



# Carmarthenshire Parking Strategy

FEBRUARY 2018

Project No: CS/091670

Doc Ref: CS/091670

Rev: P01

Carmarthenshire County Council

Issue Date: February 2018

Carmarthenshire Parking Strategy



## Contents

1. Introduction	1
2. Background Information	3
3. Parking Policy	5
4. Current Parking Demand and Capacity	6
5. Comparison with Comparable Towns	9
6. PCN Data	11
7. Technology	14
8. Economic Case for Car Park Management	18
9. Internal Consultation	20
10. Parking Strategy Proposals	22

# 1. Introduction

As a predominantly rural area the private motorcar will remain the primary means of transport for the majority of trips across the County. However, as the towns of Carmarthenshire County Council (CCC) continue to grow and develop the opportunity to locate land for parking provision within town centres becomes increasingly difficult. It is therefore essential the existing parking stock is managed effectively to maximise use.

A car parking strategy can be one of the most useful tools available to local authorities in helping them achieve their economic, social and environmental objectives.

This Parking Strategy will ensure that future changes to parking provision are both forward thinking and support the economic attractiveness and vitality of the diverse areas within Carmarthenshire. In particular, a parking strategy can:

- Support the local economy (e.g. by making it easy for shoppers and tourists to visit Carmarthenshire's market towns) and facilitate development growth (e.g. by enabling the planned housing and employment growth in Carmarthenshire);
- Provide access to key services and facilities for special needs groups and the mobility impaired (e.g. by providing appropriate Blue Badge car parking spaces);
- Improve journey time reliability for road users (e.g. by designing and managing on-street parking facilities to reduce traffic conflicts and delays);
- Encourage sustainable travel modes and help reduce reliance on the private car (e.g. by setting parking charges at appropriate levels);
- Improve the efficiency of the council's parking service;
- Enhance the built and natural environment (e.g. by reducing the amount of land required for parking and by improving the look of street scenes through the enforcement of parking contraventions);
- Make Carmarthenshire a safer place (e.g. by ensuring that car parks are 'safer by design');
- Raise revenue for the council to sustain highways and transport services (e.g. by using surplus parking revenues to subsidise non-commercial bus services)
- Reduce wasteful competition between towns in the wider sub-region (e.g. by setting car parking charges and standards that are broadly consistent with neighbouring authorities).

It should be clear from the above that car parking covers a variety of areas and a parking strategy needs to address them all. In essence, a parking strategy needs to form an integral part of a sustainable local transport system which aims to support economic, social and environmental objectives.

Having stated the above, there can be significant issues in trying to adopt a parking strategy that supports a sustainable local transport system as there are often inherent tensions between economic, social and environmental objectives.

This car parking strategy therefore strikes a balance between supporting economic growth and being an effective demand management tool to encourage the use of sustainable transport alternatives.

## 2. Background Information

CCC's existing Parking Strategy 'Integrated Parking Strategy for Carmarthenshire' was produced in 2005. The original Strategy attempted to strike a balance between the needs of individuals (whether they rely on private or public transport) local economies and business communities with the needs of the environment. Developed through extensive internal and external consultation exercises the key aims of the 2005 Strategy were to;

- To be consistent with national and regional parking objectives and with the Strategic Transport Policy in the Council's Unitary Development Plan;
- To contribute to other corporate objectives including the Corporate Strategy, Community Plan and the Local Transport Plan;
- To facilitate parking provision and management that maximises the use of existing parking stock;
- To ensure that parking facilities are safe, accessible and convenient and that they comply with the Disability Discrimination Act 1995;
- To promote more sustainable travel choices through parking provision and pricing at the same time as maintaining economic viability in the County.

The 2005 Strategy went on to identify key priorities for actions to achieve the key aims listed above:

- To **prioritise short-stay parking in town centre car parks** – this maximises the number of vehicles that can use the space in one day and thus the economic benefit to the local business community. This needs to be matched with long stay parking provision at the periphery of town centres;
- To **improve car park safety** – all car users become pedestrians once they have parked their cars and the environment within car parks needs to be user friendly and accessible;
- To **improve car park information** – this helps both regular users and visitors by indicating where car-parking provision is and for interactive displays how many vacant spaces remain. This leads to more efficient use of parking stock;
- To **provide more facilities for mobility impaired** – including appropriate levels of parking provision within car parks and through the encouragement of shop mobility schemes within town centres;
- To **provide Park and Ride** on the periphery of Carmarthen and Llanelli – as an effective means of reducing congestion at the same time as providing a pool of parking to cater for daily and seasonal peaks in demand;
- To **improve integration with public transport** services – providing car parking facilities adjacent to main bus and rail interchange points will encourage greater use of bus and rail by commuters and visitors to urban areas;

- To **apply maximum parking standards to new development** – thus ensuring that non-residential developments contribute to, and do not detract from, the parking strategy, through over or under provision of parking;
- To **provide coach and other parking** – This will help to attract more coach visitors to Carmarthenshire and the space allocated can be used by lorries or caravans during off peak periods; and
- To **provide motor cycle and cycle parking facilities in car parks** – This will help to encourage more cycling and motorcycling, both of which are more sustainable forms of transport.

### 3. Parking Policy

A review of existing local, regional and national policy and guidance relating to parking, transportation and land use planning was carried out.

- Maximum car parking standards should be used at local and regional level as a means of controlling demand. Ensure that new developments provide lower levels of parking than have generally been achieved in the past. Minimum parking standards are no longer appropriate;
- It is acknowledged that parking provision in rural areas is a major challenge for local authorities. Good design and consultation with stakeholders is important to ensuring that parking does not undermine both the ability to provide public transport and the incentive to walk or cycle;
- Consider the requirements of the Active Travel Act by encouraging the implementation of specific measures to develop safe cycling, including new or improved routes, and secure parking and changing facilities in major developments and at transport interchanges;
- Consider parking issues on a joint basis with neighbouring authorities to achieve a common approach to the provision of vehicle parking facilities at new developments; and
- Integrate park and ride provision into the parking strategy by utilising sites identified within the LTP to improve the attractiveness of public transport to reduce overall dependence on the private motorcar and to reduce the impact of transport on greenhouse gas emissions.

