

WARWICK DISTRICT COUNCIL

Parking Strategy

2026 – 2031



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01 Warwick District Parking Strategy 2026 – 2031

Our Vision:

Warwick District Council wants to deliver a modern, sustainable parking service that makes our district an even better place to live, work, and visit.

The strategy is built on four pillars; Fair & Well Managed, Balancing Supply and Demand, Technology & Data and Safety & Quality each designed to support accessibility, environmental goals, and a great experience for everyone who uses our car parks.

What the Council will do

- The service will be financially sustainable, transparent, and continually improving, with clear performance targets and a commitment to excellent customer service.
- The Council will work with partners to balance supply and demand, ensuring parking supports vibrant town centres, adapts to local needs, and works in partnership with stakeholders to tackle challenges and special events.
- The approach will help reduce carbon emissions, encourage greener travel, and support the Council's ambitious climate goals.
- The Council will harness modern technologies, from digital payments to smart enforcement and real-time information, making parking easier, more efficient, and future-proof.

Why the Council is doing this

A well-run parking service is essential for economic vitality, environmental responsibility, and the everyday lives of residents, workers, and visitors. By acting now, the Council will ensure Warwick District's parking is ready for the future delivering better outcomes for people, place, and our environment.

The parking strategy aligns with the priorities and vision of high-quality services established in the Council's Corporate Strategy, supports the sustainable delivery of services within the parameters set by the Medium-Term Financial Strategy, and advances a key objective of the Council's Change Programme of ongoing, long-term, continuous, improvement of its services.

How was this strategy developed

This strategy is the end point for an eight-month project reviewing the parking service which included detailed technical studies. These appendices include a baseline report, an engagement report and a supporting document providing the data and analysis that underpin this strategy.

How the Parking Service is currently performing

In summary the review found the relative strengths and challenges for parking in the district to be:

Strengths	Challenges
• Diverse economy, with strong retail and tourism demand • Reasonably good transport links • Clear policy guidance and well managed parking service • Generally positive views of stakeholders on quality of estate and tariffs • Many high yield sites and increasing transaction numbers. • Tariffs in line, often lower, than comparators • Estate in a generally good condition • Cashless payments already ~60% or more • Good relationship with the County Council • Commitment to National Parking Platform and opportunities for further digitalisation.	• High car ownership • No control over on-street designation, policy, enforcement, or equipment • Reduction in off-street supply in recent years (e.g. Linen Street, Covent Garden) without replacement • Some early proposals to reduce capacity further. • Peaks in town centres in December, with a peak in Warwick over the summer • Conflicts around events and peak demand in parks and leisure sites

02 From Vision to Action

The following four pillars; Fair and Well Managed, Balancing Supply and Demand, Technology and Data and Safety and Quality provide the framework for delivering this strategy, translating its objectives into clear actions and an associated plan of work

2.1. Fair and Well Managed

The parking service is currently operating well; and the aim is to further enhance customer experience, uphold financial sustainability, and promote fairness in provision and enforcement.

Management Approach

Adopt Key performance indicators to ensure continuous improvement such as:

- % Overall Penalty Charge Notice (PCN) Recovery Rate (aim for 70% or higher)
- % of PCNs challenged (aim for 25% or lower)
- % Appeal cases lost (aim for 50% or lower).

Keep within the rules for what local authorities can spend off-street parking surpluses on and maintain transparency by publishing Annual Parking Reports.

Local Authorities are subject to restrictions regarding the allocation of any surplus generated from off-street parking and related fines. While the service as a whole yielded a revenue surplus, a detailed analysis indicates that certain car parks recorded a deficit in the 2025/26 period. Performance monitoring is already being carried out on a regular basis by officers.

How a Fair and Well Managed service will be achieved:

What	Actions: Fair and Well Managed
Performance	Key performance indicators will be monitored monthly on a like for like, year on year basis.
Financial management	Monitor financial performance to ensure that the service meets its budgetary requirements and comply with legislation.
Transparency	Publish an Annual Parking Report to ensure transparency.
Asset Management	Car parks will continue to be regularly surveyed to identify defects and ensure that the car park estate continues to meet quality standards.

