

Strategic Car Parking Review (SCPR) 2025

2025 SCPR Update Report

Aberdeen City Council

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1. Introduction

1.1 Overview

Aberdeen City Council (ACC) has appointed AECOM to update key elements of the Strategic Car Parking Review (SCPR), originally prepared by AECOM in 2018. The update to the SCPR will help to inform the development of Aberdeen's next Local Transport Strategy (LTS), which will be published in 2025. The key focus of future car parking policy is anticipated to be around demand management and maximising income, with the 2025 SCPR update reviewing the outcomes and recommendations of the previous SCPR and updating and enhancing these where necessary to support this.

This report – the *2025 SCPR Update Report* – has thus been prepared to:

- Provide an overview of the previous study outcomes;
- Set out a detailed overview of current car parking provision in Aberdeen City; and
- Provide a detailed literature review and comparison of car parking policies and initiatives in other cities to inform potential approaches in an Aberdeen context.

The outcomes of this initial stage of the SCPR update will be used to inform recommendations for ACC to progress as part of their next LTS in an *Outcomes Report* – and in broader policy areas where car parking is a key consideration.

1.2 Structure of Report

Following this introduction, the remainder of the report is structured as follows:

- Chapter 2: Aberdeen City – Updated Context
- Chapter 3: Review of Previous Work
- Chapter 4: Car Parking Provision
- Chapter 5: Car Parking Charges, Duration and Permits
- Chapter 6: Car Parking Policy
- Chapter 7: Summary

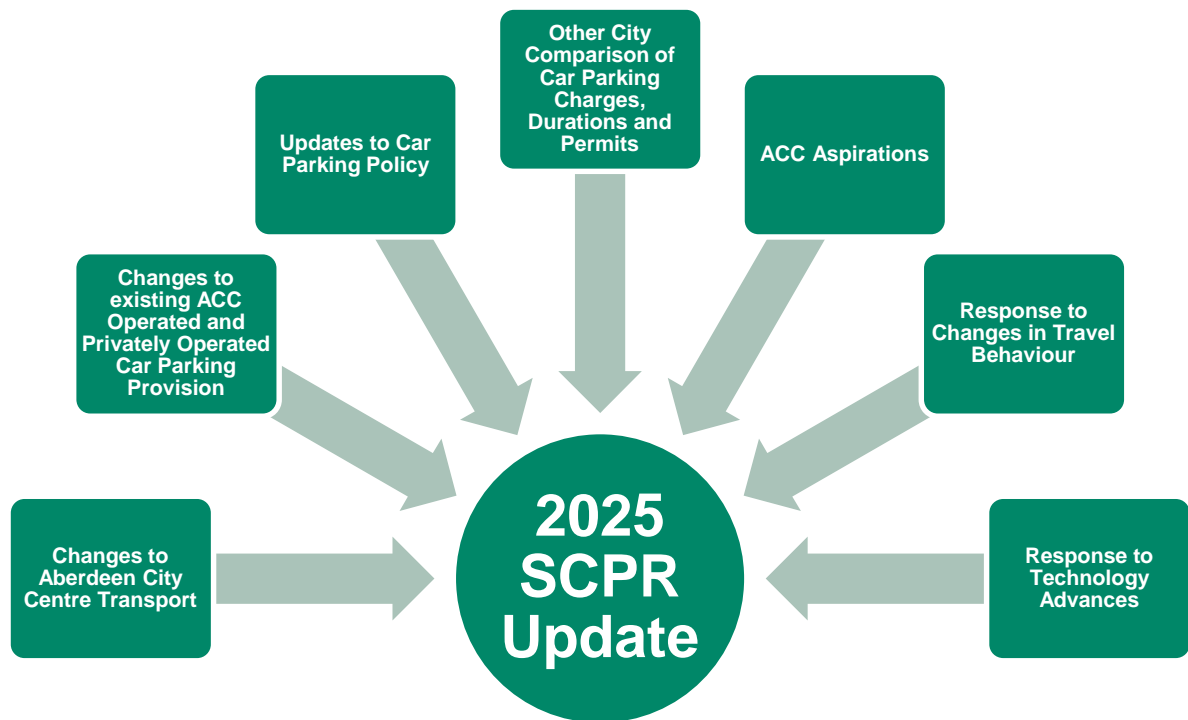


Figure 1: 2025 SCPR Update

2. Aberdeen City – Updated Context

2.1 Introduction

A number of transport changes have been implemented in Aberdeen since the completion of the previous SCPR in 2019. These are detailed below.

2.2 City Centre Changes

Low Emission Zone

ACC introduced a Low Emission Zone (LEZ) in May 2022, where only certain vehicles are able to enter based on their emissions standards. It was introduced with a two year 'grace' period meaning that between 2022 and May 2024, drivers were not fined for entering the LEZ with a non-compliant vehicle. Enforcement of the LEZ started on 1st June 2024. While a small number of car parks are located within the LEZ boundary, the vast majority are still accessible to those in non-compliant vehicles (although some people may have to change access routes to their favoured car parks if they continue to use them).

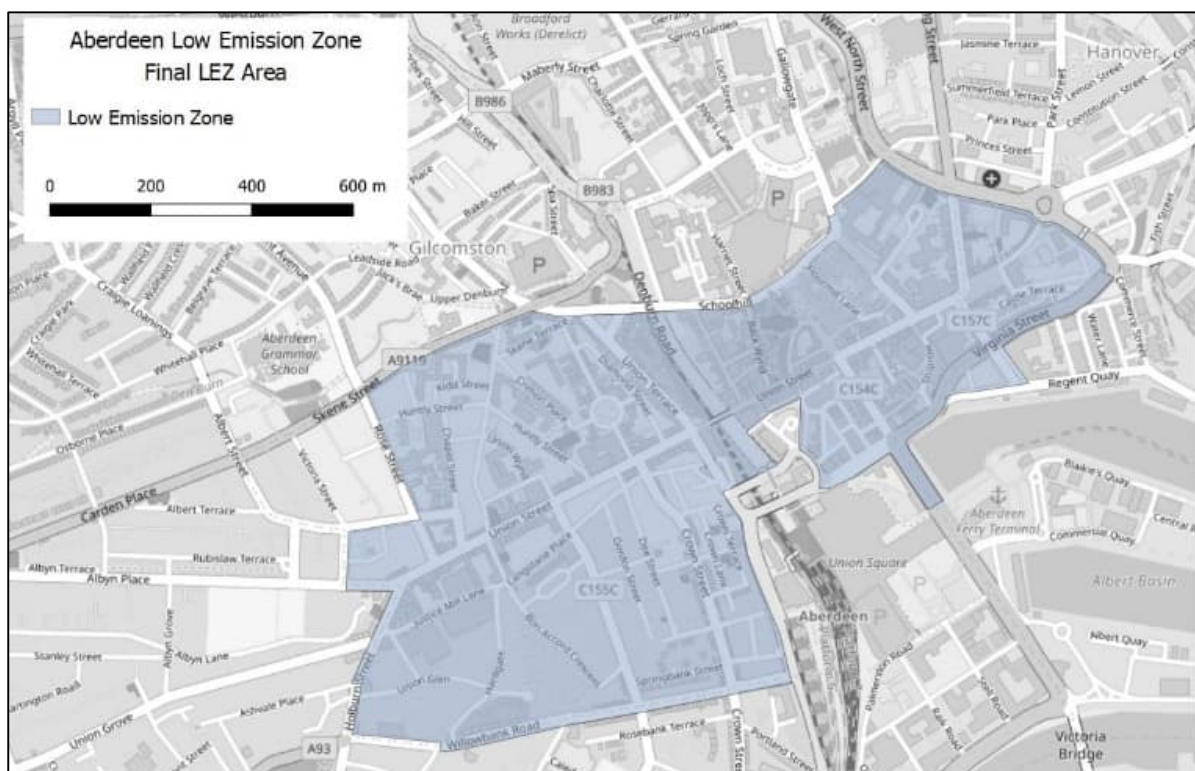


Figure 2: Aberdeen Low Emission Zone (Source: Aberdeen City Council)

City Centre Traffic Management Measures

In addition to the LEZ, ACC have also introduced a number of traffic management measures in the city centre, most notably via the implementation of a number of bus and active travel priority streets. These have been introduced to support the delivery of the Aberdeen City Centre Masterplan (CCMP) following the introduction of an Experimental Traffic Regulation Order (ETRO) in autumn 2023, which was made permanent on 17th January 2025 (coming into force on 31st January 2025). This led to implementation of restrictions on Market Street, Guild Street and Bridge Street.

As with the LEZ, the city centre traffic management measures impact on route choice, but do not preclude the ability for people to access car parks in the city centre. The locations of the city centre traffic management measures are shown in the figure below.

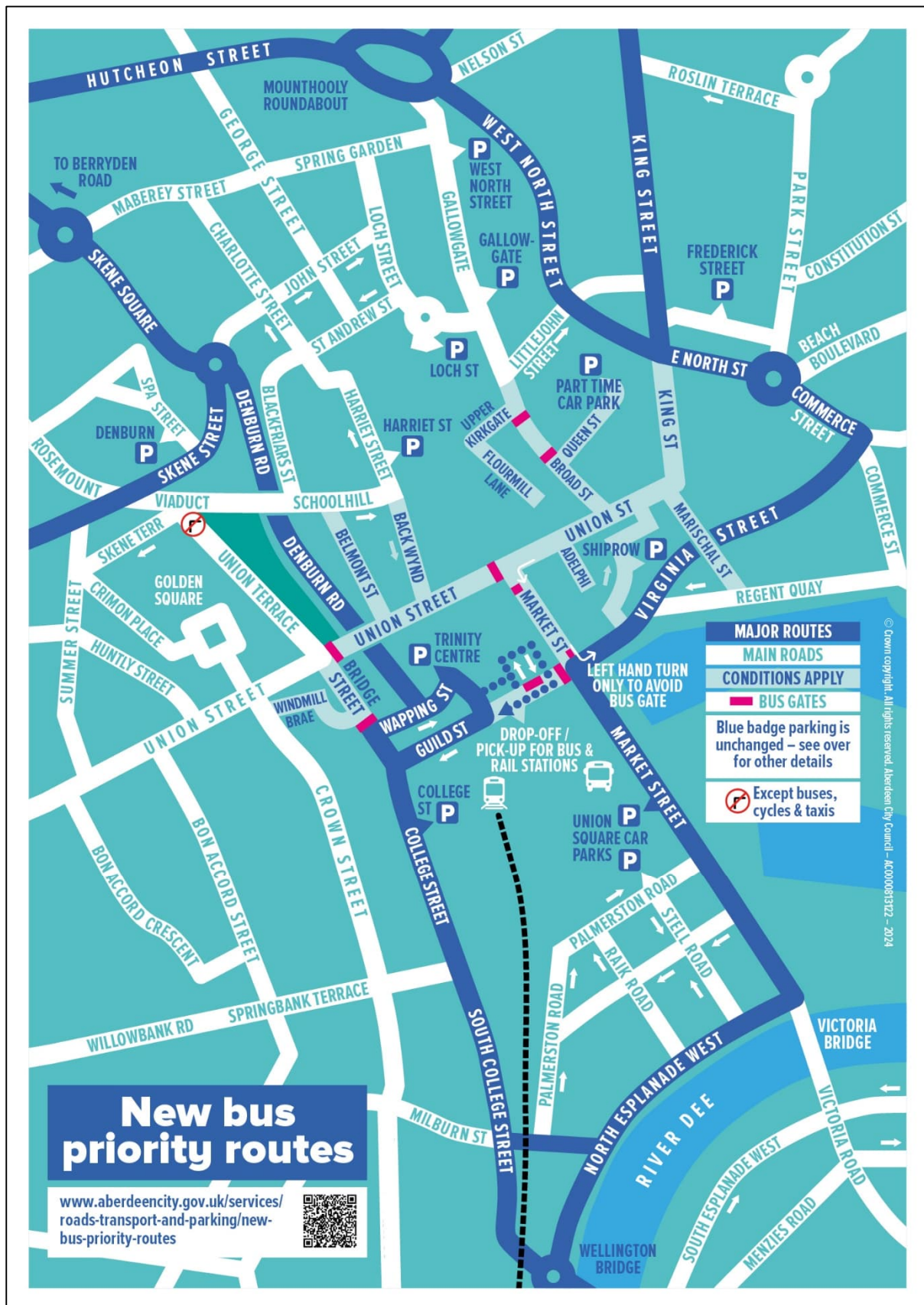


Figure 3: City Centre Traffic Management Measures (Source: Getabout.org.uk)

2.3 Parking Updates

At ACC's Budget Meeting on 5 March 2019, it was agreed to rationalise the Jack's Brae car park asset. Therefore, this car park no longer forms part of the considerations in the 2024 review.

2.4 Committee Outcomes

Since the completion of the previous piece of work, items relating to parking within the city centre have been considered at several ACC Committee meetings. The decisions of these committees have been extracted and outlined below.

Review of Parking Charges Report to Council – 14 December 2022

Motion adopted - That the Council - (1) instruct the Chief Officer - Operations and Protective Services to carry out the necessary actions to increase on-street and off-street parking charges by 10% from 1 April 2023; and (2) instruct the Chief Officer - Operations and Protective Services to carry out the necessary actions to amend the pricing structure of Resident Parking Permits.

Net Zero, Environment and Transport Committee – 31 October 2023

Motion Adopted - That the Committee:- (a) note that Aberdeen City Council controlled parking zones and car parks do not have consistent operational hours on every day of the week; (b) note that people's reasons for visiting the city centre and public transport provision have changed significantly since the current on-street and off-street city centre parking arrangements were agreed; and (c) instruct the Chief Officer - Operations and Protective Services following consultation with the Chief Officer – Strategic Place Planning to explore the feasibility of undertaking a review of on-street and off-street parking and report back with a timeline and resource implications, to the next Net Zero, Environment and Transport Committee.

Further information on the matters discussed at this meeting is provided in Chapter 5.

2.5 ART Option Appraisal & Transport Modelling Scenarios

The implementation of the LEZ and associated traffic management measures provide support for future delivery of Aberdeen Rapid Transit (ART). In June 2024, Aberdeen City Council, Aberdeenshire Council and the Nestrans Board agreed a desired network of two cross-city ART routes connecting Blackdog to Westhill and Craibstone Park & Ride to Portlethen. A Strategic Business Case (SBC) for ART is anticipated for completion at the end of the 2024/25 financial year, with an Outline Business Case (OBC) to be developed in 2025/26.

During the ART Detailed Options Appraisal, various transport modelling support was undertaken to test intervention option proposals and provide relevant model scenario results to inform the appraisal. This required application of the Aberdeen Sub Area Model 2019 (ASAM19) to test the impact of bus priority measures and provide outputs to gauge the level of passenger benefit. The ASAM19 Trip Generation and Demand models calculate predicted changes in travel demand and patterns from base-year (2019) conditions. Changes associated with the price of parking, car park capacity and accessibility of park and ride sites (and rail stations) are also represented.