It is acknowledged that this Strategy needs to reflect the Wales Transport Strategy, Carmarthenshire County Council Local Development Plan, the South West Wales Regional Transport Plan, the Future Generations Act and the Active Travel Act, and in doing so, it is important that the objectives of the new strategy reflect the following broad principles outlined in those documents;

- Encourage safer, healthier and more sustainable travel;
- Improve the sustainability of transport by improving the range and quality of, and awareness about, transport options including those which improve health and well-being;
- Improve the efficiency and reliability of the movement of people and freight within and beyond south west Wales to support the regional economy;
- Improve integration between policies, service provision and modes of transport in south west Wales; and
- Implement measures which make a positive contribution to improving air quality and reducing the adverse impact on health and climate change including reducing carbon emissions.

## 4. Current Parking Demand and Capacity

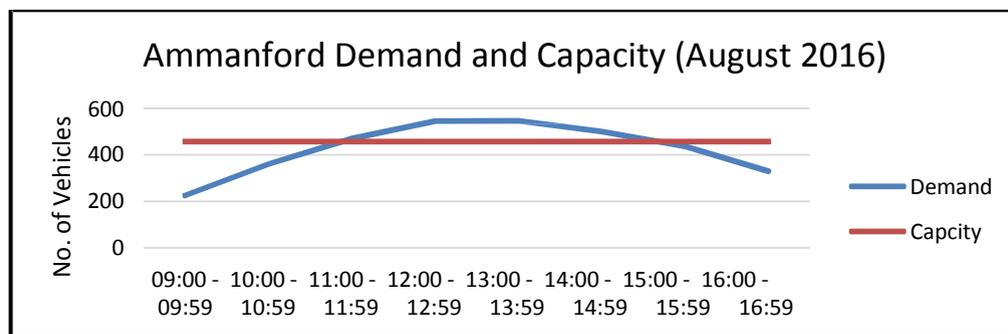
Ticket sales information was analysed across all County Council controlled car parks in Ammanford, Carmarthen and Llanelli for Fridays in August and December 2016. This analysis provides a snap shot of demand within the 3 main county towns. The following graphs compare demand with car park capacity.

As evidenced by data in Graphs 4.1 and 4.2 the car parks in Ammanford are operating at over peak capacity in both August and December.

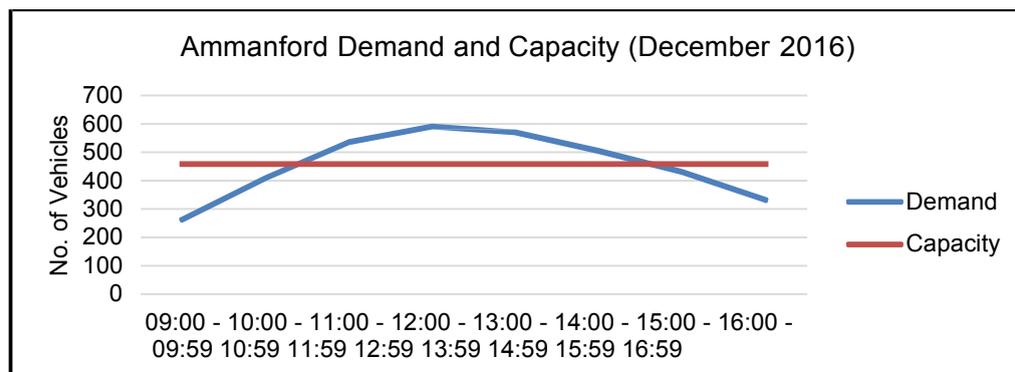
In December the car parks in Carmarthen are operating at close to capacity, as illustrated by Graph 4.4, however, in August, as displayed in Graph 4.3, there appears to be sufficient capacity to cope with demand.

According to the ticket sales information there is spare capacity in Llanelli in both August and December, as evidenced by Graphs 4.5 and 4.6.

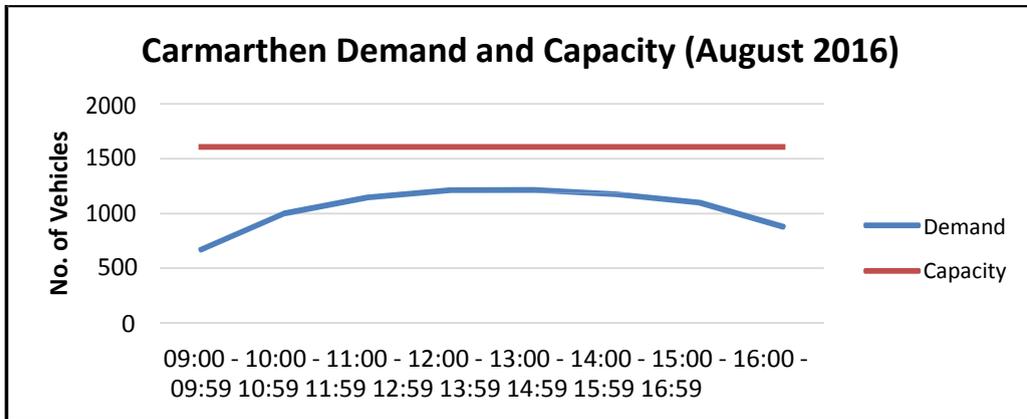
**Graph 4.1: Ammanford Demand & Capacity August 2016**



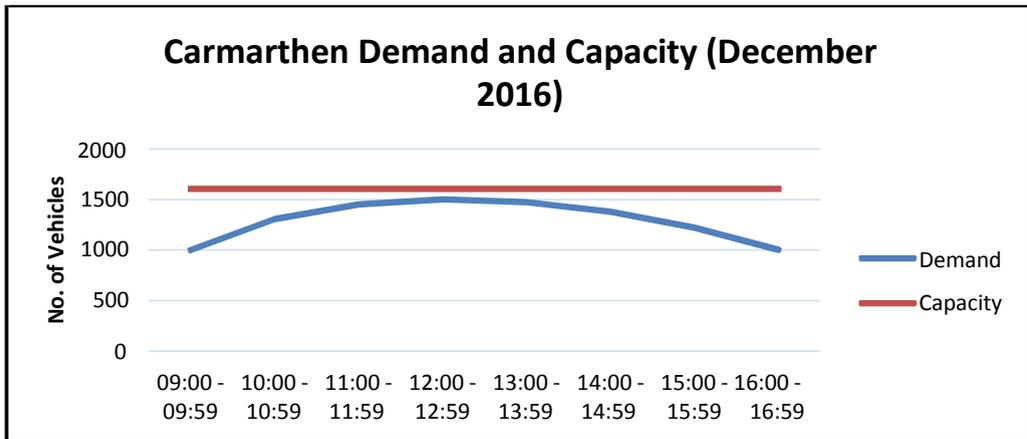
**Graph 4.2: Ammanford Demand & Capacity December 2016**