What will success look like?

Success will mean that the parking service consistently delivers an excellent customer experience, upholds financial sustainability, and ensures fairness in both provision and enforcement.

This will be achieved by adopting and monitoring key performance indicators on a year-on-year basis, ensuring the service meets its budgetary requirements, and maintaining transparency through the publication of Annual Parking Reports. Regular surveys will be conducted to identify and address defects, ensuring that the car park estate continues to meet high quality standards. The service will also comply with all legislative requirements regarding the allocation of surpluses and will remain responsive to stakeholder feedback.

2.2 Balancing Supply and Demand

Supporting our vibrant town centres and green spaces includes helping people find parking when and where they want, to provide the best visitor experience, support local business and reduce the environmental impacts of congestion. This is a challenge in our District which is well known for its famous attractions and events and welcomes thousands of visitors each year, often concentrated in the summer months or over specific weekends.

Given the costs and difficulties of increasing the supply of parking, a partnership approach and positive communications will often be the only realistic option, especially where problems are infrequent or temporary. Parking issues are not wholly the responsibility of the parking team or the District Council.

Supply and Demand Approach

Help customers find parking when and when they want it through working in partnership with other stakeholders, setting the right tariffs and adopting a quicker and more streamlined way of changing fees and charges.

Simply adding more parking is not always possible or the best answer; it is about using what we have more effectively and efficiently. That means regularly reviewing how busy car parks are, adjusting tariffs to encourage turnover where demand is high, and working with partners to provide flexible solutions during busy periods or special events. By taking a balanced approach, the aim is to support local businesses, reduce unnecessary congestion, and help everyone get on with their day.

How the Council will work to balance supply and demand:

What	Actions: Fair and Well Managed
Events and high demand	Work in partnership with event's organisers and council teams such as leisure and events to co-ordinate efforts to deal with peaks in demand with an events calendar.
Fair tariffs, fees, and charges	Tariffs will be reviewed annually with tariff setting being considered within these general parameters: • Where occupancy is normally above 80% at peak times across most of the year, the tariff should be increased by 10%+CPI annually. • Where occupancy is usually below 60% at peak times the tariff should be frozen or reduced.
Opportunities to increase supply	Continue to seek opportunities to increase off-street parking supply in key locations in liaison with the County Council, Town/Parish Councils, and Local Planning Authority.
Support modal shift and Park and Ride	Work with the County Council to reduce demand through better transport alternatives and travel choices.

What will success look like?

Success will mean that customers can reliably find parking when and where they need it. This will be achieved by making the best use of existing resources, regularly reviewing occupancy, adjusting tariffs in response to demand and working with partners to provide flexible solutions during busy periods or special events. Success will also be reflected in the ability to support local businesses, reduce unnecessary congestion, and applying a balanced approach will help maintain vibrant town centres, and deliver a positive experience for all users.

2.3 Technology and Data

Recent advancements have rapidly transformed technology in mobility and parking, introducing features like mobile payments, online-managed paperless permits, dynamic pricing, and Automatic Number Plate Recognition. Data will play an increasing role in running efficient parking services. By embracing new technologies, we can improve monitoring, pricing, predictive maintenance, and enforcement, resulting in a better overall experience for customers.

Being Technology and Data driven

Data and technology will be central to the parking service, increasing efficiency, improving public access and experience and enabling further initiatives and service improvements..

Although current laws limit how councils can adopt some of these innovations, the next decade could see major changes, especially with projects such as the not-for-profit National Parking Platform on the horizon.