Five bus / ART service options were tested using ASAM19 to inform the ART appraisal work. This work included a sensitivity test including:

- New ART mode and services.
- Reduced in-vehicle weighting to reflect quality of ART buses.
- 800m bus stop spacing.
- Reduced bus stop dwell time.
- **Supporting measure of doubling car parking charges in Aberdeen City Centre (for on- and off-street parking) to represent a range of traffic restraint initiatives.**

The ART appraisal demonstrated that the greatest benefits to public transport (and the lowest disbenefits to general traffic) are achieved under the scenario where supporting traffic restraint measures, represented in the model as a doubling of car parking charges, are implemented. This scenario was the only test modelled that demonstrated benefits to public transport greater than the disbenefits to general traffic. The ART Detailed Options Appraisal notes that *“Greater modal shift to public transport will reduce general traffic disbenefits, and supporting traffic restraint measures, such as parking policy, if implemented alongside the scheme, have the potential to ensure overall monetised benefit.”*

Going forward, the success of ART will be dependent on ACC's adoption of complementary parking controls and management – changes in the extent of any parking controls exercised by ACC needs to therefore be further considered as an essential part of the wider strategy to support the delivery of ART. Alignment of parking policy

with the development of ART should therefore form a key consideration as the updated LTS is finalised in 2025. Delivery of ART itself will provide a marker for successful public transport delivery in the city (and City Region).

2.6 Concerns Raised at Consultation

Although no public consultation has been undertaken as part of the updated review, a number of pieces of work in recent years (involving elements of public consultation) have enabled feedback on perception of car parking issues in the city to be provided.

2.6.1 Nestrans Comprehensive Travel Study

Parking-related feedback from the Nestrans Comprehensive Travel Study consultation included:

- In Aberdeen City, for residents who walked locally, the cost and availability of parking was seen as a key reason for choosing to walk rather than drive. Even with a parking permit, respondents stated it could be challenging to find a parking spot and therefore moving the car to undertake a trip that can be completed by walking made less sense.
- People use their car more often when travelling to work post-COVID-19 compared to before the pandemic as they are going to the office less frequently and therefore are more willing to pay for parking now than having to do it for five days a week.
 - *"I could not afford to pay for parking five days a week, it would have been too expensive. Now though, I'm only in the office two days a week so I don't mind that. So in my head it is a cost I can afford now and it is more convenient to me than the bus."*
- Younger people (aged 16-21) were more likely to get the bus to their place of education due to access to the free travel scheme but also to avoid parking which is generally limited and expensive.
- Some respondents stated that they prefer to visit out of town retail parks as they felt the benefits of free parking (amongst other things) meant it was more preferable than going into the city centre.
- Some respondents would rather pay for parking than pay for the bus as the benefits to them were greater and they thought, but didn't know, that parking could be cheaper than using the bus.
- When asked about parking in Aberdeen City – *"It is a nightmare, you either got to have permit, which costs or the time you can park is really small so you can't achieve anything while you park. It is a hassle."*
- One of the scenarios in the survey asked respondents to consider the following: The number of car parking spaces available will halve in the next month. How will this impact your journey choice? Feedback included the following:
 - Parking is already difficult but those who want to drive will find a way regardless.
 - This would not make people change their mode choice, but it would make them think about whether they need to make the trip or if they can do their shopping at an out of town retail park or online, but also find a space further out and walk in, pushing parking demand further away from the town.
 - Some people don't have a choice, they need the vehicle for work or to pick children up from work etc.
- P&R – opportunity is to provide clearer messaging on parking and travelling into city all included in one price.

2.6.2 City Voice Survey Results

References to parking which were made within recent reports on the City Voice Survey have been collated and are summarised below.

- Parking is expensive and there is a general lack of affordable parking within the city centre. There was reference to parking permits making parking affordable in some locations.
- There is limited availability of parking.
- Need for additional disabled parking spaces were identified at: venues (theatre, art gallery etc), general city centre areas not just multi-storey, closer to amenities/main shopping centres. More enforcement of illegal disabled parking was also highlighted.

- Very rarely park in the city centre now – with new city centre traffic interventions making it extremely difficult.
- More mother and baby spaces are required.
- Respondents were asked what were the most important factors to consider when selecting a parking space within the city centre. Outputs have been combined and averages across each of the response options are presented in the graph below.

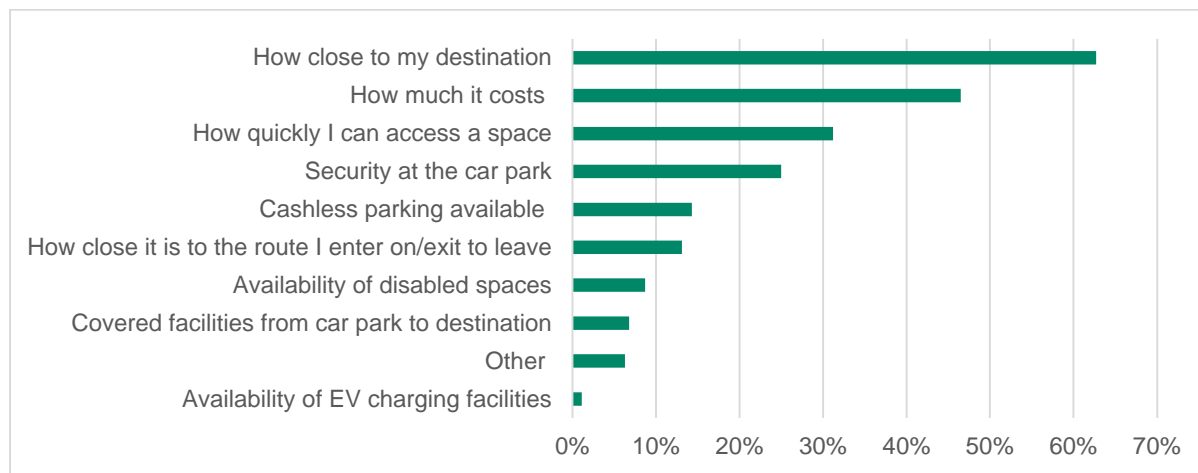


Figure 4: City Voice Survey – Most Important Parking Factors

2.6.3 ACC LTS Consultation

ACC is in the process of developing an updated LTS for publication in 2025. Responses to public consultation to inform the LTS development (with a parking focus) have been provided by ACC to highlight recent public perceptions of parking in the city.

Parking related responses from the recently completed Local Transport Strategy Consultation have been extracted and are summarised below.

Table 1: LTS Consultation Feedback

LTS Feedback Area	Key Feedback
Problems/Issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • City centre interventions make it difficult for visitors to access multi-storey car parks within the city centre • Several comments emphasising the high price of parking, many citing this as a reason not to visit the city centre. Some suggest parking should be free to attract more visitors to the city centre. • Lack of EV charging infrastructure at car parks is holding back EV growth • Parking restrictions impact those working in areas who need access to their vehicles to conduct their work • Park and Rides do not provide the service required to encourage increased use of the facility • Parking spaces are not big enough for SUVs • Increasing parking fees and decreasing spaces will have an impact on accessibility
Opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More affordable or free parking would support businesses and increase use of the city centre • Increase the availability of parking at the beachfront – free parking at beachfront should remain • Sunday parking in the city centre should be free • Car parking will be used to avoid having to take shopping on bus and other modes • Preference to use Union Square over Union Street for example as there is parking • Car parks to still provide options to pay by cash to ensure inclusivity

LTS Feedback Area	Key Feedback
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase number of dedicated car club bays • Free city centre parking after 5pm to support businesses • Minimise the negative impacts of parking on the streetscape • Investigate the possibility of introducing a Workplace Parking Levy within the city centre • Emissions based price tariffs • Further enforcement to address illegal pavement parking • Empty resident car parks should be repurposed • Motorcycle parking bays to be fitted with enhanced security infrastructure such as locking points • Opportunities to better utilise Park and Ride facilities • More on-street parking / on-street parking should not be discouraged • Reduction of parking permit costs • More disabled parking • More deterrent for commuters to park within the city centre and at the beach • More EV charging points in city centre

3. Review of Previous Work

3.1 Previous Study Aim and Objectives

3.1.1 Aim

The aim of the previous study was to:

“Undertake a review of strategic car parking across the City to consider the complex relationship of parking in the City centre with the City’s economic, social and environmental wellbeing and how well the current provision of on and off-street parking (whether operated by the public or private sector) fits with ACC’s strategic transport and land use plans.”

3.1.2 Objectives

The previous study had eight objectives, as follows:

1. A car parking policy for Aberdeen that advocates appropriate use of parking in the City centre, with parking prioritised for short stay shoppers and visitors rather than long stay commuters, and which complements wider transport and economic policies of ACC.
2. A car parking policy for Aberdeen that aligns with the approved Roads Hierarchy and facilitates routing to appropriate car parks in the City centre through the use of technology.
3. Provide high quality car parking that is accessible to all users and is inclusive of their needs.
4. Provide flexible parking provision which can adapt to suit events and occasions of demand occurrences.
5. A car parking policy for Aberdeen that supports a reduction in traffic in line with various policies for changing the modal split of access into the City centre and increasing the mode share of those using collective transport, walking and cycling within the City centre.
6. A car parking policy for Aberdeen that complements a wider suite of demand management measures promoted by ACC.
7. A car parking policy for Aberdeen that helps to promote City centre Living for existing and future residents, realising opportunities to enhance public realm and the walkability and liveability of Aberdeen City centre.
8. Examine the establishment of a sustainable business model for ACC parking assets.

3.2 Previous Actions and Recommendations

3.2.1 Actions

The previous study identified 30 actions split across six topic areas. Actions were used when the evidence base for some topics / types of parking was inconclusive thus instead of providing a formal recommendation an action was identified which principally relates to the undertaking of further studies, reviews or data collection exercises. These actions were not subject to the appraisal process but were prioritised for implementation based on a short, medium or long term programme.

Table 2: Previously Identified Actions

Topic	Ref	Action	Programme
Policy Guidance, Strategy and Technology	1	Develop supporting studies and strategies which consider wider Travel Demand Management (TDM) measures in more detail.	Short Term
	2	Assessment of the impact of the approved Roads Hierarchy Strategy on parking, particularly on-street parking and vehicle routing to off-street car parks.	Short Term
	3	Study into national pressures to restrict diesel and petrol cars and impact on Aberdeen parking (and noise / air quality) and to consider development guidelines, on-street charging and tariffs for charging.	Short Term
	4	Establish a Quality Parking Partnership for City centre parking to include private operators.	Short Term

Topic	Ref	Action	Programme
	5	Continued promotion of Getabout (TDM) initiatives and review of such initiatives, where applicable, considering the outcomes of the SCPR.	Short Term
	6	Undertake further studies / reviews to assess the implications of Scottish Government LEZ requirements in Aberdeen and how this may influence and shape parking in the City.	Short Term
	7	Review of SCPR recommendations in respect of ensuring no detriment to existing Air Quality Management Areas (AQMAS) / Noise Management Areas (NMAs).	Medium Term
	8	Review of the barriers to the feasibility and implementability of low and no car free developments in city centres with consideration of best practice from other cities with a focus on practicalities of enforcing such developments while considering the demands of increasing City Living opportunities.	Medium Term
	9	The strategic scope of the study did not allow for baseline data to be collected on a number of additional parking types that contribute to the overall parking environment and / or data was found to be lacking during the baseline review relating to: blue / green badge parking, parent and child parking, loading / unloading parking, freight parking, taxi parking, parking of coaches, cycles, motorcycles or front garden parking, streetscape contributions and free parking, illegal parking causing accidents among other types. Evidence gathering for these elements will need to be considered and be part of any Car Parking Action Plan moving forward.	Medium Term
	10	Communication strategy regarding approach of ACC relating to parking for dissemination to public and Councillors.	Medium Term
	11	Modelling of SCPR actions and recommendations within the Aberdeen Sub Area Model (ASAM).	Medium Term
	12	Refresh of the existing payment / enforcement system to consider enhanced operational effectiveness and revenue generation.	Medium Term
	13	Development of Key Performance Indicators (KPI) relating to SCPR aims and objectives in respect of monitoring of: traffic flows, car parking occupancy and public engagement.	Long Term
	14	Explore potential for introducing workplace parking levies.	Long Term
Park & Ride and Public Transport	15	Awareness raising of existing Park & Ride facilities.	Short Term
	16	Develop a strategy in partnership with Nestrans for Park & Ride including research into barriers to use.	Short Term
	17	In partnership with Aberdeenshire Council consider revisiting the case for Park & Ride at Portlethen.	Medium Term
On-Street Parking	18	Review of on-street parking permit turnover, occupancy and duration of stay.	Medium Term
ACC Off-Street Publicly Available Car Parking	19	Structural assessment of existing Multi Storey Car Parks (MSCPs).	Short Term
	20	Further investigation of opportunity to rationalise underutilised off-street sites (ACC surface car parks) at Jack's Brae and Virginia Street.	Short Term
	21	Increased provision of parent and child spaces.	Short Term

Topic	Ref	Action	Programme
	22	Close Golden Square car park.	Medium Term
	23	Consider reallocation of long / short stay car parking availability within all ACC off-street car parks.	Medium Term
	24	Review use of ACC off-street car parks by ACC employees in respect of: usage, permit availability and restrictions to be extended to include the Town House car park.	Medium Term
	25	Regular monitoring and benchmarking of off-street car parking tariffs by the public and private sector.	Long Term
EVs and Car Clubs	26	Guidance on short stay & EV parking and location.	Short Term
	27	In partnership with the Aberdeen Car Club assess the existing level of Car Club demand in the City and develop appropriate strategies thereafter.	Medium Term
Engagement Outcomes	28	Clarity and improved ease of use of the RingGo payment system.	Short Term
	29	Investigate feasibility of trialling a smart phone based app which provides information on space availability, payment functions and duration of stay reminders.	Long Term
	30	Introduction of contactless payments.	Long Term

3.2.2 Recommendations

The issues and gathering task (Stage 1) of the previous study identified 28 recommendations to progress to appraisal (Stage 2). An initial sift was carried out prior to the appraisal. The sifting process included a quantitative assessment using a seven-point scoring scale from major negative impact to major positive impact against the following criteria: Environment, Safety, Economy, Integration and Accessibility and Social Inclusion.

Recommendations would progress to the appraisal stage if the scoring was considered to be balanced across the different criteria; where an unbalance was identified the recommendation would be sifted from further consideration. Prior to sifting, two recommendations from the Engagement Outcomes topic were removed from further consideration. A further four recommendations were removed during the sifting process, resulting in six recommendations being removed from further consideration, these are outlined in the table below.

Topic	Action	Reason for Removal
Policy Guidance, Strategy and Technology	As part of the next LDP process develop parking standards based on public transport, walking and cycling accessibility.	No significant beneficial impact against the criteria.
On-Street Parking	Restrict on-street parking opportunities for long stay parking (excluding residents).	No significant beneficial impact against the criteria.
	Reduce number of on-street residential permits made available in City centre.	
ACC Off-Street Publicly Available Car Parking	Sustainable car parks e.g. solar panels on the roof.	Does not have a beneficial impact due to the sifting criteria which is focussed on transportation related benefits as opposed to benefits associated with buildings, which this recommendation is considered to score favourably against.
Engagement Outcomes	Increased off-street car parking provision.	Do not support the SCPR aim and finalised objectives moreover there is no supporting evidence base for these recommendations
	Free off-street car parking.	