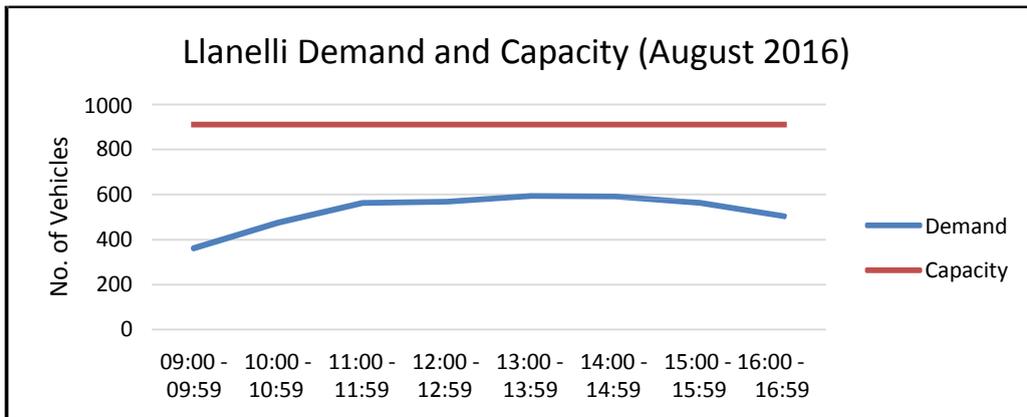
**Graph 4.3: Carmarthen Demand & Capacity August 2016**



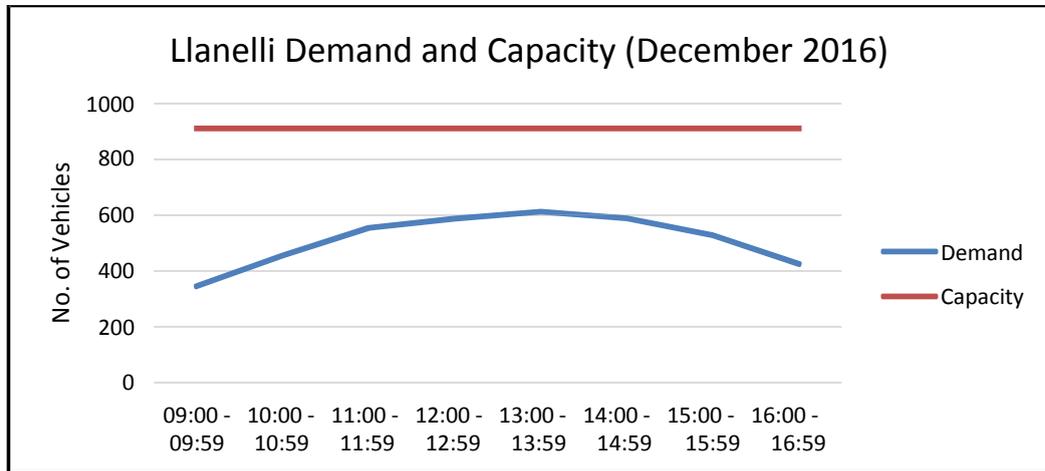
**Graph 4.4: Carmarthen Demand & Capacity December 2016**



**Graph 4.5: Llanelli Demand & Capacity August 2016**



**Graph 4.6: Llanelli Demand & Capacity December 2016**



Further information on ticket sales is available in Appendices B, C and D.

## 5. Comparison with Comparable Towns

Carmarthenshire has a wide variety of towns and locations each with their own characteristics. Their individual parking issues stem from their location, mix of land uses, and transport facilities. In managing demand CCC will have regard to the function / type and unique qualities of each area. These considerations will help to determine the most appropriate approach to parking management and to promote each area.

Car park charging needs to strike a balance between influencing travel behaviour and encouraging people into the town centre. The charging regime in an area needs to reflect the product, in terms of employment, retail, health and leisure facilities, available at that location.

From the evidence presented in Table 5.1 it is clear that the charging regime across Carmarthenshire is competitive when compared to other towns with similar demographics and a similar function. It is suggested that parking ticket sales and footfall data are continually reviewed and that consultation be undertaken on potential future changes to parking charges.

**Table 5.1 provides a comparison of car parking pricing strategies in comparable urban and rural towns across Wales.**

Towns / Council Owned Car Park	Local Authority	Short Stay				Long Stay					Coaches (All Day)	Other Prices / Concessions
		1hr	2hr	3hr	4hr	1hr	2hr	3hr	4hr	All Day		
Abergavenny, Chepstow and Monmouth	Monmouthshire County Council	£1.50	£3.00	£4.50	£6.00		£1.00	£1.50	£2.00	£4.00		Overstay: £5.00
Builth Wells, Crickhowell, Hay-on-Wye, Brecon, Knighton, Rhayader, Welshpool, Llanidloes, Machynlleth	Powys County Council	£1.00	£1.50			£0.70	£1.30	£2.50	£3.20		£5.30 (All Day) £6.30 (Overnight)	Blue Badge: Free
Haverfordwest <sup>1</sup>	Pembrokeshire County Council	£0.50	£0.60		£1.00	£0.50	£0.60		£1.00	£1.15		24hr: £1.15
Neath <sup>2</sup>	Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council					£1.00	£1.50	£2	£2.50	£3		Sunday: £1
Swansea	City and County of Swansea	£1.20	£2.40	£3.50		£1.20	£2.40	£3.50	£4.50	£7.00	£10.00 (All Day) £5.00 (3hrs)	Blue Badge: Concession
Caernarfon	Gwynedd Council	£1.00	£2.00	£3.00	£4.00				£2.00	£5.00	£3.50 (4hrs) £5.50 (All Day)	Blue Badge: Free
Bridgend	Bridgend County Borough Council	£0.70	£1.50	£2.50	£6.00	£0.70		£1.50		£3.00		
Conwy	Conwy County Borough Council					£1.00	£2.00		£3.00	£4.50		6pm-8pm: £0.50
	<b>AVERAGES</b>	<b>£0.97</b>	<b>£1.82</b>	<b>£3.38</b>	<b>£4.25</b>	<b>£0.90*</b>	<b>£1.30*</b>	<b>£2.20*</b>	<b>£2.60*</b>	<b>£4.10*</b>		
Carmarthen	Carmarthenshire County Council	£0.50p*	£1.60	£2.20	£3.40					£2.30		
Llanelli	Carmarthenshire County Council	£1.20	£1.60	£1.80	£2.00					£2.20		
Ammanford, Llandeilo, Llandovery, Newcastle Emlyn, St Clears	Carmarthenshire County Council	£0.70			£1.00					£1.50		

<sup>1</sup> Average cost of short stay and long stay car parking across Haverfordwest (not combined).