How the Council will update and digitalise the parking service:

What	Actions: Technology and Data
Upgrades to terminals	Consider opportunities to upgrade terminals to include Vehicle Registration Mark (VRM) input to improve compliance management efficiency and to further digitalise the service.
Digitalisation	Continue to work with NPP and consider terminal and handheld upgrades when online.
Artificial intelligence and ANPR enforcement	Monitor emerging AI business intelligence products, ANPR and sensor technology and procure where there is a business case for doing so.
Wayfinding	Review the relevance of on-street variable message signs when these systems require upgrade / replacement. Continue to maintain the on-foot and vehicle wayfinding signage to, from and within the car parks.

What will success look like?

The parking service will be recognised as a leader in digital transformation and data-driven decision-making. The service will have integrated new technologies such as digital payments, smart enforcement, and real-time information systems, making the service more efficient, and responsive to user needs. Upgrades to terminals will improve compliance management and allow for further digitalisation with the National Parking Platform.

2.3.1 Carbon Reduction

The Council has set out ambitions to become a Net Zero Council. The response of the parking service will be to develop a future-proofed service such that it can respond seamlessly to digital and other new technologies as they emerge.

Carbon Reduction Approach

A parking strategy which balances supporting economic vitality and access to the towns whilst discouraging frequent single occupancy car journeys through tariffs and other parking policies.

Electric vehicles are supported by central government initiatives, although the parking service must consider whether it responds to an increase in demand for charging points. Green infrastructure and solar panels should be considered on a site-specific basis.

How the Council will reduce its carbon:

What	Actions: Fair and Well Managed
Electric Vehicle Parking Charges	Off-street EV charge points should be focused on areas with limited opportunity for people to charge at home in conjunction with overnight permits.
Green Infrastructure	Seek opportunities for pocket parks and tree planting. Consider permeable surfaces.
Solar Panels	Solar panels have the potential to provide low carbon energy and are now standard in car parks in other countries. Any future proposal would need to be considered against planning considerations, grid availability, and financial feasibility.
Emission Based Charges	Review the case for emission based charges in the future in conjunction with the County Council and their wider transport policy.

What will success look like?

Success in carbon reduction will mean that the parking service supports the Council's climate change goals by balancing economic vitality and accessibility with environmental responsibility. This will be achieved by:

- managing demand and reducing congestion in car parks through tariff setting, parking policies and communications
- focusing electric vehicle charging infrastructure in areas with limited home charging options
- integrating green infrastructure such as pocket parks, tree planting, and permeable surfaces where feasible.

2.4 Safety and Quality

Parking supply and demand present distinct challenges across the towns of Warwick, Royal Leamington Spa, and Kenilworth, where Warwick District Council manages a number of off-street car parks. Each town experiences periods of high occupancy, seasonal peaks, and site-specific pressures. The strategy recognises that solutions must be tailored, combining regular monitoring, flexible management, and partnership working to address both persistent and occasional issues. The three towns are distinct in their character and challenges.

Safety and Quality

Maintain safe, accessible, and high-quality parking facilities across the district. Regular surveys and preventative maintenance ensure car parks meet modern standards and remain in good condition.

Adopt the principle of retaining current parking supply given current and potential future parking demand in the three towns.

2.4.1 Kenilworth

Kenilworth sees high occupancy towards the end of the week and Saturday, especially around Christmas, but overall there is a good balance between supply and demand in the town centre.

The car parks at Castle Farm Leisure Centre and Abbey Fields fill up on weekends when good weather, park events, football, and leisure users combine to create peaks in the demand. In turn, this impacts local residential streets.

Item	Aims/Objectives: Kenilworth
Town-wide	• Adopt the principle of retaining current parking supply, given current and potential future parking demand. • Continue occupancy and demand monitoring and identify opportunities to increase supply, subject to business case.
Town Centre	• Improve pedestrian links and signage for Square West car park where possible. • Continue to measure occupancy levels and reconsider the strategy in 5-years based on data.
Abbey Fields	• Monitor parking levels from the opening of the leisure centre. Support the implementation of a travel plan and communicate via all channels to encourage use of other parking where possible and alternative travel modes. • Consider varying current charges and permit arrangements to reduce demand and increase capacity.
Castle Farm Leisure Centre	• Continue to monitor occupancy levels and review the business case for managing demand through pricing. • Communicate via all channels to encourage use of other parking where possible and alternative travel modes.