An appraisal was conducted on 22 recommendations. The appraisal process consisted of a qualitative assessment against the following criteria: Implementability, Affordability (ACC assets only) and Public Acceptability. The criteria were scored on a low, medium and high risk scale. Recommendations which were considered to have a balance in terms of risk were taken forward to prioritisation. No further recommendations were removed during the appraisal stage.

Each of the 22 recommendations were qualitatively assessed on prioritisation with a short, medium and long term scale used.

The final recommendations from the 2018 SCPR, including programme of prioritisation, are outlined in Table 3 below.

Table 3: Previously Identified Recommendations

Topic	Ref	Programme	Programme
Policy Guidance, Strategy and Technology	1	As part of the next Local Development Plan (LDP) process, consideration to more restrictive commercial parking standards within Supplementary Guidance (SG) with a focus on the City Centre.	Medium Term
	2	Amendment of car parking standards within next LDP process to correlate to SCPR aims and objectives.	Medium Term
	3	Greater support and propensity for approval of no car developments in City Centre during the planning application process.	Medium Term
	4	Greater support and propensity for approval of low car developments in City Centre during the planning application process.	Medium Term
Park & Ride and Public Transport	6	Business model change of Park & Ride operations to consider free bus travel or reduced bus travel cost.	Short Term
	7	In partnership with Nestrans review methods for improving facilities at Park & Ride sites to make sites more attractive.	Short Term
	8	Working with stakeholder investigate potential for increased rail Park & Rail provision.	Medium Term
On-Street Parking	11	Pay & Display only in retail areas.	Long Term
	12	Introduction of North Dee Controlled Parking Zone (CPZ).	Long Term
	13	Introduction of Beach CPZ.	Long Term
	14	Restrict business permit allocation in City Centre similar to benchmarking cities.	Long Term
	15	Increase cost of residential parking permit in City Centre.	Long Term
ACC Off-Street Publicly Available Car Parking	16	Trial of Alive after Five in existing underutilised off-street car parks during evenings.	Short Term
	17	Minimise commuter parking within ACC off-street facilities.	Medium Term
	18	Balance / dynamic parking – with aid technology.	Medium Term
	19	Park Mark scheme target for ACC off-street car parks.	Medium Term
	21	Enhanced signage and wayfinding by vehicles and pedestrians with consideration of the interface of the car park with the local environment.	Medium Term
EV and Car Club	22	Increase EV on-street spaces in City Centre.	Medium Term
	23	Increase EV parking in off-street locations.	Medium Term
	24	Increased Variable Message Signs (VMS).	Medium Term

Topic	Ref	Programme	Programme
Engagement Outcomes	27	Enhanced enforcement of inappropriate parking such as parking in blue badge spaces.	Medium Term
	28	Increased secure cycle parking in off-street car parks.	Medium Term

4. Car Parking Provision

4.1 ACC Car Parking

4.1.1 Off-Street Car Parking

ACC currently operate the following car parks in the city centre:

- Broomhill Road (surface);
- Chapel Street (muti-storey);
- Denburn (multi-storey);
- Fonthill Road (surface);
- Frederick Street (multi-storey);
- Gallowgate (surface);
- Golden Square (surface);
- Marischal College (multi-storey);
- Summer Street (surface);
- West North Street (multi-storey); and
- Virginia Street (surface).

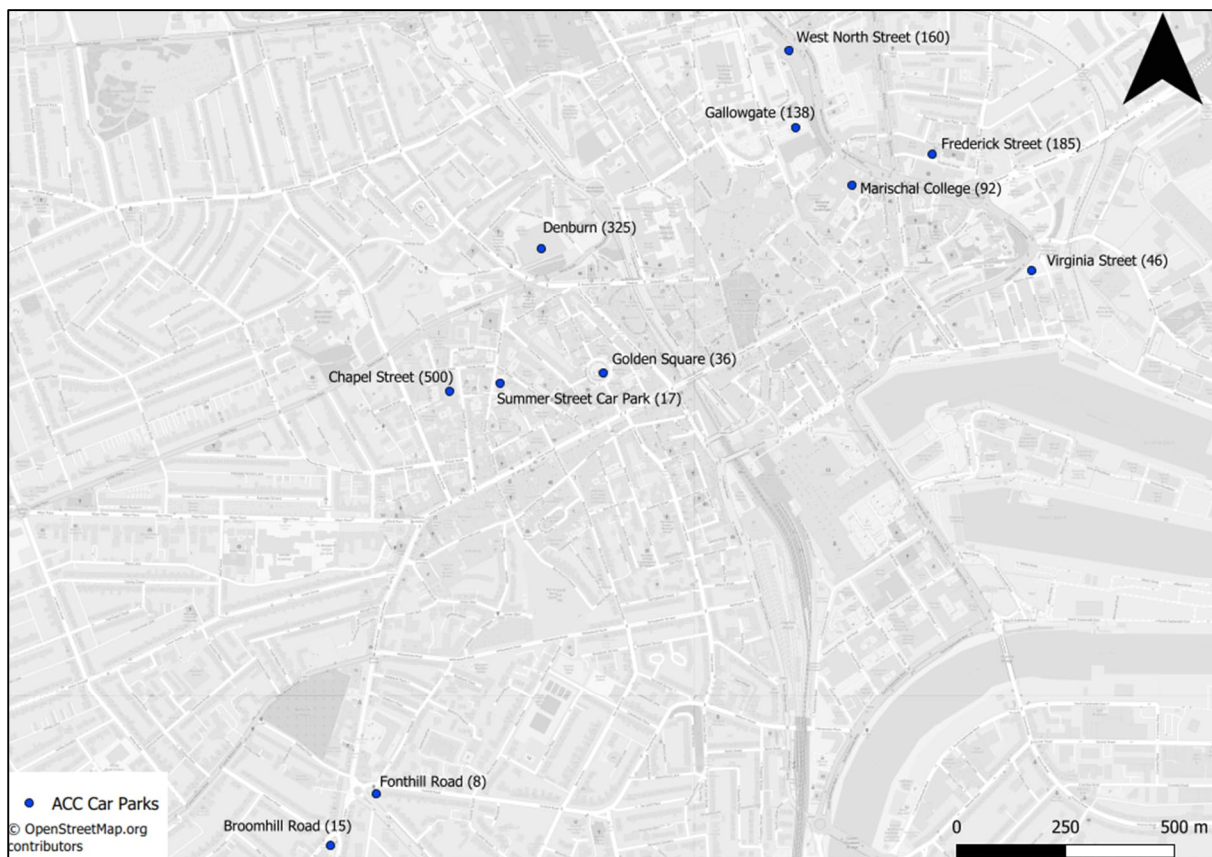


Figure 5: Car Parks Operated by ACC¹

¹ In 2023, Shell moved into the Silver Fin building on Union Street. As part of this move, Shell has taken over 80% (400 spaces) of the Chapel Street car parking capacity on weekdays. The car park remains fully open for the public on weekday evenings and the weekend and provides reduced capacity (100 spaces) during working hours on weekdays. Further information can be found in Section 4.1.7.

4.1.2 Off-Street Car Parking – Changes to Access Arrangements

As noted in Chapter 2, although the introduction of the LEZ and city centre traffic management measures have affected car park routing choice, they do not preclude the ability of users with LEZ compliant vehicles to access the various city centre car parks. However, those car parks located within the LEZ are not accessible to people with non-compliant vehicles.

4.1.3 Off-Street Car Parking – EV Infrastructure

The rise of electric vehicles (EVs) in response to the phasing out of combustion engines has been identified to potentially offer a unique set of structural challenges on car parks given the increase in weight loading from EV infrastructure. However, although no weight loading issues have been observed or are expected to cause issues to the existing ACC car parks in the short-term, there is a risk that an exponential increase in EV infrastructure, particularly given the projections for EVs as a percentage of the total UK fleet by 2035, may, in the long-term, introduce weight loading issues on older car parking facilities.

An increase in EV infrastructure at car parks within Aberdeen City can lead to a potential shortage in electric grid capacity to appropriately supply the EV charging network. ACC have identified this as a long-term risk and have measures in place to monitor grid capacity issues as EV projections continue to increase. It is also noted that the provision of EV charging infrastructure and therefore dedicated EV parking provision is restricted by the accessibility and availability of funding to buy the required infrastructure and then distribute the chargers across all parking facilities and sites. The restrictions to buy this infrastructure has limited ACC's ability to expand the EV charging network and therefore the availability of dedicated EV parking provision. Traditionally this rollout has relied on external funding sources, however in recent years, the Council has allocated its own capital funding to grow the charging network in Aberdeen which has allowed charging infrastructure to be rolled out to a greater number of sites and the number of chargers to be increased at others.

Aberdeen City Council, along with Aberdeenshire, Highland and Moray Councils is part of a joint exercise to procure a private sector partner who will work with them, for up to 20 years, to manage and grow the public charging networks that the Councils have traditionally been responsible for. It is hoped that the contract can be awarded by summer 2025.

In addition, there is a greater number of private sites – petrol filling stations, supermarkets, leisure facilities, and shopping centres – forming their own partnerships with charge point providers to offer public EV charging opportunities, meaning that users are less reliant on the network that the Council has been involved with. This is likely to grow even further as a result of changes over the last few years to permitted development regulations in planning and also EV charging standards now forming part of Scottish Building Regulations.

4.1.4 Off-Street Car Parking – ACC Projects

ACC have been progressing several projects in relation to their car park assets, principally at Denburn and Chapel Street.

4.1.5 Denburn

A review into the condition of each of ACC's off-street car parks identified that Denburn car park was of a poor condition and both the suitability and accessibility of the car park was to be of a satisfactory grade. Whilst utilisation of Denburn Car Park has remained consistent, it was determined that capital investment would be required for the facility to remain functioning.

ACC has now completed an option appraisal on potential interventions for Denburn car park – options considered included 'do-nothing', essential works, refurbishment and disposal of the facility in its entirety. Two emerging options were considered the most viable. These are described in the table below.

Table 4: Denburn Car Park Options Appraisal

Option	Description	Indicative Cost
Option 3	Demolition of Health Centre only and full refurbishment of car park / EV / waterproofing top deck / lighting / decoration	£5,530,071

Option	Description	Indicative Cost
Option 4	Full demolition of Health Centre and Denburn Car Park. Masterplan for surface car park (up to 300 spaces) and any alternative uses	£6,915,087

4.1.6 West North Street

A similar option appraisal exercise was carried out for West North Street car park. The condition and suitability was graded as being satisfactory, however accessibility was scored as bad. Six options were considered as part of the appraisal, as outlined below:

Table 5: West North Street Car Park Options Appraisal

Option	Description	Indicative Cost
Option 1	Do-Minimum / H&S Repair	£585,900
Option 2	Essential Work & Roof Deck	£1,191,025
Option 3a	Full Refurbishment (including Ventilation)	£2,038,634
Option 3b	Full refurbishment (Excluding Ventilation)	£1,641,818
Option 4	Refurbishment including Park Mark upgrade	£2,248,634
Option 5	Dispose	£160,300

Option 3b – Full Refurbishment (excluding ventilation systems) was identified as the preferred option. This has been presented to the Capital Board for allocation of funds.

4.1.7 Chapel Street

As noted earlier, in 2023, Shell moved into the Silver Fin building on Union Street. As part of this move, Shell has taken over 80% (400 spaces) of the Chapel Street car parking capacity on weekdays. The car park remains fully open for the public on weekday evenings and the weekend and provides reduced capacity (100 spaces) during working hours on weekdays. Shell pay ACC a commercial rent for their portion of car parking spaces. As part of this agreement, Shell has invested £1.2 million to upgrade the car park. Upgrades have included structural repairs, lighting upgrades, re-lining, CCTV upgrades, a new access barrier solution and decoration improvements to the car parking area and stairwells.

Although anecdotal, there have been some reports raised at this car park of increased instances of violations in terms of misuse of parent and child parking spaces.

4.1.8 Park and Ride Facilities

Nestrans undertake annual 'snapshot' surveys at all of the Park & Ride sites in the North East. These surveys involve an enumerator attending the site on a weekday and noting down the occupancy. The results of these surveys from 2016 and 2022 have been summarised below. Sites located in Aberdeen City are in bold.

Table 6: 'Snapshot' Park & Ride Occupancy Survey Summary (Source: Nestrans)

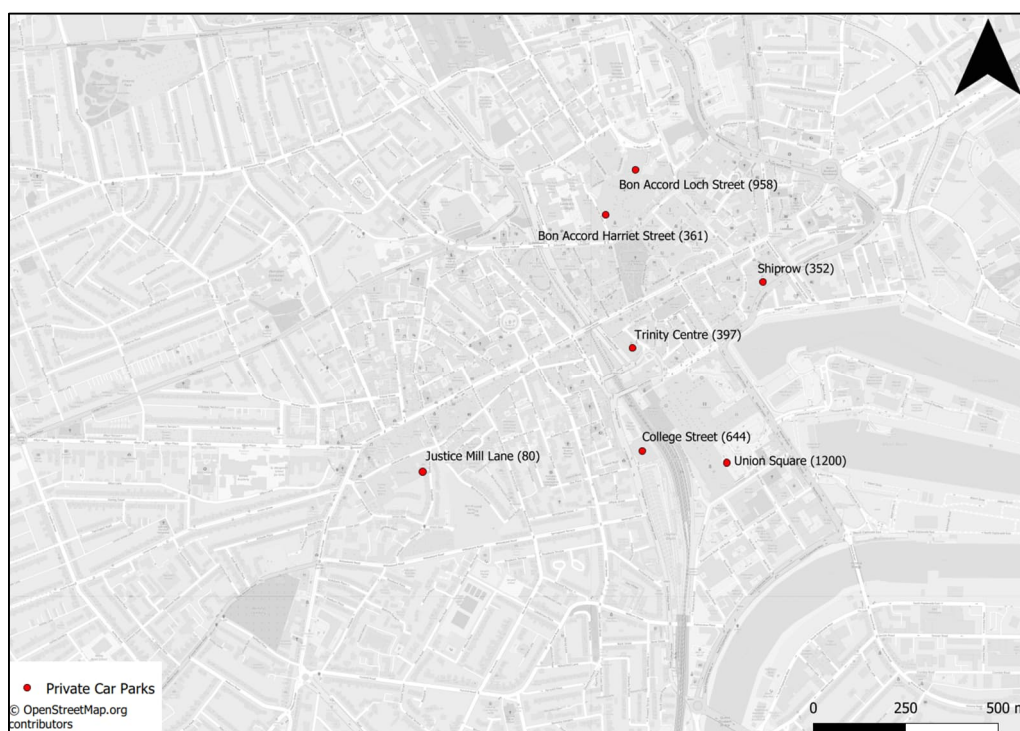
	Location	Recorded Car Park Capacity	2016 Occupancy Counts		2022 Occupancy Counts		% Difference between 2016 and 2022
			Parked Vehicles in Car Park	% Occupied	Parked Vehicles in Car Park	% Occupied	
Bus-based Park & Ride	Bridge of Don	532	123	23%	10	2%	-21%
	Ellon	300	172	57%	91	30%	-27%
	Kingswells	915	103	11%	266	29%	18%
	Craibstone	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Rail-based Park & Ride	Huntly	27	20	74%	13	48%	-26%
	Insch	49	44	90%	20	41%	-49%
	Inverurie	104	99	95%	133	128%	33%
	Dyce	61	55	90%	60	98%	8%
	Portlethen	30	13	43%	5	17%	26%
	Stonehaven	100	89	89%	141	141%	52%

The results show that one bus-based Park and Ride facility in Aberdeen City (Kingswells) observed an increase in occupancy, however this is largely attributed to an overspill of parking generated from one of the adjacent car parks at the Prime Four business park. Occupancy at Bridge of Don between the two snapshot surveys reduced, as a result of the main service being withdrawn from the site. The car park at Dyce rail station observed an increase in capacity.