<sup>2</sup> Average cost across all Neath car parks listed on NPTCBC website.

\*St. Peters Car Park offers 1 hour car parking at 0.50p

## 6. PCN Data

Analysis was undertaken to evaluate Penalty Charge Notice (PCN) data for both August and December 2016.

**Table 6.1: PCN Offences August 2016**

		August 2016	
	Total PCN's	Top 3 Locations (number of offences)	Top 3 Offences (number of offences)
Ammanford	50	Margaret Street - (13) Park Street - (7) Wind Street Car Park - (7)	Parked in P&D CP without a ticket - (25) Parked in restricted St. during prescribed hrs - (5) Parked on Clearway where parking is prohibited - (6)
Carmarthen	273	St. Peters Car Park - (44) John Street Car Park - (40) Lammas Street - (16)	Parked in P&D CP without a ticket - (72) Parked in restricted St. during prescribed hrs - (41) Parking in residents of shared use parking place - (31)
Llandeilo	36	Rhosmaen Street - (12) New Road - (4) Crescent Rd - (4)	Parked in restricted St. during prescribed hrs - (9) Parked in a loading place during restricted hours - (9) Parking in residents of shared use parking place - (5)
Llandovery	38	Castle Car Park - (19) Orchard Street - (4) Queen Street - (4)	Parked in P&D CP without a ticket - (11) Parked in restricted St. during prescribed hrs - (8) Parking in residents of shared use parking place - (7)
Llanelli	331	Church Street Car Park - (42) East Gate Car Park - (39) Upper Inkerman St & Lloyd Street - (18 each)	Parking in residents of shared use parking place - (81) Parked in P&D CP without a ticket - (69) Parked in restricted St. during prescribed hrs - (48)
Newcastle Emlyn	9	Mart Car Park - (5) College Street - (2) Bridge Street - (2)	Parked in P&D CP without a ticket - (5) Parked for longer than permitted - (2) Parked in a designated disabled persons place & Parked lowered to meet the level of c/way - (1 each)
St. Clears	3	Pentre Road - (2) Station Road - (1)	Parked in restricted St. during prescribed hrs - (2) Parked for longer than permitted - (1)

**Table 6.2: PCN Offences December 2016**

December 2016			
	Total PCN's	Top 3 Locations (number of offences)	Top 3 Offences (number of offences)
Ammanford	34	Margaret Street _ (12) Hall Street Car Park _ (6) Rear of Quay Street & Wind Street _ (3) each	Parked in P&D CP without a ticket _ (15) No loading/unloading in restricted street & Parking in residents of shared use parking place & Parking in disabled parking space without _ (3 each)
Carmarthen	330	John Street Car Park _ (36) St. Peters Car Park _ (34) Friars Car Park _ (25)	Parked in P&D CP without a ticket _ (84) Parked in restricted St. during prescribed hrs _ (49) Parking in residents of shared use parking place _ (41)
Llandeilo	17	New Road _ (4) Rhosmaen Street _ (4) Crescent Road & Carmarthen Street _ (3) each	Parking in residents of shared use parking place _ (5) Parked in restricted St. during prescribed hrs _ (6) No loading/unloading in restricted street _ (3)
Llandovery	19	Castle Street Car Park _ (8) Garden Lane _ (3) Stone Street _ (3)	Parked in restricted St. during prescribed hrs _ (8) Parked in a restricted area of car park _ (3) Parked beyond the parking bays _ (3)
Llanelli	164	Church Street Car Park _ (34) Murray Street MSCP _ (16) Lloyd Street _ (9)	Parked in P&D CP without a ticket _ (45) Parking in residents of shared use parking place _ (31) Parked for longer than permitted _ (18)
Newcastle Emllyn	13	College Street _ (3) Sycamore Street _ (3) Mart Car Park _ (2)	Parked in restricted St. during prescribed hrs _ (5) Parked for longer than permitted _ (2) Parked beyond the parking bays _ (2)
St. Clears	1	St. Clears Car Park _ (1)	Parked beyond the parking bays _ (1)

Across the County, in August and December there were a total of 1,322 PCN's issued. Just over half of these, 56%, were for offences that are down to driver behaviour or poor parking choices; e.g; parking in loading bays, parking in disabled bays or parking in a restricted street. Education is needed to mitigate this behaviour, but little can be done in terms of physical interventions to control this behaviour.

The remaining 44% of PCN's were issued for behaviour that could be better controlled, e.g; staying beyond the time permitted in a pay and display ticket could be removed if parkers were able to pay at the end of their stay. Parking without a P&D ticket could be reduced by the introduction of barriers that issued a ticket on arrival.

New technology has a key role to play in reducing the number of PCN's issued for parking violations were parkers are regularly breaking parking rules.

# 7. Technology

## **Car Park charging methods**

CCC is committed to making sure it considers the full range of demand management tools and technological innovations. Some may be more suitable or timely than others and there may be a combination of approaches that are complementary to each other.

Technology will play an increasing role in facilitating parking for both the user and the provider. By 2020 70% of new cars will have internet access, society is more connected than ever. Car parks are becoming smarter and a new range technological management products are enabling car park providers to manage their assets in more efficient ways.

The following are potential interventions which CCC may consider in the future along with other innovations, as they become available.

### **Pay by Phone**

This is a system where payment is provided via phone (automated telephone line) or via an application downloaded on to a smart phone. Telephone payment systems are beneficial in that they offer an alternative to cash payment for the user. Telephone payment also offers a reduced operating cost to Councils as there is no cash collection needed at meters (if operated as the only payment method).

Payment by phone can be used as the only method of payment or it can be operated alongside more traditional methods such as pay and display. If operated as a single payment option, it should be ensured that the area has good mobile phone signal for payment by users and enforcement officers, who are required to check telephone payments.

Benefits include removing the need to carry change to pay for parking. The technology can also be used to provide reminder messages by text to advise of an approaching end of period and to extend parking time remotely up to the maximum permitted.

### **Contactless Payment Technology**

This involves converting existing 'chip and pin' card payment facilities to contactless 'wave and pay' facilities. This enables faster payment to be made without the need for a mobile connection.

The main benefit of this is that it will serve to improve payment reliability and customer experience.

### **Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR)**

ANPR technology is a ticketless operation. Vehicles are observed on entry to the car park and the registration number identified. Payment is required at a meter, using the vehicle registration number, before returning to the car. The technology can work without the need for barriers as the vehicle registration details are recorded.