2.4.2 Royal Leamington Spa

The Base Case and engagement exercise examined a variety of issues throughout Royal Leamington Spa. The principal characteristics identified are summarised as follows:

- High demand across most of the town including the Town Centre and Old Town with only a few sites frequently under 60% full in peak times.
- Bedford St, Covent Garden and Chandos Street are key assets for Warwick District Council, having very high vehicle turnover and yield.
- Changes to the town centre roads may reduce on-street parking capacity further in the future.
- Severe but infrequent issues with parking around Victoria Park.
- High demand on weekdays across the Old Town site.

The Town Centre will undergo major improvement through the Leamington Transformation project and parking availability is considered 'critical' to retaining business and retail vitality in the town.

Demand is also generally high in the Old Town, busier on weekdays than at the weekend, which suggests commuting use.

Victoria Park experiences peaks in demand, with little alternative parking and residents parking schemes limit options for on-street parking. This is worst when sporting events such as bowls championships combine with good weather and the various attractions of the park to create peaks in demand which cannot be accommodated by the car parks around the site.

The three parking sites at Newbold Comyn see extreme variations between out-of-season weekdays when it is nearly empty and peak days when good weather, football and parkrun's combine to create high peaks when the parking is full and traffic management and circulation problems are seen.

Item	Aims/Objectives: Royal Leamington Spa
Town-wide	• Adopt the principle of maintaining current off-street parking numbers overall, although spaces may be relocated as the town develops. • Continue occupancy and demand monitoring and identify opportunities to increase supply, subject to business case.
Town Centre	• Continue to measure occupancy levels and reconsider the strategy in 5-years based on data. • Acknowledge the likely redevelopment of Covent Garden and Chandos St car park sites as part of the Leamington Transformation Framework. Seek to maintain reasonable parking supply within the developments.
Victoria Park	• Continue occupancy and demand monitoring. • Review the business case for managing demand through pricing. • Work with stakeholders to look at event travel planning such as temporary parking on the park during high demand periods.
Newbold Comyn	• Continue occupancy and demand monitoring. • Review the business case for managing demand through pricing.

2.4.3 Warwick

In Warwick, the Base Case and the engagement exercise highlighted that:

- There is demand across the town centre can make finding a parking space difficult during popular times of the day and days of the week.
- Parking is reasonably seasonal with higher demand in some car parks over the summer tourism season.
- Demand is likely to increase in future years given developments around the town.
- The loss of Linen St MSCP has left locals feeling that there is a 'gap' in provision on the west side of town centre.
- Residents often find it difficult to park near their homes.
- There are opportunities to improve customer service around St Nicholas Park
- There is low demand across the three car parks along the racecourse/St. Mary's Lands..

In St Nicholas Park there is generally some capacity outside of the summer months, although the car park is used for events parking and specifically by users of the leisure centre. There is some frustration from customers of the Leisure Centre that they have to "pay twice," once for usage of leisure facilities and again for parking.

Myton Fields provides an important release valve for high demand periods and events parking but suffers from a poor surface which will continue to degrade over time.

The three racecourse car parks are under used outside of times when they are given over for event uses.

Item	Aims/Objectives: Warwick
Town-wide	• Adopt the principle of maintaining current off-street parking numbers overall, although spaces may be relocated as the town develops. • Continue occupancy and demand monitoring and identify opportunities to increase supply, subject to business case.
Town Centre	• Seek opportunities to replace the capacity lost in Linen Street. • Continue to measure occupancy levels and reconsider the strategy in 5-years based on data.
St Nicholas Park	• Consider options to offer leisure centre customers free or reduced cost parking.
Myton Fields	• Retain as essential parking for peak demand and events. • Consider installing grass mesh reinforcements for ~80 spaces to protect the surface.
Racecourse Car Parks	• Retain as Council assets, with the objective to generate income through tariffs. • As technology improvements come online, consider digitising the various permits and concessions (e.g. golf course customers) • Monitor and change tariffs to reflect demand.