Since the preparation of the above table, a new bus service has commenced operation out of the Bridge of Don Park & Ride facility. Bus operator Ember provides a bus service from the Park & Ride to Dundee, Edinburgh and Glasgow. The Ember bus fleet is made up of fully electric vehicles.

4.1.9 Private Car Parking

There are a number of privately operated off-street car parks located throughout Aberdeen city centre. The figure below shows the location of these car parks and their capacities.

**Figure 6: Privately Operated Car Parks in Aberdeen City Centre**

The previous SCPR concluded that the combined off-street capacity (ACC and privately operated) within the city was adequate to support the demand for parking with the collective car parking capacity operating at or less than 85%. Whilst there is no updated parking occupancy data to further validate this (as detailed in Section 4.2 below), given the significant changes in city centre usage in recent years (particularly since the COVID-19 pandemic), it

is reasonable to suggest that there is a reduced demand for parking within the city centre, and as such the collective city centre parking capacity remains adequate for the levels of demand, though further data analysis would be needed to reinforce this rationale.

4.2 Car Park Data Availability

It is noted that since the previous SCPR, there has been a reduction in the quality and availability of data relating to both ACC car park assets and privately operated car parks. This means that it is not possible to provide robust commentary on changing trends in car park occupancy and consumption between the two pieces of work. However, this chapter has re-established the characteristics of the ACC and private car park assets at the present time, which will provide valuable context for future consideration of any new approaches the Council may take to deliver car parking policies, including through the LTS.

The progression of this review has therefore identified an opportunity for ACC (and for ACC through discussion with third parties including private car park operators) to develop and maintain an efficient approach to monitoring car parking demand and usage in the city going forward. This will be of particular importance as complementary projects which have the capability to affect how parking is consumed in the city (such as Aberdeen Rapid Transit) are progressed.

Further consideration of potential avenues ACC may wish to explore in the parking data monitoring space will be discussed further as the SCPR is finalised. Improved data collection methodologies should also extend to the Park & Ride sites.

5. Car Parking Charges, Duration and Permits

5.1 Introduction

This chapter provides an overview of current parking charges in Aberdeen, permitted lengths of stay and also provides detail of parking permit availability.

5.2 ACC Off-Street Car Parks

5.2.1 Overview

ACC currently offers a range of parking tariffs for off-street car parking within the city. The Council operates ten city car parks, of which nine are operational twenty-four hours a day Monday to Sunday, with one (Marischal College) open to the public on a Thursday, Saturday and Sunday. The opening hours vary between each car park, but generally ACC car parking charges apply Monday to Saturday from 08:00 to 20:00 hours and between 13:00 and 17:00 hours on a Sunday. Maximum duration of stay also varies.

The ten off-street car parks operated by ACC and the hours where parking charges are applied are shown in below².

Table 7: Summary of ACC Operated Car Parks (Source: ACC Website)

Car Park	Open	Charging Hours	Max Stay
Gallowgate Car Park	24 Hr	Mon-Sat 08:00-20:00, Sun 13:00-17:00	4 Hrs
Frederick Street Multi-Storey Car Park	24 Hr	Mon-Sat 08:00-20:00, Sun 13:00-17:00	14 Hrs
Summer Street Car Park	24 Hr	Mon-Sat 08:00-20:00, Sun 13:00-17:00	4 Hrs
Marischal College Multi-Storey Car Park	Thurs, Sat, Sun	Thu 18:00-20:00, Sat 08:00-18:00, Sun 13:00-17:00	4 Hrs
Broomhill Road Car Park	24 Hr	Mon-Sat 08:00-18:00,	2 Hrs
Fonthill Road Car Park	24 Hr	Mon-Sat 08:00-18:00,	3 Hrs
Chapel Street Multi-Storey Car Park	24 Hr	Mon-Sat 08:00-20:00, Sun 13:00-17:00	NA
West North Street Multi-Storey Car Park	24 Hr	Mon-Sat 08:00-20:00, Sun 13:00-17:00	NA
Denburn Multi-Storey Car Park	24 Hr	Mon-Sat 08:00-20:00, Sun 13:00-17:00	NA
Virginia Street Car Park	24 Hr	Mon-Sat 08:00-20:00, Sun 13:00-17:00	NA

A summary of the parking charges for each of the ten car parks operated by ACC based on the latest parking tariffs (January 2025) is shown below.

Table 8: ACC Summary of Car Park Charges (£) (Source: ACC Website)

Car Park	Tariff (£)							
	1 Hr	2 Hr	3Hr	4Hr	5Hr	6Hr	10Hr	14Hr
Gallowgate Car Park	3.30		4.80	6.30	-	-	-	-
Frederick Street Multi-Storey Car Park	1.40	3.30	4.80	6.30	6.90	8.20	13.50	16.50
Summer Street Car Park	3.30		4.80	6.30	-	-	-	-
Marischal College Multi-Storey Car Park	3.30		4.80	6.30	-	-	-	-
Broomhill Road Car Park	1.40	2.60	-	-	-	-	-	-
Fonthill Road Car Park	1.40	2.60	-	-	-	-	-	-
Chapel Street Multi-Storey Car Park	2.90		4.10	5.50	6.90	8.20	13.50	16.50
West North Street Multi-Storey Car Park	2.90		4.10	5.50	6.90	8.20	13.50	16.50
Denburn Multi-Storey Car Park	2.90		4.10	5.50	6.90	8.20	13.50	16.50

² <https://www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/services/roads-transport-and-parking/parking/find-car-park>

Car Park	Tariff (£)						
	1 Hr	2 Hr	3Hr	4Hr	5Hr	6Hr	10Hr
Virginia Street Surface Street Car Park	2.40		3.60	4.80	6.00	7.20	12.10
							16.50

Based on the information presented above, a summary of the key parking data for car parks operated by ACC is shown below:

- Five of the ten car parks are multi-storey car parks with a maximum duration of fourteen hours.
- The minimum tariff of 1 hour in duration is operated at three car parks. In general, the minimum tariff is based on a two-hour duration.
- The maximum tariff based on a fourteen-hour duration is £16.50. This is the same price across five car parks where long-term stay is permitted.

5.2.2 ACC Sunday Parking Charging

5.2.2.1 Background

The feasibility of changing the current pay and display policy of ACC was brought forward as a Notice of Motion at the 31 October 2023 Net Zero, Environment and Transport Committee on the basis that not all religious days are observed on a Sunday – with the current policy of free parking on Sunday mornings allowing many to drive to church for worship.

The following decisions were taken at the committee.

- (i) *to note that Aberdeen City Council controlled parking zones and car parks do not have consistent operational hours on every day of the week;*
- (ii) *to note that people's reasons for visiting the city centre and public transport provision have changed significantly since the current on-street and off-street city centre parking arrangements were agreed; and*
- (iii) *to instruct the Chief Officer - Operations and Protective Services following consultation with the Chief Officer – Strategic Place Planning to explore the feasibility of undertaking a review of on-street and off-street parking and report back with a timeline and resource implications, to the next Net Zero, Environment and Transport Committee.*

As part of the update to the subsequently commissioned SCPR, ACC wishes to assess whether provision of free parking at Council car parks should continue to be offered on Sunday mornings. On-street parking controls are in place from 08:00 to 20:00 from Monday to Saturday and 13:00 to 17:00 on a Sunday in Controlled Parking Zones A, B, C, E, F and G, and off-street car parks in the city centre. Within surrounding areas, on-street parking is managed from 08:00 to 20:00 Monday to Saturday only. This is in keeping with the requirement to manage parking during peak times and to reduce the impact of commuter parking on local residents.

5.2.2.2 Data Review

As outlined in Section 4.3, it is noted that since the previous SCPR, there has been a reduction in the quality and availability of data relating to ACC car park assets. However, ACC has made some data available for the purposes of understanding current trends associated with their Sunday charging regime.

This section summarises analysis of Sunday car parking charges at ACC Car Parks in 2022, 2023 and 2024, based on Variable Message Sign (VMS) data provided to AECOM by ACC. A total of 10 car parks are monitored via the Council's UTMIC car park guidance system, using two methodologies. Four of the privately operated car parks (Bon Accord Harriet Street and Loch Street, Union Square and Shiprow) utilise their own monitoring systems and provide occupancy, fill rates and spaces remaining data directly back to the car park guidance system via proprietary adapters (Scheidt & Bachmann and Skidata AG respectively). It is understood that there is currently an issue with the connection back to Union Square and no data is currently being provided. The remaining six car parks are operated by the Council and have inductive loop detectors installed at all the entry and exit points, which are connected into UTMIC compliant car park monitors installed within small roadside cabinets. The car park monitors provide the data back to a car park adapter in the UTMIC system via GPRS wireless mesh routers, also installed within the roadside cabinets.

Of the 10 car parks in the dataset provided by ACC, only four had available Sunday occupancy data: Bon Accord (Loch Street), Denburn, College Street, and The Mall Aberdeen (Trinity Centre). Of these four, Denburn is the only one operated by ACC and therefore the only one where the Sunday charging schedule applies. Additional data was provided by ACC in January 2025 for the Frederick Street car park, although it is noted that this is for

entries only – some caution is required when comparing this to the other occupancy data. This car park is monitored using CCTV and analytics. The Bon Accord (Loch Street), Trinity Centre and College Street car parks have been included in the analysis as a comparison, i.e. to examine what happens where the charging schedule is different. At these car parks, charges apply throughout the day on Sunday. Sunday car parking charges apply at all council operated car parks between 13:00 and 17:00, apart from at the Broomhill Road and Fonthill Road car parks (which are not included in this analysis)³. For each car park, the data availability was as follows:

- Bon Accord (Loch Street): 2022, 2023, January to June 2024
- The Mall Aberdeen (Trinity Centre): 2022, 2023, no data for 2024
- Denburn: 2022, 2023, January to November 2024
- College Street: 2022, 2023, January to November 2024 (no data May/June)
- Frederick Street: August to December 2024

The number of Sundays with data was variable across the sites and the time periods, as shown in the table below. Sites with low data availability should be treated with caution – as the results shown in this note are averages across the days with data, there is more confidence in results with more data availability.

³ <https://www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/services/roads-transport-and-parking/parking/find-car-park>

Table 9: Days with Available Data

Car Park		09:00	09:30	10:00	10:30	11:00	11:30	12:00	12:30	13:00	13:30	14:00	14:30	15:00	15:30	16:00	16:30	17:00	17:30	18:00	18:30
Bon Accord (Loch Street)	2022	15	12	7	7	5	6	12	10	14	17	11	7	7	6	9	11	11	13	15	9
	2023	12	8	9	7	10	10	11	12	14	13	8	9	8	4	10	15	11	12	14	12
	2024	6	7	2	2	4	6	6	6	3	3	7	5	1	4	7	5	5	6	3	4
Trinity Centre	2022	9	12	13	14	13	12	15	13	12	14	13	17	16	16	14	10	14	4	7	7
	2023	No Data			10	11	11	13	11	13	13	13	15	16	17	14	13	9	10	9	9
	2024	No Data																			
Denburn	2022	18	19	15	17	18	17	16	17	16	16	19	18	16	16	16	20	16	16	14	17
	2023	12	15	16	17	16	15	17	16	18	19	17	18	18	19	17	17	17	18	20	17
	2024	14	14	10	13	14	16	13	12	11	13	15	12	10	11	12	14	8	9	9	13
College Street	2022	18	18	17	16	16	18	17	15	16	16	17	16	16	15	17	17	17	16	15	16
	2023	15	16	18	16	16	13	20	16	16	15	17	17	16	17	17	15	16	17	18	14
	2024	12	11	10	12	11	12	8	8	9	9	8	8	5	8	9	8	6	6	8	7
Frederick Street ⁴	2024	15		15		15		15		15		15		15		15		15		15	

The average Sunday occupancy at each car park at each time is shown below. It is noted that these results are the average occupancy across all available Sundays (the number of Sundays with data is shown above) at the exact time mentioned, for example the results for 13:00 are the average Sunday occupancies at 13:00, rather than an average of Sunday occupancies across all minutes between 13:00 and 13:29. For Frederick Street, this figure is different, instead representing the average number of entries across all available Sundays in a given hour.

It is again noted that Denburn and Frederick Street are the only ACC operated car parks with available occupancy or entry data and hence the only ones where the 13:00 to 17:00 charging schedule applies. It is noted that there may also be differences in the perceived quality or location of the car parks discussed above which will impact demand patterns – this has not been factored into this analysis.

Table 10: Average Sunday Occupancy

Car Park		09:00	09:30	10:00	10:30	11:00	11:30	12:00	12:30	13:00	13:30	14:00	14:30	15:00	15:30	16:00	16:30	17:00	17:30	18:00	18:30
Bon Accord (Loch Street)	2022	118	234	381	468	527	645	752	827	926	1,064	1,119	1,104	1,067	897	764	807	772	668	637	669
	2023	60	66	154	272	370	492	701	827	845	879	963	951	916	835	636	606	589	484	377	336
	2024	51	75	144	195	331	556	687	769	813	746	779	793	785	705	672	587	503	423	324	262
Trinity Centre	2022	10	6	30	43	64	59	88	96	111	117	94	94	89	99	59	24	22	0	0	0
	2023	No Data			8	20	34	51	37	45	41	42	33	6	11	13	14	0	0	0	0
	2024	No Data																			

⁴ It is noted that the data for Frederick Street was included in a separate dataset which recorded vehicle entries rather than occupancy; as such the results should be treated as somewhat distinct.