This system works best in busy car parks as the high installation costs render the system ineffective in smaller car parks.

Once installed ANPR technology can offer a wide range of Intelligent Transportation System services, ranging from occupancy and real-time user statistics.

This technology is permissible in privately controlled car parks in Wales, however, Welsh Local Authorities, do not yet have the power to enforce parking violations.

### **In Car Communications and Sensor Technology**

This technology can assist in managing parking resources before arrival at the destination and it can reduce congestion resulting from searching for parking spaces. As technology develops the facility to book and pay for a parking space before arrival may become an option.

In car technology is also developing which utilises GPS to identify vacant parking spaces. This allows drivers to be directed straight to an empty space, thereby, reducing circulation time. The system works by using technology embedded in the road and which sends a signal to system users.

Although this represents another potential demand management tool, deployment of this technology is better suited to busy car parks where demand for spaces is high.

### **Pay on Foot**

This form of charging requires a barrier on all entries and exits. A ticket is issued to the user on entry to the car park (tickets are not issued if the car park is full acting as a means of demand management), and payment is required at a meter before returning to the car. The validated paid ticket is then inserted into the machine on exit to release the barrier.

Installation of barriers is costly and will increase the costs of implementation. The extra cost is unlikely to bring any extra benefits to the users compared to pay and display or payment via phone or app. Barrier control may help to reduce the need for enforcement; however, maintenance costs for the barrier entry system are likely to be high.

Payment by foot systems work by knowing the exact number of spaces, capturing vehicles movements so that the number of spaces available is known and this information controls users into and out of the car park. This method of charge collection is better suited to large multi-storey car parks.

### **Pay and Display**

Pay and display is the traditional method of collecting car parking charges, where users purchase a ticket for a set time once they have parked and display this within their vehicle.

This method offers a simple, easily understood method of payment for users which is economical to install and maintain. Battery operated pay and display machines are cheaper to install as mains connection is not required.

No barrier control is required, however, enforcement of pay and display is resource intensive and will require the input of Civil Parking Enforcement officers. Pay and display meters are also required to be emptied on a regular basis.

There are a range of pay and display machines available which allow different methods of payment:

- Coin payments only (with no change given);
- Coin, cash and card payment; and
- Card only - usually used in conjunction with payment via phone (automated telephone line) or via an application downloaded on to a smart phone.

### **Electric Vehicle Charge Points**

There are currently over 110,000 electric vehicles on the UK roads and as the government has announced that diesel and petrol cars will be banned from 2040 this number will rise dramatically in the next 30 years.

Data provided by Zap Map show that there are 4,934 public charging points installed in the UK across 7,616 locations which provides 14,105 connectors. The total number of connectors has increased from 9,125 in February 2016 to nearly 12,000 by Jan 2017. In November 2017, 3.1% (430) of the 14,105 connectors were available in Wales.

Local authorities can purchase a range of vehicle charging infrastructure solutions through the ESPO 636 Vehicle Charging Infrastructure framework. There are a variety of options to consider depending on the speed of charge (between 30 mins and 12 hours for a full charge), electricity supply available, type of vehicle to be charged and number of vehicles to charge at any one time.

Table 7.1 highlights the existing electric charging facilities in Carmarthenshire.

**Table 7.1: Existing Electric Charging Facilities**

Location	Address	Type of charge available	Payment required
<b>Public Electric Charging</b>			
Murray Street Car Park	Murray Street, Llanelli, Carmarthenshire, SA15 1DJ	2 x 7kW 32A Type 2 Mennekes	No
Nant-Y-Ci Park and Ride	A40, Carmarthen, Carmarthenshire, SA31 3SA	1 x 50kW 125A JEVS (CHAdeMO)	Yes
Mart Car Park	New Road, Newcastle Emlyn. SA38 9BA	2 x 7kW 32A Type 2 Mennekes	No
St Peters Car Park	St Peter's Street, Carmarthen SA31 1LN	2 x 7kW 32A Type 2 Mennekes	No
<b>Private Electric Charging</b>			
FRF Toyota Carmarthen	Morfa Lane, Carmarthen Carmarthenshire, SA31 3AX	6 x 3kW 16A Type 2 Mennekes	No
Renault Dealership: Gravells	Pembrey Road, Kidwelly, Carmarthenshire, SA17 4TF	2 x 3kW 16A Type 2 Mennekes 1 x 7kW 32A Type 2 Mennekes	Eligible Customers
The Brown's	King Street, Carmarthen, Carmarthenshire, SA33 4RY	2 x 11kW 16A Tesla Type 2	N/A
J & J Motors Nissan	Crosshands Business Park, Llanelli, Carmarthenshire, SA14 6RB	2 x 7kW 32A Type 2 Mennekes	Eligible customers
Dinefwr Park & Castle (National Trust)	Llandeilo, Carmarthenshire, SA19 6RT	1 x 3kW 13A 3-Square pin 1 x 7kW 32A Type 2 Mennekes	Yes
Salem Memorial Hall	Salem, Llandeilo, Carmarthenshire, SA19 7LU	1 x 7kW 32A Type 2 Mennekes	No
Parc-Y-Scarlets	Pemberton Retail Park, Llanelli, Carmarthenshire, SA14 9UZ	2 x 11kW 16A Tesla Type 2	N/A
The Plash Inn	Llanfallteg, Whitland, Carmarthenshire, SA34 0UN	1 x 7kW 32A Type 2 Mennekes	No

Payment methods vary, but most networks require an account to be set up before use. Some networks prefer motorists to use a Radio Frequency Identification (RFID) card and others a smartphone app, while some allow access using either. A large number of EV charge points are free to use, while others are accessible with set charges. These tend to be a connection fee, price per time, price per energy consumed, or a combination of the above.

The following is a summary of potential installation costs and charge times;

- Fast – 7 kW      Charge time – 4-6 hours      Potential Cost £2,500
- Fast 22kW      Charge time – 1-2 hours      Potential Cost £3,000
- Rapid            Charge time 20-30 mins      Potential Cost £20,000

Installation costs are typically around £5,000 for the fast 7kW chargers and around £15,000 for a rapid charger, however connection costs to the grid can vary depending on local infrastructure.

## 8. Economic Case for Car Park Management

Car parking policy should be seen as an integral part of the overall transportation strategy for an area. It should complement the goals and objectives of key policy documents. In addition, the parking strategy needs to consider the parking regime of other comparable towns. Car park management needs to be carefully co-ordinated to prevent leakages to other towns in other areas.

