peripheral car parks such as North Bromsgrove, School Drive and, where appropriate, Recreation Road South, whilst premium pricing is retained for the most convenient centrally located facilities. The review will also consider whether specific permit arrangements, discounted parking products or other incentives should be introduced for Bromsgrove Sport and Leisure Centre users and members to support continued access to leisure facilities whilst ensuring parking capacity is managed effectively. This approach would provide a financial incentive for long-stay users to choose less heavily utilised car parks while protecting visitor access in key town centre locations.
- 8.12 The current permit structure means that a season ticket holder only needs to use a car park for approximately one day per week to achieve a financial saving compared with paying the standard daily parking charge. This represents a significantly greater discount than is typically seen in parking permit schemes, where the break-even point is often closer to four days per week. The Council will review permit pricing and eligibility to ensure that permits support the strategic management of parking demand, encourage use of appropriate long-stay locations and provide a fair balance between affordability and efficient use of parking assets.

8.13 The Council's permit strategy will therefore seek to:

- Prioritise visitor parking within core town centre car parks.
- Increase parking turnover in the most popular locations.
- Relocate long-stay parking demand to car parks with available capacity.
- Encourage more efficient use of the overall parking network.
- Support town centre businesses by improving visitor access.
- Ensure permit pricing remains fair, proportionate and aligned with demand.
- Future permit allocation will primarily focus on car parks with available long-stay capacity, including North Bromsgrove, School Drive and, where appropriate, Recreation Road South.
- Maintain appropriate parking provision for Bromsgrove Sport and Leisure Centre users, including consideration of targeted permit, validation or discount schemes where these support wider parking management objectives.

8.14 Annual reviews of permit allocations, permit pricing and parking tariffs will be undertaken to ensure that parking management arrangements continue to support town centre vitality whilst making the best use of the Council's available parking capacity.

Sustainability and Accessibility

8.15 The Council recognises that many residents, businesses and visitors will continue to rely on private vehicles for the foreseeable future. However, the parking service also has an important role in supporting wider environmental, accessibility and public realm objectives.

8.16 During the lifetime of this strategy, the Council will seek to improve the sustainability, accessibility and user experience of its parking estate through ongoing investment and maintenance programmes. This will include maintaining appropriate Blue Badge provision, improving pedestrian routes and wayfinding, enhancing lighting and perceptions of personal safety, and supporting better connections between parking facilities and other modes of transport.

8.17 The Council will also continue to review opportunities to expand electric vehicle charging infrastructure where there is demonstrated demand. Whilst rapid charging facilities are available within Bromsgrove, there is currently limited provision of destination charging infrastructure suitable for longer-stay parking. Future investment will therefore consider the appropriate balance between rapid charging and lower-powered charging facilities that support longer visits to the town centre, workplaces and leisure destinations.

1. 8.18 Sustainability, accessibility and climate resilience considerations will be incorporated into future parking infrastructure, maintenance and investment decisions wherever practicable.

9. Parking Assets and Regeneration

- 9.13 The Council's parking estate provides essential parking capacity for residents, visitors and businesses while also representing a significant strategic asset. Future decisions regarding parking provision will therefore take account of operational requirements alongside regeneration, placemaking and wider Council priorities.
- 9.14 The current assessment indicates that the town centre car park estate continues to provide sufficient capacity to meet existing and forecast demand. As a result, there is no immediate requirement to make significant changes to parking provision or to determine the long-term future of individual car park assets. However, recognising the importance of these assets to the wider regeneration and growth of the town centre, the Council will continue to review the performance, utilisation and strategic role of the estate as part of its ongoing planning for the town centre.
- 9.15 In particular, the future role of Churchfields Car Park should be considered as part of a comprehensive review of the town centre car park estate rather than in isolation. While current parking capacity means there is no immediate need for a decision regarding the site, the Council will proactively explore and evaluate a range of potential future options for Churchfields and other town centre parking assets. This work will be undertaken alongside wider regeneration, transport and development initiatives to ensure that future decisions are informed by robust evidence, an understanding of long-term parking demand, and the Council's wider place-making and regeneration objectives.

10. Parking Enforcement

- 10.1 Effective parking enforcement helps keep roads safe, prevents inconsiderate parking and makes sure parking spaces are available for residents, visitors and businesses. Enforcement is not about generating income. Its purpose is to ensure parking rules are followed and to support the safe and efficient movement of traffic.
- 10.2 The Council delivers Civil Parking Enforcement through its partnership with Wychavon District Council. This service includes the provision of on-street parking enforcement on behalf of Worcestershire County Council, together with off-street parking enforcement, permit administration, Blue Badge

enforcement, school patrols, parking dispensations, appeals administration and the recovery of unpaid Penalty Charge Notices.

- 10.3 Over the lifetime of this strategy, the Council will adopt a more intelligence-led approach to enforcement activity, using parking data, customer feedback, member enquiries and local intelligence to target locations where non-compliance has the greatest impact. Priority will be given to locations where parking behaviour affects safety, accessibility, traffic movement, town and local centre vitality and public confidence in the parking service.