Car Park		09:00	09:30	10:00	10:30	11:00	11:30	12:00	12:30	13:00	13:30	14:00	14:30	15:00	15:30	16:00	16:30	17:00	17:30	18:00	18:30
Denburn	2022	14	23	38	52	71	79	79	87	95	106	126	126	130	130	128	115	86	62	64	77
	2023	3	7	29	41	57	56	60	57	65	54	52	57	63	40	34	23	27	45	29	21
	2024	3	8	28	37	40	53	59	51	29	53	49	43	36	24	31	13	18	8	40	43
College Street	2022	73	92	107	121	146	157	175	192	215	239	226	233	248	255	237	195	189	187	184	157
	2023	33	47	65	74	85	107	129	130	138	140	166	169	158	138	118	115	107	92	66	33
	2024	28	41	58	61	98	99	114	131	152	141	171	145	151	125	112	110	91	79	71	36
Frederick Street ⁵	2024	5		11		12		13		12		7		7		11		18		17	

Table 11: Average Sunday Occupancy (%)

Car Park		09:00	09:30	10:00	10:30	11:00	11:30	12:00	12:30	13:00	13:30	14:00	14:30	15:00	15:30	16:00	16:30	17:00	17:30	18:00	18:30
Bon Accord (Loch Street)	2022	12%	24%	40%	49%	55%	67%	78%	86%	97%	111%	117%	115%	111%	94%	80%	84%	81%	70%	66%	70%
	2023	6%	7%	16%	28%	39%	51%	73%	86%	88%	92%	101%	99%	96%	87%	66%	63%	61%	50%	39%	35%
	2024	5%	8%	15%	20%	35%	58%	72%	80%	85%	78%	81%	83%	82%	74%	70%	61%	52%	44%	34%	27%
Trinity Centre	2022	2%	2%	8%	11%	16%	15%	22%	24%	28%	30%	24%	24%	23%	25%	15%	6%	6%	0%	0%	0%
	2023	No Data			2%	5%	9%	13%	9%	11%	10%	11%	8%	1%	3%	3%	3%	0%	0%	0%	0%
	2024	No Data																			
Denburn	2022	4%	7%	12%	16%	22%	24%	24%	27%	29%	33%	39%	39%	40%	40%	39%	35%	26%	19%	20%	24%
	2023	1%	2%	9%	13%	17%	17%	18%	18%	20%	17%	16%	18%	19%	12%	11%	7%	8%	14%	9%	6%
	2024	1%	2%	9%	11%	12%	16%	18%	16%	9%	16%	15%	13%	11%	7%	9%	4%	6%	3%	12%	13%
College Street	2022	11%	14%	17%	19%	23%	24%	27%	30%	33%	37%	35%	36%	39%	40%	37%	30%	29%	29%	29%	24%
	2023	5%	7%	10%	12%	13%	17%	20%	20%	21%	22%	26%	26%	25%	21%	18%	18%	17%	14%	10%	5%
	2024	4%	6%	9%	9%	15%	15%	18%	20%	24%	22%	27%	23%	23%	19%	17%	17%	14%	12%	11%	6%
Frederick Street ⁶	2024	3%		6%		7%		7%		6%		4%		4%		6%		9%		9%	

The 2022 and 2023 results for Denburn indicate that there was no drop off in usage as a result of parking charges coming into effect at 13:00, with a more similar demand pattern to the other non-Council operated car parks.

The results from 2024 indicate that there is a drop off in occupancy for Denburn between the morning hours and when parking charges begin to apply at 13:00, with occupancy falling from a morning peak of 59 spaces occupied at 12:00 to 29 spaces occupied at 13:00. This effect is however most pronounced at 13:00; but by 13:30 occupancy once again rises to a level

⁵ It is noted that the data for Frederick Street was included in a separate dataset which recorded vehicle entries rather than occupancy; as such the results should be treated as somewhat distinct.

⁶ Ibid.

approaching that of the morning peak before tailing away again as the afternoon progresses. In comparison, the Bon Accord (Loch Street) and College Street car parks hit their peak occupancy later in the day, at 13:00 in the case of Bon Accord (Loch Street), and at 14:00 in the case of College Street. The period including 14:00, 14:30 and 15:00 are approximately the busiest times of the day at these car parks. At Denburn, demand begins to tail off slightly earlier in comparison, although it is noted that there is an increased relative uptake again at 18:00 and 18:30 which is not so visible at the other car parks.

This difference in occupancy patterns between Denburn in 2024 and the other car parks is likely to be an indicator that demand has reduced during the afternoon hours at the ACC operated car park due to the parking charges, although there is some indication that demand has spread out towards the morning and early evening hours instead of being “lost”.

At Frederick Street, which has 2024 data only, there appears to be a reduction in entries to the car park between 14:00 (inclusive) and 16:00 (not inclusive). This indicates that there is reduced usage over the period where charges apply compared to both the morning (09:00-12:00) and early evening (16:00-18:00), but that the drop off occurs in a relatively tapered way, reducing from 14:00 instead of at 13:00 and picking up again at 16:00 instead of 17:00. This could be indicative of a tendency for some users to shift their schedule around the charging hours, but that the charges are not having a completely prohibitive impact on car park use. Peak car park entries on Sundays occur at 17:00 and 18:00, again indicating that the presence of parking charges may be having an impact on entries.

There is also indication that Sunday car park usage has dropped between 2022 and 2024 at all car parks including Denburn. This could be as a result of a number of factors, including decreased recording accuracy or machine error, and would need to be further verified with additional data. Overall, these results suggest a need to explore what additional data is available to increase the level of confidence in this analysis. There is also a need to understand if Sunday data is available for ACC's other car parks as this will be needed to provide a robust recommendation in relation to the Notice of Motion discussed at the Net Zero, Environment and Transport Committee in October 2023.

Other Local Authorities Comparison

Other local authorities within the UK, namely City of Edinburgh Council and Dorset Council, introduced longer parking charges on a Sunday in 2021. Edinburgh City Council introduced Sunday parking charges in the City Centre as part of their Parking Action Plan. The new measure has seen areas previously free to park on a Sunday now requiring a pay-and-display ticket between the hours of 12:30-18:30⁷. The plans were introduced as part of the city's move towards being more eco-friendly and transforming into a carbon neutral capital by 2030⁸. The Council stated that footfall volumes on Sundays have become similar to the rest of the week and therefore parking charges should reflect that demand.

Following a review of car parking, Dorset Council introduced Sunday parking charges in Council controlled car parks. The aim of the measure was to bring parity and consistency to Sunday parking across all Dorset Council car parks⁹. Drivers using any Dorset Council car park will be charged for parking 08:00 to 20:00, Monday to Sunday. This extends the chargeable period by two hours in most areas¹⁰.

Neither Edinburgh City Council nor Dorset Council have conducted a review into the impact of introducing Sunday parking charges. However, the table below is an overview of the pros and cons expected to be realised following introduction of Sunday parking charges. This information was gathered from a desktop review.

Table 12: Sunday Charges Introduction – Positives and Negatives of Scheme

Positive	Negative
Provides additional income for Council on the basis that Sunday shopper activity is similar to other days of the week and therefore can be viewed as being fair/proportionate.	Charges may discourage people visiting town/city centres.
Parking charges could encourage use of public transport and active travel both on Sundays and Saturdays.	Potential impact on footfall in the place where introduced; impact on businesses.
Decreases long stay parking/space blocking in City Centre car parks on Sundays, improving space turnover and availability.	There may be limited viable alternative public transport options to enable users to switch from travel by private car to public transport (for example, fewer bus/train services on a Sunday).
Helps to achieve environmental goals.	Requires enforcement officer and equipment resource for the extra day.
Reduces congestion.	Likely to be viewed negatively by faith-based groups given that some people have to travel into the city centre for those activities.
Councils have the flexibility over how the charges work and could offer exemptions to suit specific needs. For example, church goers benefit from charging not commencing until the afternoon, or church members are issued with exemption permits.	Proposing this as a solution may open Councils up to criticism from other faith groups for whom Sunday is not a practising day around fairness i.e. those users already have to pay to park.
Revenue generated from charges can be reinvested back into local communities to improve infrastructure and services.	Could be perceived that there are other ways of achieving positive outcomes rather than introducing parking charges, for example perception that more public transport services should be operated instead.
Could discourage some people who park for social activities on Saturday evenings and then collect their vehicles on Sundays whilst still having a blood-alcohol level above the drink-drive limit.	

⁷ <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-scotland-edinburgh-east-fife-56589358>

⁸ <https://www.edinburghlive.co.uk/news/edinburgh-news/edinburgh-sunday-parking-charges-come-20144885>

⁹ <https://www.dorset.live/news/dorset-news/car-park-charges-how-much-6856234>

¹⁰ <https://news.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/2020/10/16/charges-at-dorset-council-run-car-parks-set-to-change/>

Positive	Negative
Seeks to move the conversation for some users on to <i>how</i> they access the city centre rather than <i>whether</i> they do (as they are already committed to making the trip).	

5.3 ACC Off-Street Car Parks – Council Initiatives (2024)

5.3.1 ACC Evening Parking Street Trial

ACC trialled a new scheme which allowed users to park in a select number of Council owned car parks for just £1 after 5pm. The six-month trial was agreed as part of the Council's Budget early in 2024. The move was aimed at boosting footfall in the city centre where work is under way to transform the central section of Union Street. The £1 charge represented a saving of up to £4.80 on standard charges for three hours' parking in the evening. The car parks involved in the trial were Virginia Street, Gallowgate, Frederick Street, Summer Street, Chapel Street, West North Street and Denburn. The scheme was concluded at the end of October 2024.

5.3.2 October/November 2024 Free Parking

ACC announced that for the last three weekends of October and the first weekend of November 2024, parking at Denburn car park and Frederick Street car park would be free of charge during the weekend. These dates were selected as they aligned with the school October holidays, the start of the Christmas shopping period and the brick-billed dinosaurs trail that took place throughout the city centre. This initiative was combined with the '£1 after 5pm' scheme (outlined above), providing visitors to the city centre with a variety of car parking offerings.



Figure 7: ACC Promoted Car Park Schemes in October (Source: ACC Website)

Analysis of availability data provided by ACC was conducted to understand the effectiveness of the October parking scheme. The limited available data meant that analysis could only be completed for Denburn car park.

Average weekend occupancy (Saturday and Sunday) within the trial period was compared to the average weekend occupancy for the rest of 2024, and to the average weekend occupancy over the same period in 2023. The following table illustrates the results by period and year.

Table 13: Average Weekend Occupancy by Year and Time Period – Denburn Car Park

Period	09:00	11:30	14:00	16:30	19:00
Oct/Nov 2023	10	53	76	60	43
Rest of Year (RoY) 2023	9	65	83	56	60
Oct / Nov 2024 (Trial)	14	86	123	50	114
Rest of Year (RoY) 2024	9	59	91	73	71
<i>Comparison 1 (Trial - RoY 2024)</i>	169%	146%	135%	68%	160%
<i>Comparison 2 (Trial - Oct/Nov 2023)</i>	144%	164%	161%	82%	267%

The results indicate there was an overall uplift in occupancy levels at Denburn car park during the Free Parking Initiative over the trial period. Occupancy levels increased by up to 169% compared to average weekend occupancy during the rest of 2024, and by up to 267% compared to approximately the same period in 2023. It was noted that the average occupancy remained relatively consistent around 16:30; in fact it was slightly lower on average than during the comparator periods, indicating that there remained some fluctuation in usage levels throughout the day during the trial period. It is important to note there are also multiple other variables that are expected to influence weekend off-street parking demand in the city centre, as well as broader travel behaviours, that have not been included in this summary analysis.

5.4 ACC On-Street Car Parking

5.4.1 Aberdeen On-Street Parking

On-street parking spaces in Aberdeen are managed and controlled by ACC who also undertake enforcement of parking restrictions. The number of parking spaces in Aberdeen is limited and therefore on-street spaces are suitable for short term parking, with turnover rates higher compared to off-street parking locations. Tariffs have been applied to five different zones located in Aberdeen, which together comprise the Controlled Parking Zone (CPZ). The tariffs range from a duration of twenty minutes up to five-six hours.

A summary of the on-street parking charges applied across the various zones in the CPZ are shown below.

Table 14: ACC On-Street Parking Charges (£)¹¹

Car Park	Zone	Tariff 20m	Tariff 30m	Tariff 40m	Tariff 0-1hr	Tariff 1-2hr	Tariff 2-3hr	Tariff 3-4hr	Tariff 4-5hr	Tariff 5-6hr
Inner Central Zones	A, B, C, E, G	1.50	2.90	2.90	4.20	5.50	-	-	-	-
Outer Central Zones	A, B, C, E, F, G	1.40	2.60	2.60	3.80	5.00	-	-	-	-
Peripheral Zones	H, J, K, N, P, L, M & T	0.90	0.90	1.40	1.40	2.60	3.80	-	-	-
Peripheral Zones	RR	0.90	0.90	1.40	1.40	2.60	3.80	4.80	6.00	7.20
Peripheral Zones	YY, Z					1.80	5.45			

¹¹ On-street parking, Aberdeen City Council website: <https://www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/services/roads-transport-and-parking/street-parking>

5.4.2 ACC Parking Permits / Impact of CPZ Changes

ACC offers a number of different resident, business and contractor parking permits. Annual tariffs for permits are shown below.

Table 15: ACC Parking Permits – Annual Tariffs¹²

Area	Annual Tariff (£)
Resident City Centre (Zones A to G)	210
Resident Peripheral (Zones H to X)	157 (first permit) 210 (second permit)
Resident Peripheral (Zone RR & Z)	105 (first permit) 157 (second permit)
Business City Centre	612
Contractor Parking Permit	670
Car Parking Permit	243 (1 month only)

It is acknowledged that there is some evidence of commuters into Aberdeen City Centre parking on the edge of the CPZ to avoid paying for car parking. Whilst the exact number of those who do this is unknown, it is anticipated that this will be occurring on a regular basis, potentially resulting in a missed revenue opportunity for ACC at city centre car parks.

Although expansion of the existing CPZ boundary could help reduce this type of parking behaviour by 'pushing' it further beyond the extents of the city centre and therefore reducing the appeal and practicalities of parking and walking into the city centre, there is potential for this to introduce issues in areas previously unaffected by this type of parking behaviour.

5.4.3 Resident Parking Permits

Aberdeen City residents are entitled to a permit if their usual place of residence is within a controlled parking zone. Zones A to G are entitled to a maximum of one permit which must be fixed.

There are two types of parking permits available – fixed and flexible permits. A fixed permit means the permit is assigned to a specific vehicle and therefore a specific registration number. The permit can only be used for the vehicle to which the permit is assigned.

A flexible permit, available in all zones except A to G, is a permit which is not assigned to a specific vehicle or specific registration number. It can be used on any vehicle which is used by the person who bought the permit and their visitors.

Parking permits are not valid in 45-minute parking bays, for parking on single/double yellow lines or in places with any other type of parking restrictions e.g. loading only bays.

5.4.4 Business Parking Permits

Business customers are entitled to a business parking permit if their business premises are located in the CPZ and the permit is used solely for business purposes. The business must also be registered as paying Non Domestic Rates to ACC.

Businesses located in zones A to G are entitled to a single fixed permit. If they are in any other zone, they are entitled to two permits. If a business is entitled to two permits, they can either have two fixed permits, or one fixed permit and one flexible permit.

Contractor Parking Permit

Contractors are entitled to a contractor parking permit if they work in an eligible trade. Examples of eligible trades are shown below:

- Aerial Installation;
- Building;
- Carpentry;
- Joinery;
- Plumbing; and

¹² Parking permits, Aberdeen City Council website: <https://www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/services/roads-transport-and-parking/parking/virtual-parking-permits>

- Tiling.