Parking demand is mainly influenced by the type, quality and function of the town centre facilities and amenities. In villages and small towns, the parking policy is often based on providing enough spaces to accommodate demand. In larger towns, the overall transport objectives of reducing congestion, harmful emissions and accidents whilst promoting public transport to safeguard accessibility are all key objectives.

In 2010 Transport Research Laboratory (TRL) undertook a review of parking measures and policies across the UK. The research underlined the importance of parking and pricing, and confirmed that parking policies should strive to use parking facilities as efficiently as possible through linking optimal parking to supply and price. It suggested that too much supply was as harmful as too little, whilst prices that are too low are as harmful as those that are too high.

The TRL report confirmed that there are two roles for parking:

1. To balance supply and demand, and
2. To use parking to meet other policy objectives such as traffic management goals to accessibility for businesses and shoppers.

### **The Cost of Parking**

Access for car users is not the only problem. There is also the issue of the cost of parking. Both local authorities and private companies have to cover their costs in relation to parking. Maintenance, management and long-term investment in the quality of the car park are all serious considerations that must be taken into account. While a disproportionate amount of media attention is devoted to pricing and enforcement, the quality of the car park is also important. Furthermore, it must be recognised that car parks attract business rates that must be paid. Consequently, neither on-street nor off-street parking is free. The cost needs to be covered by someone, somewhere, somehow.

### **What Customers Want**

Research complete by MRUK (2015), which assessed the impact of car parking charges on behalf of Welsh Government, as well as research complete by the Association of Town & City Management (2014) on innovative practices in parking provision identified that individuals make their parking decision on multiple considerations.

**Table 8.1: Research on what customers want**

<b>Ranking</b>	<b>ATCM (2014) Research</b>	<b>MRUK (2015) Research</b>
<b>1</b>	Location	Availability of spaces
<b>2</b>	Personal safety	Restrictions on parking (i.e. how long people can park for)
<b>3</b>	Safe environment	Proximity of parking to intended destination
<b>4</b>	Tariffs	Traffic flow
<b>5</b>	Ease of access	Signage
<b>6</b>	No/little queuing	Overall retail offering
<b>7</b>	Number of spaces	Out of town retail offering
<b>8</b>	Effective surveillance	Out of town parking charges
<b>9</b>	Size of parking space	Price of car parking
<b>10</b>	Appropriate lighting	Security of car park

The research highlights that within the top ten considerations of parking, the cost of car parking ranks lower than multiple other key factors which individuals base their decision on when choosing which car park to use.

### **Why Charging is Necessary and The Benefits of Charges**

Car parking plays a critical role in the successful operation of town centres. For the future vitality of town centres throughout Carmarthenshire, it is important that CCC find the correct balance between parking demand and capacity. Too little parking will result in increased illegal parking and congestion, while too much parking will detract from the Council's sustainable transport policies, encourage additional traffic and reduce the availability of land that could potentially be utilised for more economically attractive activities.

In addition, it is vital to ensure that parking is made available in the right locations. Business people, shoppers, commuters, tourists and students all have different needs and it is crucial that parking is designed to cater for their different characteristics, so that they are accommodated in the right location.

## 9. Internal Consultation

There are a number of initiatives and strategies that CCC could implement in an attempt to provide the right mix and balance of parking. The original strategy attempted to strike a balance between the needs of individuals (whether they rely on private or public transport) local economies and business communities with the needs of the environment. Developed through extensive internal and external consultation exercises the key aims of the 2005 Strategy were to;

- To be consistent with national and regional parking objectives and with the Strategic Transport Policy in the Council's Unitary Development Plan.
- To contribute to other corporate objectives including the Corporate Strategy, Community Plan and the Local Transport Plan.
- To facilitate parking provision and management that maximises the use of existing parking stock.
- To ensure that parking facilities are safe, accessible and convenient and that they comply with the Disability Discrimination Act 1995.
- To promote more sustainable travel choices through parking provision and pricing at the same time as maintaining economic viability in the County.

These aims were facilitated by the 9 priorities listed on the table 9.1 below.

While a Scrutiny Report in 2016 proposed a further series of Alternative Parking Options / Approaches, as listed in table 9.1.

**Table 9.1: Parking Priorities 2005 compared to Alternative Parking Options 2016**

2005 Parking Strategy Prioritises	2016 Scrutiny Report Alternative Parking Options / Approaches
Priority 1: Prioritise short stay parking in town centre car parks	Increasing the number of free parking days
Priority 2: Car Park Safety	Pay on Exit Schemes
Priority 3: Car Park Information	Shop and Drop Initiatives
Priority 4: Facilities for Mobility Impaired	Pay by Phone/Cashless Payment System
Priority 5: Park and Ride	
Priority 6: Public Transport Integration	
Priority 7: Parking Standards on New Developments	
Priority 8: Coach and Other Parking	
Priority 9: Cycle and Motorcycle Facilities in Public Car Parks	

Further information on the initiatives listed on this table is available in Appendices E and F.

An internal consultation event was undertaken within the County Council Planning, Regeneration and Transport Planning teams in order to establish a common set of priorities in relation to parking.

A series of potential priorities were presented to the group. Table 9.2 summaries those priorities that were agreed for inclusion in the emerging strategy, while chapter 10 provides more detail on the implementation of each.

**Table 9.2: Priority Measures**

<b>Priority Measure</b>	<b>Ranking</b>
Prioritise short stay parking in town centre car parks	1
Car Park Safety	2
Use of Technology	3
Car Park Information	4
Inter Modal Integration	5
Park and Ride & Park and Share	6
Parking Standards at New Developments	7
Free Parking Days	8
Facilities for Mobility Impaired	9
Coach and Other Parking	10
Cycle and Motorcycle Facilities in Public Car Parks	11

# 10. Parking Strategy Proposals

## **Priority 1: Prioritise short stay parking in town centre car parks**

In areas where there is a need to support shoppers and encourage increased retail activity, consideration will be given to prioritising short stay parking. Recognising the long stay function our car parks provide, in order to stimulate footfall and economic activity, restricting the time that people are allowed to park before they have to vacate a space, or pay an increased charge, will help to keep spaces turning over and increase availability to shoppers throughout the day.

Greater utilisation of town centre car parks by short stay parkers, will result in more efficient use of parking spaces and thereby maximise the potential number of vehicles that can be accommodated within available space.

Controlling the length of time people can park can be used in conjunction with pricing policies to promote a greater turnover of short stay spaces and to encourage longer stay parking in car parks on the periphery of the town centre.