10.4 Priority Enforcement Areas

- Rural and district centre enforcement locations - a minimum level of enforcement resource will continue to be directed toward locations outside Bromsgrove town centre. The current arrangement is for 25% of Civil Enforcement Officer (CEO) time to be spent outside Bromsgrove town centre. This will continue to be reviewed throughout the duration of the strategy period.
- Town centre parking turnover and misuse of short-stay parking.
- Blue Badge misuse.
- School safety and school entrance obstruction.
- Parking on tactile crossings and dropped kerbs (subject to relevant powers).
- Obstruction of pedestrian routes and accessibility features.
- Environmental offences associated with vehicles, including littering from vehicles where enforcement powers permit.

11. Technology and Innovation

- 11.1 Technology has an important role in helping the Council manage the parking estate more effectively and improve the customer experience.

The Council will continue to invest in:

- Cashless payment options
- Digital permits
- Improved reporting systems
- Data-led decision making

- 11.2 The Council will also monitor opportunities presented through the National Parking Platform and other emerging technologies that improve customer choice and operational efficiency. The National Parking Platform aims to

enable motorists to pay for parking using their preferred parking app across participating local authority car parks, reducing the need to download multiple applications and creating a more consistent parking experience for customers.

Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR)

- 11.3 The Council has considered the potential use of ANPR technology within its car parks. However, current legislative limitations mean ANPR cannot be used by local authorities to independently enforce off-street parking contraventions, and Civil Enforcement Officer patrols would still be required to monitor compliance, including disabled bays, electric vehicle charging bays and other parking restrictions. As a result, the anticipated benefit of releasing Civil Enforcement Officer capacity would not be realised. Given the significant capital and ongoing revenue costs associated with ANPR systems, the technology is not currently considered to offer sufficient operational or financial benefit. The Council will keep this position under review throughout the lifetime of the strategy to reflect any changes in legislation, technology, operational requirements or business need.

12. Monitoring and Delivery

- 12.1 The success of this strategy will depend on regular monitoring and evidence-led decision making. The Council will continue to monitor parking demand, customer behaviour, permit usage, enforcement activity and EV charging demand to ensure that future decisions are based on real-world evidence rather than assumptions.

Action Plan

Action	Outcome	Target Date
Review season ticket and permit allocations, including options to prioritise long-stay parking at North Bromsgrove and School Drive	Increase availability within centrally located visitor car parks	Q3 2026/27

Action	Outcome	Target Date
Review parking tariffs and season ticket pricing structure to encourage use of underutilised car parks	Better distribution of demand across the network	Q3 2026/27
Consider the findings of the Alvechurch Parking Review and consider other areas that may benefit from similar reviews, incorporating agreed actions into future parking service planning and investment programmes as appropriate	Ensure local parking issues are addressed through an evidence-led approach	Q3 2026/27
Establish a quarterly parking occupancy monitoring programme across the Council's parking estate	Improved evidence base for future decision making and capacity planning	Q4 2026/27
Undertake annual review of town centre parking demand and utilisation	Monitor effectiveness of parking management measures	Annually from Q3 2027/28
Develop and implement an enforcement improvement plan with Wychavon Parking Services	Improved compliance and turnover in key town centre locations	Q4 2026/27
Develop and assess future options for Churchfields Car Park and the wider town centre car park estate, taking account of the impact of this Strategy on parking demand, utilisation and customer behaviour, together with regeneration opportunities and wider place-making objectives.	A robust evidence base and range of deliverable options to support future decisions on the long-term role of Churchfields Car Park and the wider town centre car park estate.	Q1 2027/28
Review opportunities to improve car park signage, wayfinding and customer information directing users to available capacity	Increased awareness and use of alternative parking locations	Q2 2027/28
Review EV charging provision across the parking estate, to consider a mix of rapid and longer-stay charging opportunities	Support transition to lower emission vehicles	Q2 2027/28

Action	Outcome	Target Date
Review opportunities to introduce additional digital parking services and occupancy monitoring technology	Improved customer experience and operational intelligence	Q3 2027/28
Prepare for implementation of the National Parking Platform, subject to national rollout arrangements	Greater payment flexibility and improved customer choice	By 2029

Longer-Term Strategic Considerations

12.2 The following matters will be kept under review throughout the life of this strategy:

- The need for additional town centre parking capacity.
- Recommendations arising from the Alvechurch Parking Review
- The outcome of any future reviews of local parking issues outside the town centre
- Regeneration opportunities involving parking assets.
- Expansion of EV charging infrastructure.
- Emerging parking technologies.
- Parking implications of future Local Plan growth.

Monitoring and Review

12.3 Implementation of the strategy will be monitored throughout its lifetime through:

- Quarterly occupancy surveys.
- Annual reviews of parking tariffs and permit arrangements.
- Monitoring of parking income and usage trends.
- Monitoring of enforcement activity and compliance levels.
- Monitoring of EV charging infrastructure usage and demand.
- Annual review of progress against the Strategy Action Plan.

12.4 Key measures will include:

- Occupancy levels within core visitor car parks.
- Utilisation of North Bromsgrove, School Drive and other long-stay parking locations.

- Permit allocation by car park.
- Parking income and season ticket usage.
- Customer complaints and satisfaction levels.
- Enforcement outcomes and compliance rates.
- Demand for and utilisation of EV charging infrastructure.

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