A contractor parking permit is eligible to park in any on-street pay and display, permit and voucher bay in Aberdeen City, in all zones. It is not possible to use contractor parking permits in any 45-minute zones or for parking on single or double yellow lines. The permit is not valid in any of ACC's pay and display car parks.

5.4.5 Blue Badge Provision

Designated on-street Blue Badge parking is available at 18 areas within the city centre. Areas include both groups of streets and single streets. Blue badge parking is also available at eight car parks within the city centre: Denburn, Bon Accord Loch Street, Bon Accord Harriet Street, Gallowgate, Shiprow, Union Square, Trinity Centre and College Street. ACC have reported that the current provision of Blue Badge spaces is sufficient for the number of registered users within the city.

5.4.6 Car Parking Permits

Monthly parking permits are available for the following car parks:

- Denburn Multi-Storey;
- Frederick Street Multi-Storey;
- West North Street Multi-Storey; and
- Virginia Street.

A car park permit is valid for one month, from the first day of the month until the last day. The car parking permit can only be used in the vehicle it has been issued for. It is only possible to apply for a permit for one month at a time.

5.4.7 Parking Permit Data

ACC provided parking permit data to AECOM in December 2024. The table below shows the total number of ACC issued parking permits for car parks where permits are available and all permit zones within Aberdeen City.

Table 16: Total ACC Parking Permits Issued

Car Park / Parking Zone	Total Number of Permits
Denburn Multi-Storey Car Park	67
Frederick Street Multi-Storey Car Park (Levels 5&6)	34
Virginia Street Car Park	2
West North Street Multi-Storey Car Park	14
Zone A	38
Zone B	59
Zone C	101
Zone E	79
Zone F	77
Zone G	78
Zone H	271
Zone J	139
Zone K	287
Zone L	373
Zone M	261
Zone N	280
Zone P	28
Zone RR	197
Zone T	261
Zone V	122
Zone W	162
Zone X	195
Zone Y	392
Zone YY	74
Zone Z	416
Total	4,007

The table below provides a breakdown of the number of parking permits per type issued within all parking zones within Aberdeen City.

Table 17: ACC Issued Parking Permit Types per Parking Zone

Parking Zone	Fixed Resident Permit 12 Months	Fixed Resident Permit 6 Months	Fixed Resident Permit 3 Months	Fixed Business Permit 12 Months	Fixed Business Permit 6 Months	Fixed Business Permit 3 Months	Flexible (Vehicle) Resident Permit 12 Months	Flexible (Vehicle) Resident Permit 6 Months	Flexible (Vehicle) Resident Permit 3 Months	Flexible Business Permit 12 Months	Flexible Business Permit 6 Months	Flexible Business Permit 3 Months	Parking Voucher ¹³	Courtesy Car Permit ¹⁴	Total
Zone A	15	7	10	1	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	-	38
Zone B	25	7	13	10	-	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	59
Zone C	33	19	33	2	1	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	8	2	101
Zone E	22	14	29	5	1	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	2	79
Zone F	21	16	32	2	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	-	77
Zone G	27	20	26	1	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	-	78
Zone H	70	39	31	-	-	-	67	21	36	1	-	-	6	-	271
Zone J	33	17	24	-	-	-	29	14	17	-	-	1	4	-	139
Zone K	62	37	50	1	1	-	65	36	23	5	-	1	5	1	287
Zone L	111	51	39	-	1	1	107	24	22	4	2	1	7	3	373
Zone M	72	26	35	2	-	-	60	26	31	-	-	-	8	1	261
Zone N	68	33	44	-	-	-	62	28	30	-	-	1	10	4	280
Zone P	5	4	1	5	1	-	5	-	1	3	1	2	-	-	28
Zone RR	69	29	18	-	-	-	55	9	15	-	-	-	2	-	197
Zone T	87	23	21	-	-	-	90	15	17	1	-	1	4	2	261
Zone V	34	10	16	-	-	-	40	14	8	-	-	-	-	-	122
Zone W	36	22	28	2	-	-	41	12	15	3	1	-	2	-	162
Zone X	71	7	8	1	-	-	89	6	4	3	-	-	5	1	195
Zone Y	181	3	1	-	-	-	203	1	-	-	-	-	-	3	392
Zone YY	36		1	-	-	-	35	1	1	-	-	-	-		74

¹³ Residents can apply for access to a maximum of 15 vouchers a year, once approved a voucher allows for a full day parking in their residential permit zone only; the customer must pay as and when they want to use a voucher. If all 15 are used they must wait until the one year anniversary to be able to apply for more. This figure in this column indicates that someone has been approved for access to parking vouchers so the 3 will be 3 different residents that now have access to 15 parking vouchers each. Demand for parking vouchers has increased significantly now that it can be completed virtually. ACC have notified intentions to charge an uplift in their 2025/2026 budget.

¹⁴ Courtesy permits are a temporary mechanism to allow for temporary changes in fixed permits e.g. a courtesy car while main vehicle is repaired etc.

Parking Zone	Fixed Resident Permit 12 Months	Fixed Resident Permit 6 Months	Fixed Resident Permit 3 Months	Fixed Business Permit 12 Months	Fixed Business Permit 6 Months	Fixed Business Permit 3 Months	Flexible (Vehicle) Resident Permit 12 Months	Flexible (Vehicle) Resident Permit 6 Months	Flexible (Vehicle) Resident Permit 3 Months	Flexible Business Permit 12 Months	Flexible Business Permit 6 Months	Flexible Business Permit 3 Months	Parking Voucher ¹³	Courtesy Car Permit ¹⁴	Total
Zone Z	137	22	26	-	-	-	202	16	13	-	-	-	-	-	416
Total	1215	406	486	32	6	14	1150	223	223	20	4	7	75	19	3,890

5.4.8 Digitisation of Parking

In 2024, ACC rolled out the Digitisation of Parking project, a £1.3million capital project to replace and modernise parking system infrastructure and improve citizen, business and visitor experience. Approximately 99% of existing parking meters in operation had reached the end of their serviceable life with action required to protect the revenue income, ensure cost effective replacement, and that systems are future proofed and fit for purpose as far as is reasonably practical.

The project involved the introduction of virtual parking permits, the replacement and rationalisation of parking meters, and deployment of automatic number plate recognition (ANPR) vehicles allowing for intelligent led directed enforcement of compliance.

5.4.8.1 Virtual Parking Permits

In Summer 2024, virtual parking permits replaced paper permits in the CPZ. Users were invited to apply for a virtual permit when their paper permit is due for renewal. A new user-friendly portal was introduced to streamline the process by conducting an automated digital identity check as part of the application process. This check verifies the eligibility of the applicants and removes the need for manual verification and approval by customer service teams. The portal also allowed for users to change their vehicle registrations on their permits.

The new virtual permits instantly notify City Wardens through their handheld devices if the vehicle has a valid permit. Virtual parking permits offer the following benefits:

- Faster and more convenient service for citizens and businesses;
- Instant issue of permit when approved via digital identity checking;
- No need to display anything on the vehicle;
- Reduced demand on staff and resources;
- Reduced costs from printing and posting permits; and
- Reduced potential for fraud and misuse.

5.4.8.2 Parking Payment Efficiency and Modernisation

The project also involved the procurement and installation of 100 new parking meters that are ticketless, solar powered (with exception of car parks), and connected to live maintenance and cash collection reporting ensuring prompt servicing and reducing any potential downtime and inconvenience to residents and visitors. The new meters require users to enter their vehicle registrations which starts a virtual parking session. This removes the need for the printing and displaying of a physical ticket. The project also offers parking users more flexibility and choice in paying for parking. Customers can use PayPoint, a service that allows them to pay by cash or card at more than 100 locations across Aberdeen.

Parking meters, PayPoint, and cashless parking services provide greater choice of convenient ways to pay for parking. Furthermore, multi-vendor cashless options provide access to both PayByPhone and RingGo services in Aberdeen. These are two of the biggest cashless parking operators in the UK meaning most visitors to the city may already have an account with one of the providers that they can use in Aberdeen. Cashless parking still offers the greatest flexibility, with users able to extend their parking without having to return to their vehicle. Approximately 2,500 on-street signs are being replaced as part of the project. These new designs are intended to inform users of the different payment options available in the area where they are parking.

5.4.8.3 Intelligence Based Enforcement

The Digitisation of Parking project will also introduce ANPR vehicles that can automatically detect parking contraventions by scanning vehicle registrations and checking the digital parking rights by checking virtual permits, cashless parking and virtual parking meter transactions. The ANPR vehicles will be accompanied by city wardens on electric bikes who will then receive tasks to attend any vehicle that has been detected as possibly not being compliant with parking regulations. The electric ANPR vehicles will be livered and easily identifiable. Testing commenced in August 2024 and will continue for an extended period of time before being deployed for operational use.

5.5 Privately Operated Car Parks

As noted in Chapter 4, there are several privately operated car parks located in Aberdeen to support parking demand in the city. The list of privately operated car parks and their associated tariffs (as of January 2025) are shown in the table below. It is also noted that some privately operated car parks, such as Union Square, offer an additional evening rate that is typically significantly lower in comparison to the usual daytime rates shown in the table below.

Table 18: Aberdeen Privately Operated Car Park Tariffs

Car Park	Tariff 0-1h	Tariff 1-2h	Tariff 2-3h	Tariff 3-4h	Tariff 4-5h	Tariff 5-6h	Tariff 6-7h	Tariff 7-8h	Tariff 12h	Tariff 24h
Union Square	3.50	4.50	5.50	6.50	8.50	9.50	13.00	18.50	18.50	18.50
College Street (Union Square)	3.00	3.00	4.00	5.00	6.00	7.00	7.00	7.00	7.00	7.00
College Street (ScotRail)	3.50	3.50	3.50	3.50	6.00	6.00	6.00	6.00	6.00	6.00
Trinity Centre	2.80	4.00	6.00	8.00	9.00	11.00	13.50	16.00	17.50	17.50
Justice Mill Lane	2.00	3.50	5.00	5.00	7.00	7.00	11.00	11.00	11.00	13.00
Harriet Street	3.60	3.60	5.00	6.00	7.00	8.00	8.00	8.00	8.00	12.00
Loch Street	3.60	3.60	5.00	6.00	7.00	8.00	12.00	12.00	12.00	12.00
Shiprow (NCP)	2.95	5.90	8.85	11.80	14.95	14.95	14.95	14.95	14.95	14.95

Key characteristics of the privately operated car park tariffs in Aberdeen are as follows:

- All of the eight privately operated car parks have tariffs ranging from one hour to 24 hours.
- The minimum tariff based on a one-hour parking duration is £2.00 (Justice Mill Lane).
- The maximum tariff based on a 24 hour duration is £18.00 at Union Square car park.

5.5.1 Comparison of Tariffs Between ACC Operated and Privately Operated Car Parks

Car parking charges for privately operated car parks located in Aberdeen are significantly higher than ACC's tariff structure.

A comparison between an ACC car park (West North Street) and a selection of privately operated car parks is shown below.

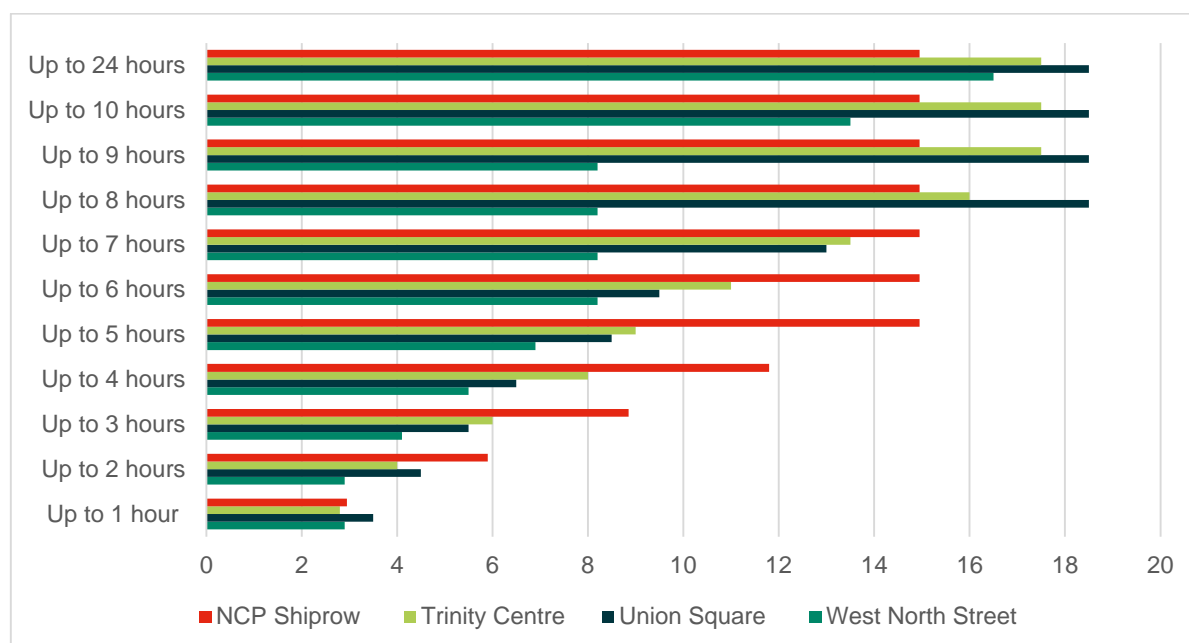


Figure 8: Price Comparison of ACC and Privately Operated Car Parks

The above comparison of car parking charges between ACC and privately operated car parks indicates that the parking charges applied at ACC car parks are generally lower in comparison to the equivalent charges applied for privately operated car parks. The exception is for an up to 1 hour duration at Trinity Centre which is £2.80 in comparison to ACC operated West North Street which is £2.90. The maximum charge for a 10-hour duration at

ACC West North Street is £13.50 compared to £18.50 at Union Square and £17.50 at Trinity Centre. There is no increase in parking charges between up to 6 hours and up to 9 hours duration at ACC Chapel Street, however there is a significant increase at Trinity Centre from £11.00 to £17.50 for the same duration.

5.5.2 Comparison of Charging Hours Between ACC Operated and Privately Operated Car Parks

A comparison between the charging hours of ACC and privately operated car parks are shown in the table below.

Table 19: Comparison of ACC and Privately Operated Parking Charging Hours

Car Park	Open	Charging Hours
ACC Chapel Street	24 Hours	Mon to Sat 08:00 – 20:00, Sun 13:00 – 17:00 ¹⁵
Union Square	24 Hours	24 hours
NCP Shiprow	24 Hours	24 hours
Trinity Centre	Mon-Sat 07:30 – 18:30, Sun 09:30 – 18:00	24 hours ¹⁶

Private car parks typically have charges for 24 hours, with ACC having a charging structure that generally applies for 12 hours a day Monday-Saturday and on Sunday afternoons (as noted earlier in this section).