### **Proposal :**

- Where appropriate prioritise short stay parking in town centre area car parks through pricing and / or allocation of short stay parking spaces.
- Undertake a review of town centre car parks to ensure the appropriate mix of short and long stay parking provision.
- Provide attractive long stay parking in car parks at the periphery of the town centres that encourages long stay parking through availability and relative pricing.
- Promote increased accessibility with public transport and Active Travel modes to develop transport hubs that connect long stay car parks to town centres and employment opportunities.
- Develop appropriate parking facilities to cater for increased residential accommodation in town centres.
- Where appropriate provide rapid electric charging facilities and spaces to short term parking for electric vehicles.
- Develop and promote park and ride services where appropriate.

## **Priority 2: Car Park Safety**

Research complete by MRUK (2015), which assessed the impact of car parking charges on behalf of Welsh Government, states that personal safety ranks second in the top 10 factors that influence an individual's decision to park at a given location.

A car park that is perceived to be safe and secure will attract more activity than one that is thought to be less secure.

Town centres are the hub of the community and every effort will be made to ensure that shoppers, commuters, residents and visitors are made to feel as safe as possible. Considerate design and layout, good quality lighting, a clean environment, visible CCTV and a good turnover of vehicles are all factors that can contribute to improving the car park environment.

Once motorists leave their parked car they become pedestrians, who can be vulnerable within a car park environment, through interaction with motor vehicles and other pedestrians.

Improvements to pedestrian circulation routes combined with general security measures can significantly increase the safety of pedestrians and vehicles within a car park.

### **Proposal:**

- Carry out site appraisals to identify areas in public car parks where pedestrians are vulnerable and investigate appropriate safety improvements, such as CCTV, lighting and circulation routes.
- Pursue Safer Car Parking status in public car parks where appropriate and advertise car parks where awards have been achieved.
- Provide safe and secure pedestrian routes between and the town centre and car parks, including those on the periphery of the town.
- Retain Safer Car Park status for every town centre.

### **Priority 3: Use of Technology**

Carmarthenshire County Council is committed to ensuring that it considers a full range of demand management tools and technological innovations to enhance the visitor experience. Some technology may be more suitable, or timely, than others and a combination of measures that are complementary to each other will be needed.

Technology will play an increasing role in facilitating parking for both the user and the provider. By 2020 70% of cars will have internet access, society is more connected than ever. Car parks are becoming smarter and a new range technological management products are enabling car park providers to manage their assets in more efficient ways.

ANPR technology offers many advantages to both the car provider and the motorist. The provider can benefit from improved car park management and occupancy statistics, while the user benefits from increased flexibility and advice in finding the most appropriate parking location and available space.

Where the implementation of ANPR technology is not appropriate the Council will investigate the introduction and promotion of cashless payment opportunities by such as contactless payment and Apps that allow users to reserve and pay for parking prior to arrival.

Pay on Foot car park management requires the installation of barrier control that issues a ticket on arrival at the car park. The motorist then pays for parking before returning to the car. This system allows the motorists greater flexibility over the duration of their stay. This method of control is better suited to large multi storey car parks, and needs to be considered in terms of site permeability, user experience and potential impact on queuing traffic in sensitive town centre locations.

#### **Proposal:**

- That the Council pursues the potential change in legislation with Welsh Government and subject to clarification and affordability, proceeds with a phased programme of introducing an ANPR Pay on Exit system across appropriate car parks.
- Cashless payment options are considered where appropriate to facilitate 'contactless' payment.
- Where possible, parking Apps that allow users to pre-book and pay for parking prior to arrival will be considered.

#### **Priority 4: Car Park Information**

Communication and transparency plays a key role in the successful operation of car parks. Wayfinding and directing motorists to the most appropriate car park location will reduce congestion and improve the overall town centre experience, as well as ensuring effective utilisation of car parking capacity

Websites and Apps are replacing the traditional forms of information provision and action will be taken to that where appropriate full use of these as key communication tools is fully explored. The County Council website will be regularly updated and provide improved information to promote car park facilities such as; electric charging points, cycle parking and public transport connections.

Techniques in signage are evolving, the use of images and visual cues can provide drivers with clear succinct information about the location of parking facilities at their destination, while real time information can be used to advise on the availability of spaces.

An area of growing potential is the inclusion of real time information into GPS systems such as smart phones and satellite navigation tools, which allow drivers to continually access information on the move.

#### **Proposal:**

- Provide appropriate clear and consistent signing information to all public car parks.
- As a minimum, signing to include the name of the car park, number of spaces available and the duration of stay, where practical, will be provided.
- Where appropriate, interactive signage will be used to identify available spaces or to direct motorists to alternative parking locations.
- Increase the use of iconography on the County Council website to promote car park facilities such as; electric charging points, public transport connectivity, cycle parking, opening times and tariffs.
- Embrace technological developments in relation to smart phones and satellite navigation systems to provide information on parking availability and facilities, to enhance the customer experience.
- Promote the Council sponsored [www.sharecymru.com](http://www.sharecymru.com) car sharing website.

## **Priority 5: Inter Modal Integration**

The delivery of a successful parking strategy requires a long term holistic approach. The needs of motorists cannot be considered in isolation. Integration between different modes of transport is vital to ensure increased use of sustainable transport.

Consideration of the interchange facilities between car, bus and rail services as well as Active Travel modes, particularly at the larger rural stations, could encourage increased public transport commuting in larger towns. Existing car parks adjacent to railways station present a significant opportunity to promote intermodal commuting, increased promotion of these facilities is required to maximise utilisation.

The Active Travel Act now requires Local Authorities to develop and promote walking and cycling opportunities across Active Travel towns. To encourage multi modal trips safe and secure cycle parking will be provided at key transport interchanges.

### **Proposal:**

- Develop enhanced interchange facilities and wayfinding within the Active Travel towns to promote increased use of public transport services.
- In conjunction with Network Rail, investigate the potential for providing safe and convenient parking at rural railway stations to encourage commuting where possible.
- Explore potential for improved integration at Llanelli Railway Station, especially in relation to the town centre and the Wellness Village.
- Liaise with neighbouring local authorities to promote similar parking arrangements at transport interchanges and encourage the use of public transport for intercounty travel, especially for work purposes.
- In conjunction with bus operators, investigate potential for providing safe and convenient car parking areas adjacent to main bus routes and stopping points on the periphery of town centres to encourage transfer onto the bus service.

## Priority 6: Park and Ride & Park and Share

Park and Ride is an effective system for intercepting and reducing traffic congestion before it arrives in the town centre.