03 Risks and Opportunities to the Strategy

This section highlights the key challenges that could impact the successful delivery of the parking strategy, while also identifying areas where proactive management and innovation can turn potential obstacles into positive outcomes for Warwick District.

Risk / Challenge	Response
Internal staff resources	Ensure appropriate staffing and budget lines; continue to resource the parking service with identified staff and budgets.
Rapid changes in technology	Embrace digitalisation, collaborate with the National Parking Platform, monitor emerging technologies, and upgrade systems as needed.
Changes to legislation	Monitor legislative changes and respond proactively, viewing them as opportunities for improvement and innovation.
Seasonal and event-driven peaks in demand	Work in partnership with event organisers and council teams to coordinate efforts and manage peaks with an events calendar.
Loss of parking supply without replacement	Seek opportunities to replace lost capacity, collaborate with the County Council, and reconsider strategy based on data.
Financial sustainability	Monitor financial performance, comply with legislation, and publish Annual Parking Reports for transparency.
Environmental challenges	Integrate green infrastructure, support EV charging, and implement targeted policies to balance carbon reduction with accessibility.
Macro-economic and retail trends reducing demand	Maintain a balance of tariffs and supply. Respond with flexible management, regularly review occupancy, and adapt strategies to changing conditions.
Local government reform	This five-year Parking Strategy has been prepared amid ongoing consultation on Local Government Reorganisation (LGR). Although no formal proposals have been confirmed for Warwickshire, the Strategy is designed to ensure the Council's parking service remains adaptable, efficient and financially sustainable under any future governance model. Recognising that LGR can lead to the consolidation of district (off-street) and county (on-street) functions, the Strategy adopts an LGR-ready approach. As the Council already operates a fully in-house service with established enforcement and digital capability, it is well positioned to integrate within any future unified parking arrangement.

04 Action Plan

The tables below set out a five-year action plan structured around the four strategic pillars of the strategy and considering the risks and opportunities to the strategy. It provides a clear framework for delivery while retaining flexibility, allowing actions to be reviewed and refined over time in response to changing circumstances and emerging priorities.

Measure	Description	When	Monitoring
Resources	Continue to resource the parking service appropriately with identified staff resources and budgets.	Ongoing	- Staff resource in place - Budget lines identified
Delivery	- Establish a working group to consider parking (and transport) across the district with Parking Working Group or similar. - Maintain a log of queries and issues. - Continue to work with the County Council and neighbouring authorities.	Yr 1 Yr 1 Ongoing	- Working group established - Attendance - Actions and follow ups

Measure	Description	When	Monitoring
Service performance management	- Continue to deliver a good parking service by adopting key performance indicators. - Monitor compliance and financial performance by publishing Annual Parking Reports.	1 – 2 yrs Annually	- KPI performance - Annual Parking Reports
Asset Management	Regularly surveys of car parks to identify defects and ensure estate meets quality standards.	Ongoing	- BPA safe parking schemes - Life Care Plan for MSCPs
Specific user Groups	- Investigate options for tourism permits to link with hotels and attractions (reliant on digitalisation) - Consider the current concessions policies for free parking in car parks.	1 – 2 yrs 3 – 4 yrs	- New products and services - Traffic count data