5.6 Bus and Rail Fares

An overview of local bus and rail fares has been undertaken to provide a comparison with the cost of car parking charges in Aberdeen. The following public transport routes have been chosen to compare the costs of rail and bus trips¹⁷:

- Aberdeen to/from Dyce;
- Aberdeen to/from Stonehaven;
- Aberdeen to/from Kintore; and
- Aberdeen to/from Inverurie.

Table 20: Bus and Rail Fare Cost Comparison

Journey Location	Mode	Cost
Aberdeen to Dyce	Train	A return train journey between Aberdeen and Dyce costs £4.50. Car parking at Dyce train station is free for customers travelling from this station.
	Bus	A Day Rider ticket which covers unlimited travel between Aberdeen and Dyce is £5.30 per day.
Aberdeen to Stonehaven	Train	A return train journey between Aberdeen and Stonehaven costs £8.20. Car parking at Stonehaven train station is free for customers travelling from this station.
	Bus	An Aberdeen Commuter Day Rider ticket which covers travel between Aberdeen and Stonehaven costs £9.20 per day.
Aberdeen to Kintore	Train	A return train journey between Aberdeen and Kintore costs £8.40. Car parking at Kintore train station is free for customers travelling from this station.

¹⁵ Although Chapel Street car park is open for 24 hours a day, charges do not apply for the full 24 hours.

¹⁶ Users can be charged for a full 24 hour rate even though the car park is not open for 24 hours a day. During unopen times, users would not be able to access their vehicle but they would still be charged.

¹⁷ Information collected in February 2025 using ScotRail, First Bus and Stagecoach websites.

Journey Location	Mode	Cost
	Bus	An Aberdeen Commuter Day Rider ticket which covers travel between Aberdeen and Kintore costs £9.20 per day.
Aberdeen to Inverurie	Train	A return train journey between Aberdeen and Inverurie costs £9.70. Car parking at Inverurie train station is free for customers travelling from this station.
	Bus	An Aberdeen Commuter Day Rider ticket which covers travel between Aberdeen and Inverurie costs £9.20 per day.

5.6.1 Comparison between Car Parking Charges and Bus Fares

Information provided to AECOM from ACC (sourced from the Strategic Dimension component of the ART business case) sets out a comparison of bus ticket costs against city centre parking charges in Aberdeen, Edinburgh, Glasgow and Dundee.

Table 21: Bus vs Parking Costs in Scottish Cities¹⁸

City	Bus Return Ticket*	Bus Day Ticket	3 Hours City Centre Parking	Full Day City Centre Parking
Aberdeen	£5.25	£5.55	£4.80	£13.50
Edinburgh	£4.00	£5.00	£24.60	£82.00
Glasgow	£4.20 - £13.40 (depending on zone)	£5.90	£10.50	£32.00
Dundee	£5.10 - £6.10 (depending on length of journey)	£4.65	£4.70	£10.70

*Generally, not available as a product so cost of two singles has been used for analysis. Price for Aberdeen has been taken from cost of a two-trip 24 hour ticket.

Bus tickets, both return and day, are lower (often significantly so) than the price of car parking. Within Aberdeen, a full day of city centre parking is approximately just under three times more expensive than a bus return ticket. However, within Edinburgh, this same comparison increases to 20 times the cost. The cost of parking (for three hours) in Aberdeen and Dundee more closely aligns with the cost of a return or day bus ticket in comparison to Edinburgh and Glasgow where parking is typically considerably more expensive than the bus fare. A full days' worth of city centre parking in Edinburgh and Glasgow is also significantly higher than in Aberdeen and Dundee.

5.7 Comparison Cities

A comparison of parking charges and different permit types in operation across five different cities in the United Kingdom has been undertaken to provide a comparison with Aberdeen. The following cities have been chosen for this exercise:

- Dundee;
- Glasgow;
- Belfast;
- Plymouth; and
- Nottingham.

5.7.1 Dundee

Dundee City Council (DCC) is responsible for the operation and enforcement of off-street and on-street parking in Dundee.

¹⁸ Information within table sourced in April 2025.

DCC Off-Street Parking

There are approximately 4,900 off-street parking spaces across Dundee city centre. Four multi-storey car parks are operated by DCC as well as eleven surface car parks in Dundee City Centre. Of the eleven surface car parks operated by DCC, three of the car parks are based on premium rate tariffs.

The maximum tariff in the multi-storey car parks are based on a twelve-hour duration which is £10.70. A separate tariff of £3 per day is applied at weekends at two of the multi-storey car parks.

The tariff significantly increases for the three premium rate operated car parks in Dundee City Centre where the maximum tariff based on a ten hour stay at each of the three car parks is £21.30.

Dundee Privately Operated Car Parks Tariffs

In addition to the car parks operated by DCC, there are a number of privately operated car parks in Dundee. Tariffs in these car parks are generally higher than those charged in the DCC operated car parks.

DCC On-Street Parking Charges

DCC is responsible for managing on-street parking in Dundee. Two tariffs are applied for on-street parking in the city; a tariff for on-street parking within the A991 Ring Road and a tariff for parking outside of the A991 Ring Road. The following tariffs are applied:

- City Centre (Inside A991 Ring Road) – 0m-30m = £2.70, 30m-60m = £3.60
- City Centre (Outside A991 Ring Road) – 0m-30m = £2.50, 30m-60m = £3.30

DCC Parking Permits

DCC introduced resident parking permits in 1977 in response to specific difficulties which existed in the Broughty Ferry and City Centre areas. There are no parking permits applied to business or for those conducting business activities across Dundee.

The prices of annual parking permits in Dundee are shown below.

Table 22: DCC Parking Permits – Annual Tariffs

Area	Annual Tariff (£)
Resident City Centre	130
Resident Broughty Ferry	90
Resident Menzieshill	22

Dundee Parking Initiatives

During July 2024, DCC rolled out an initiative which provided free weekend parking at two city centre multi-storey car parks, namely Greenmarket and Olympia. The initiative was reported to have been introduced to soften the impact of the implementation of the Low Emission Zone and support businesses through the transition of the LEZ, which came into effect in May 2024. Both car parks are located just outside the LEZ boundary.

5.7.2 Glasgow

Glasgow City Council (GCC) operates a total of 17 car parks across Glasgow which includes seven multi-storey / barrier-controlled car parks and 10 surface pay and display car parks. There are approximately 5,400 multi-storey parking spaces and 1,200 surface pay and display parking spaces.

The seven multi-storey car parks are open daily, and the maximum tariff based on a 10-hour stay is £32. The tariff based on a minimum one-hour duration is £2.50 which only applies to one of the nine pay and display car parks.

Glasgow Privately Operated Car Parks

There are several different private companies who control and manage parking in Glasgow. The largest privately operated company operating in Glasgow is NCP. The maximum tariff based on a 24-hour stay at an NCP car park in Glasgow City Centre is £16.95. A one hour stay costs £1.95.

Glasgow City Council On-Street Parking

On-street parking charges in Glasgow are operated and controlled by GCC who also are responsible for parking enforcement. In the city centre zone in Glasgow, a tariff of £1.60 per 15 minutes is applied. For the zones outside the city centre, a tariff of £1.00 per fifteen minutes is applied.

Payment Options

A range of payment options are available to pay for parking in GCC operated car parks which are summarised below:

- Pay on the day card;
- Top-up cards;
- Season tickets; and
- RingGo – App or Website.

A top-up card is available to purchase to pay for parking in GCC operated car parks. The benefits of using a top-up card are shown in the table below.

Table 23: Top-Up Card Prices

Top-Up Card	Bronze	Silver	Gold	Platinum	Diamond
You Pay	£20	£50	£100	£300	£500
Extra Credit	10%	10%	15%	20%	30%
Card Value Issued	£22	£55	£115	£240	£650
Discount applied to car park tariff	10%	10%	20%	30%	50%

Glasgow Parking Permits

A resident parking permit allows a user to park in a shared use parking space within the Glasgow parking zone stated. The tariffs for resident parking for each zone in Glasgow are shown below.

Table 24: GCC Parking Permits – Annual Tariffs

Area	Annual Tariff (£)
Anderston	196
Barras North	98
Barras South	98
Belmont	98
City Centre	328
Cranstonhill	98
Dowanhill	98
Hyndland	98
Garnethill	85
Hillhead	85
Kelvingrove	98
Napiershall	98
Necropolis	98
North Kelvin	85
Park	98
Partick	98
Sandyford	98
Spiersgate	98
Tradeston	98
Woodlands	98

Area	Annual Tariff (£)
Woodside	98
Yorkhill	98

Business permits are available for business users. A flat fee of £850 per annum is applied which allows for business related parking across all areas in the city.

5.7.3 Belfast

Belfast City Council Car Parks

Belfast City Council (BCC) currently owns and operates 13 car parks in the City Centre, all of which have a tariff. There is a total of 1,133 charged parking spaces.

Corporation Square car park provides the largest number of spaces across all charged sites with 168 spaces, whilst Hope Street North provides the least with 41 spaces.

The price per hour in BCC operated car parks varies from a minimum of £0.40p per hour to a maximum of £1.20 per hour. The maximum daily charge also varies from a minimum of £3.60 to a maximum of £13.80.

The majority of BCC operated car parks charge users from 8am to 6pm on Mondays to Saturdays. Hope Street North and Little Victoria Street have a longer charged period to 9pm. Smithfield is charged 8am to 6pm on a Monday, Wednesday, Friday and Saturday, whilst charged times are later on a Thursday, from 8am to 9pm.

Belfast Privately Operated Car Parks

There are numerous privately owned car parks within Belfast City Centre, which provide significantly more capacity than BCC operated car parks. For the purposes of this comparison with Aberdeen, 12 key sites have been summarised due to their central location and number of spaces provided.

The sites are owned by various companies including Northern Ireland Transport Holding Company (NITHCo), more commonly known as Translink (who also operate the Glider bus rapid transit system), Q-Park, NCP, APCOA and Value Car Parks.

Charges per hour in private car parks are higher than BCC car parks. Generally, most privately owned car parks are £3.00-£3.50 per hour after the first hour, however some can be cheaper or more expensive such as The Tannery, whilst Victoria Square and City Quays charge £4.00 per hour. The highest charge per hour in BCC operated car parks is £1.20 per hour.

The price charged per hour varies across all sites. Maximum daily charges range from £6.95 (The Tannery) to £25 (APCOA Lanyon Place and St Anne's Square). Maximum daily charges in private car parks are much higher compared to BCC car parks (i.e. £1.80-£13.80).

On-Street Parking

There are 3,455 on-street parking spaces provided within the city centre core area, with a further 9,322 provided in the city centre fringe. This gives a total of 12,777 on-street spaces.

Only 14% of on-street spaces are currently 'controlled' i.e. have an enforced time limit or payment regime; these are predominantly located within the core zone. There are also nearly 1,900 spaces within the core that remain uncontrolled. There are 9,100 (80%) uncontrolled spaces located in fringe areas.

In Belfast, all on-street controlled parking spaces are charged at the Tariff C rate, with the exception of five streets which are charged at the Tariff B rate.

On-street parking areas where Tariff B applies charge users 40p to park per 15-minute period, up to a maximum charge of £3.20 or £6.40, depending on whether the maximum on-street duration of stay is 2 hours or 4 hours. Tariff C charges users 45p to park per 15-minute period, up to a maximum charge of £3.60 or £7.20, depending on whether the maximum on-street duration of stay is 2 hours or 4 hours. These on-street charges apply Monday to Saturday from 08:00 to 18:00.

Belfast City Council Payment Options

A range of payment options are available to pay for parking in BCC operated car parks which are summarised below:

- Cash via machines and cash/card via Pay-by-Plate machines.
- RingGo – App or Website.

- Season tickets – monthly and quarterly season tickets are available at eight BCC car parks. Monthly season tickets range from £54.60-£81.90 per site and quarterly tickets range from £132.60-£198.90 per site.

Belfast Parking Permits – Residential Parking Zone

A number of Residential Parking Zones have been proposed in Belfast in areas such as Market East and Market West off Cromac Street, Queen's University/The Holylands, Stranmillis village and Lower Malone. However, to date only one of these proposed zones has been delivered, this being the resident parking zone in the vicinity of Queen's University/The Holylands in south Belfast.

There are 228 parking bays within the zone, of which 119 spaces are for resident permit holders only and 109 spaces are pay & display. However, parking users with a resident, business or visitor permit are permitted to park in any bay within the zone for free. There are also a number of loading bays within the zone which are free for users and have a maximum stay of 10 minutes.

Parking restrictions within the zone apply from 08:00 to 18:00 Monday to Friday, excluding public holidays. Non-permit holders are charged a fee for parking in a designated pay & display bay. The stated tariffs are shown below.

Table 25: Belfast Resident Parking Zone - Pay and Display Tariffs

Time Period	Tariff
Up to 15 minutes	£0.15
Up to 30 minutes	£0.30
Up to 45 minutes	£0.75
Up to 1 hour	£1.20
Up to 1 hour and 15 minutes	£1.50
Up to 1 hour and 30 minutes	£1.80
Up to 1 hour and 45 minutes	£2.10
Up to 2 hours	£2.40

A resident's permit costs £30 per annum.

Within the zone a resident or business can apply for one book of 25 visitor permits every quarter for visitors of that resident or business, costing £12.50 per quarter.

Businesses within the zone and without access to private off-street parking can apply for one business permit which costs £30 per annum.

Blue badge holders can park free of charge, without a time limit, within a designated bay within the zone during its operational hours.

5.7.4 Plymouth

Plymouth City Council Car Parks

Plymouth City Council (PCC) operates 19 public car parks within the city area, providing an approximate total of 3,000 spaces. These are made up of nine short stay car parks, accounting for 397 spaces and 10 long stay car parks, accounting for 2,680 spaces. Most of the city centre car parking is provided across five multi-storey car parks which account for 2,365 parking spaces (or 77%) of all the Council's off-street parking spaces. The nine short stay car parks provide free parking for either two hours or three hours, whilst a further four long stay car parks provide free parking for an unlimited amount of time.

The four multi-storey car parks are open daily and offer both short stay (1-2 hours) tariffs up to monthly season tickets. Napier Terrace offers the first two hours free, whilst Mayflower Street (east) and Theatre Royal charge £3 for the first two hours, £6.60 for six hours and £13 for 24 hours. Western Approach (containing 1,000 spaces) is the only multi-storey to offer a 1-hour tariff charged at £1.10, with charges set at £3.30 for three hours from 8am-10pm and £4.40 for four hours (between 8am and 7pm). Monthly season tickets range from £55 for Napier

Terrace and Western Approach and then increase to £165 per month for Mayflower Street (east) and Theatre Royal.

Payment at both the multi-storey and surface car parks can be completed by RingGo, debit or credit card or by seasonal pass. PCC announced in February 2023 that it would install new parking terminals at the free short-stay surface car parks to address vehicles overstaying their 'free time' allocation. The parking terminals would ensure that vehicles check-in when they arrive and leave at the end of their allocation, thus ensuring there is a regular turnover of spaces.

On-Street Parking

In relation to on-street parking, a small amount is provided along Cornwall Street, Plymouth Coach Station and Armada Way. Charges start at £1.10 for 30 minutes, up to £6.60 for three hours. There are also various charging options for evening parking which range depending on duration.