Carmarthenshire currently operates one Park and Ride service, at Nant –Y-Ci. The service runs every 30 minutes from 07:00 to 19:00, Monday to Saturday. Parking is free at Nant-Y-Ci while a day return to Carmarthen town centre currently costs £1.00.

Additional Park and Ride facilities in other locations may be considered following the successful completion of relevant WeITAG 2 assessments, 5 Case Model assessments, demand analysis and identification of the capital and revenue monies to deliver and run

A successful Park and Ride operation can do much to increase the overall town centre experience. It can remove long stay parking from town centres and thereby increase short stay parking provision. It can reduce town centre congestion and increase public transport use.

To increase the attractiveness of Park and Ride additional facilities may be provided to enhance the overall customer experience. The provision of safe and secure cycle parking will encourage increased Active Travel, parking and charging facilities for electric vehicles will help reduce carbon emissions and improved connectivity with the public transport network can help reduce congestion.

Park and Share has a vital role to play in the overall delivery of an integrated transport strategy. The County Council provides dedicated Park and Share facilities at Nant-Y-Ci.

### Proposal:

- In addition to the Park and Ride service, encourage Park and Share, by promoting [www.sharecymru.com](http://www.sharecymru.com) and by providing spaces to those wishing to complete their journeys as a car share.
- To facilitate increased use of electric vehicles appropriate charging facilities and parking spaces will be provided for electric vehicles.
- Consider developing Rail Park and Ride, by better utilising and promoting car parks adjacent to railway station.
- Consideration will be given to developing facilities to accommodate limited daytime parking for campervans and caravans within Park and Ride sites.

## **Priority 7: Parking Standards at New Developments**

The application of maximum standards is in accordance with national and regional guidelines to encourage lower levels of parking provision and greater use of more sustainable modes of transport. The parking standards seek to ensure a transparent and consistent approach to the provision of parking whilst providing a framework for considering the accessibility and sustainability aspects of new development when lower provision is sought by a developer.

CCC will consider the relevance of national maximum parking standards in relation to new developments

The parking standards will inform observations made by CCC's Highways Authority on applications received for planning permission.

It is appropriate to consider the levels of parking proposed by new developments in conjunction with the parking provision strategy of the Council as a whole, thereby allowing private development and public car parking to jointly cater for the level of provision required.

In 2017 5% of all new vehicles sold in the UK were battery powered. This figure is set to increase as a growing number of major manufactures are announcing plans to move away from the production of fossil fuel powered vehicles, Carmarthenshire County recognises this trend and will need to reflect this in future policy development and application.

### **Proposal:**

- Parking standards will be applied to new non-residential development in accordance with Council approved parking standards; coupled with contributions towards improvements to sustainable transport facilities at new developments located in areas with good public transport services.
- Consider increases to optimum standards where non-residential in-town development parking facilities will be available to the public and can be considered to contribute to the parking requirements of the town as a whole.
- Consideration should be given to parking spaces at new developments for electric vehicles with associated infrastructure.

## **Priority 8: Free Parking Days**

Free parking days are to be provided by the County Council as an incentive to boost trade in the retail, hospitality and business sectors. This initiative is designed to support town centre events that are organised and promoted to benefit the whole town and to increase footfall.

Events should promote town centre facilities and amenities and to attract new and increased footfall. The event days must support the whole town and not be specific to one sector or organisation.

As this proposal is designed to encourage increased economic activity and to increase footfall in town centres, those events that are planned during recognised 'quiet days' will be looked on more favourably.

In return for planning and facilitating an event the County Council will provide free parking for 5 days in line with predetermined guidance.

During the events monitoring should take place to record footfall and parking activity so that attendance and the impact of the event can be evaluated and compared.

### **Proposal:**

- On receipt of an appropriate application request the County Council will consider providing up to five days free town centre parking. An exclusion period for free parking days extends from 1<sup>st</sup> December until 31<sup>st</sup> December.
- Events must comply with predetermined guidance to ensure relevant marketing and monitoring take place, and council support acknowledged in all material.

### **Priority 9: Facilities for Mobility Impaired**

The County Council is committed to providing sufficient and appropriate parking facilities for all users within public car parks. It is also committed to providing a suitable mix of appropriate parking facilities for the mobility impaired.

#### **Proposal:**

- Provide appropriate level of disabled parking provision within public car parks in accordance with current parking guidelines.
- Provide on-street disabled parking bays at appropriate town centre locations, where practical.
- That the accessibility of on-street parking bays designated for blue badge holders be reviewed and standardised according to the legislative requirements, where feasibly possible
- Promote the provision of safe and convenient disabled access to and from public car parks.

## **Priority 10: Coach and Other Parking**

It is acknowledged that the coach industry provides a significant economic boost for town centres, and the market for organised coach trips, and cruise liner day trips, is growing. Carmarthen is already a recognised destination on the coach market circuit and there is significant potential to promote these opportunities in other areas.

The provision of appropriately sited formal and informal coach parks promotes increased use of sustainable transport helps to attract additional organised trips. Facilities need to be provided so that the coach drivers have the opportunity to stop and rest over before preparing for the return journey.

The facility can also be used by other forms of transport, when not required by coaches.

### **Proposal:**

- Review demand for, and provide visitor coach parking, where appropriate, at locations adjacent to the larger towns of the county.
- Evaluate demand and utilisation at existing coach park facilities and consider how to make best use of existing facilities.
- Consider and review level of charge to be applied to coach parking areas on a demand basis, such that the attraction of the facility is not compromised.
- Consider utilisation of coach parking areas to accommodate other forms of transport, such as lorries, caravans and camper vans for the provision of safe and convenient, limited day time, stop over facilities.

### **Priority 11: Cycle and Motorcycle Facilities in Public Car Parks**

The provision of designated cycle and motorbike parking facilities within car parks will not only encourage the use of forms of private transport less onerous than the car on parking stock but will also portray the image that these forms of transport are valued as highly as the private motorcar.

To ensure a fully equitable parking system we will look to provide motorcyclists with dedicated parking spaces where appropriate along with the appropriate pay and display infrastructure that can be utilised by motorcyclists.

#### **Proposal:**

- Further develop safe and secure motorcycle parking within town centre car parks, Park and Ride sites and at locations, or on routes, of particular attraction to motorcyclists.
- Introduce infrastructure that will allow motorcyclists to utilise pay and display facilities.
- To encourage increased use of Active Travel, promote the provision of safe and secure cycle parking facilities within town centres, at railways stations and other key transport hubs, in accordance with the Active Travel Design Guide.