Measure	Description	When	Monitoring
Site specific issues and Events Planning	Through the Parking/Events Working Groups, manage and communicate with stakeholders and partners to address specific issues during events of peaks in demand.	Ongoing	- Working group actions - Customer feedback
Change parking fees to reflect the market and inflation	Implement new tariffs and update signage through pricing mechanism.	1 – 2 yrs	Tariffs decided
	Changes to off-street orders and on-street schedules where required.	1 – 2 yrs	Orders changed
Digitalisation	Continue to work with the National Parking Platform to realise the benefits of a multi-vendor data platform.	1 – 2 yrs	Adoption and implementation
	Business case for parking enforcement handhelds and terminal upgrades to use registration plates to improve enforcement efficiency.	1 – 2 yrs	Efficiency KPIs
	Monitor emerging AI business intelligence products, ANPR and sensor technology for when they may become economical.	2 – 5 yrs	New products and services
Wayfinding	Work with the Transport Authority to retain Variable Message and other highways signage in good order.	1 – 5 yrs	Customer feed-back
	Continue to improve wayfinding and signage in car parks.	1 – 3 yrs	
	Review the value of wayfinding systems considering growth of in-car and mobile technology.	5 yrs	
Carbon Reduction	- Continue to work across the Council to achieve a balanced, incremental approach to Electric Vehicle charging. - Seek opportunities for pocket parks, permeable surfaces, solar energy canopies, and tree parking in partnership with local communities. - Consider over the medium-term emissions and other types of charging alongside local transport policy.	Ongoing	- EV charging point usage data. - Utilities bills and energy efficiency - Number of projects

Measure	Description	When	Monitoring
The three town centres	Adopt a principle of retaining overall parking levels given current and potential future demand	Y 1	Parking Strategy
Kenilworth	- Manage the parking at Abbey Fields and Castle Farm at peaks. - Communicate and consider measures to balance supply / demand with stakeholders. - Improve pedestrian links to signage between Square West and the High Street	1 – 2 yrs 2 – 3 yrs	- Delivery - Report to working group
Royal Leamington Spa	- Investigate options to increase supply in the north of the town centre. - Consider business case for managing demand at Victoria Park. - Consider business case for managing demand at Newbold Comyn	1 – 2 yrs 1 – 2 yrs 1 – 2 yrs	- Report to working group - Delivery
Warwick	- Seek opportunities to replace lost parking in the town centre. - Investigate options to improve experience of leisure centre users in St Nicholas Park - Consider business case for grass mesh reinforcement for part of Myton Fields site to protect the surface.	1 – 2 yrs 2 – 3 yrs 2 – 3 yrs	- Report to working group. - Delivery

05 Glossary of terms

Acronym/ Term	Definition
ANPR	Automatic Number Plate Recognition – technology that uses cameras and software to read vehicle number plates for enforcement, access control, and data collection. Also known as LPR or ALPR.
APS	Automated Pay Station – a self-service machine for parking payment, often called “pay-on-foot” or “pay-on-exit.”
BPA	British Parking Association – the leading professional association for the parking and mobility sector in the UK, setting standards and providing guidance.
EV	Electric Vehicle – a vehicle powered by electricity, either fully or as a hybrid. Parking strategies often address EV charging infrastructure.
KPI	Key performance indicator – a measurable value used to evaluate the success of an organization or service in meeting objectives (e.g., recovery rate, appeal rate).
MSCP	Multi-Storey Car Park – a parking facility with multiple levels, typically used in urban areas to maximize parking capacity.
NPP	National Parking Platform – a UK-wide initiative to create a not-for-profit, multi-vendor digital platform for parking payments and management, aiming to standardize and simplify parking services.
PCN	Penalty Charge Notice – a formal notice issued for parking or traffic violations, commonly known as a parking ticket.
RFID	Radio-Frequency Identification – technology using electromagnetic fields to automatically identify and track tags attached to objects, used in some parking access systems.
VMS	Variable Message Sign – electronic signage that provides real-time information (e.g., parking availability) to drivers.
VRM	Vehicle Registration Mark – the unique alphanumeric identifier (license plate) assigned to a vehicle in the UK. Used in ANPR systems for enforcement and data collection.
WDC	Warwick District Council – the local authority responsible for parking strategy in Warwick District.