Private Car Parks

Whilst the majority of car parking and car parks in the city centre are operated by Plymouth City Council, Drake Circus operates a car park which is attached to the retail outlet. Charges start from £3.30 for up to 2 hours up to £15.00 for between 6 to 24 hours. Those customers arriving after 5pm can park for £3.00 until the car park closes at 1:15 am Sunday to Thursday and 3am Friday to Saturday.

Parking Permits

Six different parking permits are available within Plymouth:

- Resident Parking Permit – for some areas within Plymouth, a resident parking permit is required if the person's home is within a permit zone area. Permits are £45 for a year or free for vehicles with less than four wheels.
- Visitor Parking Permit – residents living within a permit zone can apply for a visitor parking permit which allows for the residence to have an additional permit for occasional visitors. Visitor permits can be purchased on a daily ticket basis or up to a yearly permit.
- Business Parking Permit – these permits are for staff who require regular and frequent use of a vehicle necessary for the day-to-day operation of a business. They allow for parking in a resident parking bay and shared use bays. Business permits are not intended for staff to park near the premises for most of the working day. Example of business permit users include tradesman carrying out works at a property or those who make regular deliveries throughout the day such as a florist. Business short stay permit (up to 2 hours of parking and no return in 2 hours) is £220 per year and business long stay permit (unrestricted parking anywhere in the city) is £440 per year.
- Pedestrian Zone Permit – allows for vehicle access within a permit zone every day from 6pm to 9:30am, except Thursdays when access is allowed from 8pm to 9:30am. The cost of this permit is £33 a week or £110 for a year.
- Health and Home Car Permit – this permit is available for those who are a healthcare professional, travel regularly to visit clients, deliver NHS / PCC funded essential health care and support services or provide services to a residential property in a controlled parking zone. Health and Home Care short stay permit (up to 2 hours of parking and no return in 2 hours) is £110 per year and Health and Home Care long stay permit (unrestricted parking anywhere in the city) is £165 per year.
- Commercial Wharf Permit – the Commercial Wharf area is a popular area with food and beverage establishments. Due to the high number of pedestrians within the area, vehicle access is controlled to ensure the safety of pedestrians. A Commercial Wharf permit is required for any vehicle accessing the area to support business activities. Parking on the Wharf is not permitted. The cost of the permit is £33 a year.

5.7.5 Nottingham

Nottingham City Council Off-Street Car Parking

There are over 8,000 spaces in city centre car parks, with an additional several thousand off-street pay-and-display bays and over 6,500 spaces at the various Park and Ride sites located outside Nottingham. Nottingham City Council (NCC) operates six car parks located in Nottingham City Centre. The maximum tariff based on a duration of stay of 24 hours is £18.00.

Nottingham City Council On-Street Car Parking Charges

NCC enforced on-street parking charges are applied between 08:00 and 22:00. On-street parking is separated into three zones (Zone 1, 2 and 3). Each zone has a different cost per hour. During charging hours (08:00 and 22:00), Zone 1 costs £2.80 per hour, Zone 2 is £1.50 per hour and Zone 3 is 80p per hour.

Nottingham Resident Parking Permits

NCC has introduced annual charges for permits to further manage the highway, encourage residents to look at different transport options, reduce congestion and improve air quality.

The first permit per household is free and a charge of £35 (per year) applies for a second permit with a third permit costing £50 per year.

5.7.6 Comparison of Parking Charges

A comparison between the different parking charges based on tariffs applied in Aberdeen, Dundee, Glasgow, Belfast, Plymouth and Nottingham is presented below. The data has been compared for the following elements:

- Off-Street Parking (Council Operated Car Parks);
- On-Street Parking; and
- Parking Permits.

A comparison of the charges at council operated car parks in each of the six cities is shown in **Figure 9** below.

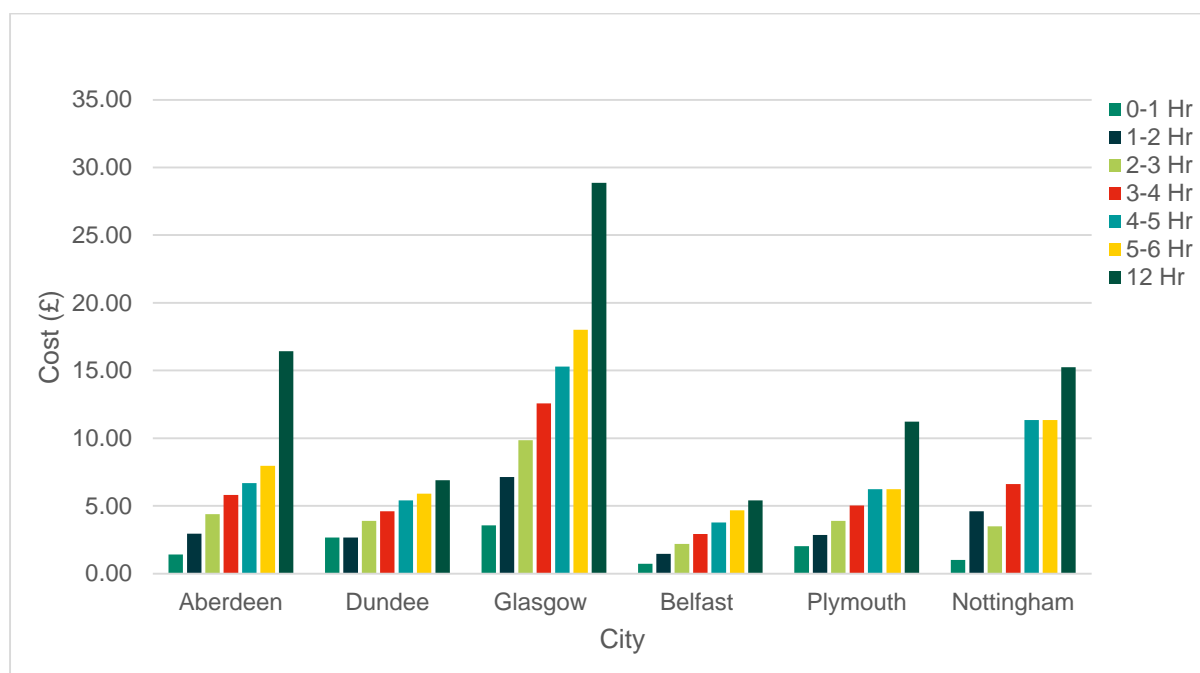


Figure 9: Comparison City Parking Charges

The above data indicates that the parking tariffs implemented by ACC are slightly higher in comparison with the equivalent tariffs applied in Dundee, Belfast and Plymouth. However, the charges are significantly lower than the charges applied in Glasgow and in comparison for some durations in Nottingham. For a 12-hour duration, parking tariffs in Aberdeen are the second highest throughout the comparison cities. Glasgow has the largest increase in tariff price from 5-6 hours to 12 hours followed by Aberdeen.

A comparison between parking tariffs applied to on-street parking across the six different cities is shown in the table below.

Table 26: Comparison of On-Street Parking Charges

Area	Aberdeen 60min Cost	Dundee 60min Cost	Glasgow 60min Cost	Belfast 60min Cost	Plymouth 60min Cost	Nottingham 60min Cost
City Centre	£4.20	£3.50	£6.40	£1.70	£2.20*	£2.80
Outer Area	£3.80	£3.30	£3.20	£1.00	N/A	£1.50

Peripheral	£1.40	N/A	N/A	£0.80	N/A	£0.80
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*Note this data is based on price changes made at the start of 2023 and therefore may have changed in recent times.

The above data indicates that on-street parking tariffs in Aberdeen are higher than the equivalent tariffs applied in the comparison cities excluding Glasgow, where tariffs are higher within the City Centre. Aberdeen has the highest tariff for parking in the outer area between the comparison cities with a tariff of £3.80 based on a 60-minute period.

The comparison of the resident and business parking permit tariffs across the six cities is shown in the table below.

Table 27: Comparison of Resident and Business Parking Permits

Area	Aberdeen Cost Per Year	Dundee Cost Per Year	Glasgow Cost Per Year	Belfast Cost Per Year	Plymouth Cost Per Year	Nottingham Cost Per Year
Resident City Centre	£210	£130	£328	£30	£45	Free
Resident Peripheral	£157	£98	£196	£30	£45	Free
Business	£612	NA	£850	£30	£440	Free

The above indicates that permit tariffs in Aberdeen are higher than the equivalent tariffs applied in all cities with the exception of Glasgow where tariffs are higher. Resident City Centre permits in Aberdeen are seven times more expensive than Belfast and just over 4.5 times more expensive than Plymouth.

6. Car Parking Policy

6.1 Introduction

This chapter provides an overview of potential policy measures that ACC could consider for adoption as part of their own approach to the delivery of car parking. It considers:

- Policy Framework;
- Potential Approaches to Charging;
- Mitigation Measures / Demand Management;
- Exemption Measures;
- Alignment with Wider Policy Aspirations;
- Larger Vehicles Policy;
- Parking Management Impact on Different Sectors and Population Groups; and
- Case Studies.

6.2 Policy Framework

As noted earlier in this report, the update to the SCPR will help to inform the development of Aberdeen's next Local Transport Strategy (LTS), which will be published in 2025. Since the previous work was undertaken, parking provisions have been afforded through the Transport (Scotland) Act 2019, which banned pavement parking, double parking, and parking at dropped kerbs. The aim of the ban is to highlight the danger that illegal pavement parking poses to pavement users and in particular those with mobility issues or visual impairments¹⁹.

Scotland was the first nation in the UK to make pavement parking illegal. Local Authorities began issuing fines from December 2023. Those found guilty of breaking the law are required to pay a £100 fine, with a 50% reduction if paid within 14 days.

During the first month of enforcement, 2,369 penalty charge notices were handed out to drivers in Aberdeen, equating to £36,900 in fines. Overall, 92% of these fines related to pavement parking, 5% related to dropped kerb parking, and 2% of fines were related to double parking²⁰. Further information on other provisions associated with the Act is provided later in this chapter.

In addition, the **Nestrans Regional Transport Strategy 2040**²¹ notes that:

- Car parking management is the principal means of managing demand currently and will continue to be a key part of the Strategy in the future.
- Underpinning car parking management is the need to extend parking controls including the extent of Controlled Parking Zones and ensuring that policies reflect the needs of residents over the demands of commuters. An early consideration will be to identify areas where commuters park without costs, yet still contribute to congestion and take up road space, often in residential areas or parks on the edge of town centres/Aberdeen City Centre.

Furthermore, **Nestrans' Regional Parking Strategy**²² was published in 2012.

The strategy has two overarching objectives:

- 1) To support the economic vitality of the city and town centres and the wider objectives of the Regional Transport Strategy through a balanced approach to the management of car parking; and
- 2) To support and influence increases in the proportion of journeys undertaken by sustainable modes, particularly by bus and rail.

The strategy outlines a range of policies with associated actions. The policies cover a range of parking related themes such as:

¹⁹ [https://www.transport.gov.scot/news/pavement-parking-ban/#:~:text=The%20Transport%20\(Scotland\)%20Act%202019%20bans](https://www.transport.gov.scot/news/pavement-parking-ban/#:~:text=The%20Transport%20(Scotland)%20Act%202019%20bans)

²⁰ <https://www.pressandjournal.co.uk/fp/news/aberdeen-aberdeenshire/6578952/aberdeen-pavement-parking-fines-first-month/?commentCount#~:text=Since%20July%20201,%20pavement%20parking%20has>

²¹ [Nestrans-RTS_PUBLISHED.pdf](#)

²² [Nestrans Draft Parking Strategy](#)

- **Turnover of spaces:** parking policies and controls particularly in areas where there is a concentration of local services. Supporting a thriving evening economy.
- **Charges:** should be set within the context of costs associated with using other modes of transport as to not dis-incentivise use of more sustainable modes.
- **Permits:** review current business permit policies.
- **Enforcement:** identify problem areas which impact on the flow of traffic and / or cause a safety concern.
- **Infrastructure:** explore and apply new parking technologies and infrastructure e.g. automatic number plate recognition and mobile phone payments.
- **Park & Ride:** continue to develop and promote Park & Ride facilities.
- **Planning Policy and Development Management:** guidance on maximum parking standards should be applied to all new developments and the introduction of car free or low car developments should be supported. Ensure that parking and travel planning issues are considered at an early stage in the planning process.
- **Travel Planning:** support employers to develop, implement and monitor travel plans. Support set up of car clubs. Encourage public sector organisations to lead by example in implementing car parking policies.
- **Reducing carbon emissions and improving air quality:** support work to consider the benefits and feasibility of applying differential parking charges to reflect the impact of larger and more polluting vehicles.

6.3 Potential Approaches to Charging

Outlined below are a range of charging approaches which can be imposed across different car parking facilities to achieve a variety of outcomes such as increasing the availability of spaces (turnover rate), encouraging the use of different facilities, influencing mode choice, reducing rates for users and increasing revenue for operators / facility owners.

6.3.1 Restrictions

Car parks with no control on parking duration allow people to park for as long as they want. Whilst this may be appropriate in locations where there is ample space, it is typically not suitable in most towns or cities where space is constrained and is at a premium.

Car parks with no time restrictions effectively limit the number of people who can park in a given place per day because there is no way of controlling how often the space can be freed up for other users. All day parking is typically permitted in peripheral areas of towns and cities where low space turnover can be accommodated. These spaces are typically used by local workers and business owners who are parking for long periods of time. In contrast, short stay parking facilitates increased trade and shopping by maximising space availability throughout the day. This in turn supports the businesses that need customers to be able to access their sites.

It is important that key desirable car parks located within the centre of towns or cities are predominantly short stay to support shoppers and visitors who are parking for a shorter period of time. The parking tariffs should reflect the desirability of town or city centre car parks by imposing higher tariffs in car parks which are closest to the town / city centre.

6.3.2 Parking Charges Influence

The Nestrans Draft Parking Strategy 2012 states that parking charges should reflect the need to support economic vitality but also be set in the context of the costs associated with using other modes of transport, so that they do not dis-incentivise the use of more sustainable modes such as public transport.

As well as being a mechanism for managing the length of stay and turnover of spaces, parking charges can also support measures aimed at encouraging a shift towards more sustainable modes of transport. The focus should be on encouraging commuters and long stay parkers to use public transport to/from the city centre and therefore leaving city centre spaces available for short stay customers and service users.

The introduction of parking charges and adjustment of existing parking charges have been proven to have an impact on car park occupancy and duration of stay. This was observed in the Fermanagh & Omagh District Council area in Northern Ireland and in the German city of Munich.

Following the development of the Fermanagh & Omagh District Council Parking Strategy in 2017, new car park pricing strategies were introduced in the District. Following the analysis of car park occupancy and duration of stays, the Council imposed a new set of actions which included; increased tariffs in centrally located car parks to better reflect their desirability (i.e. those in closest proximity to goods and services), and reduced long stay parking to improve space turnover (i.e. space availability). The Council also introduced increased tariffs. As a result, long stay parking decreased by around 10% and space availability increased in central car parks by around 20%.

The German city of Munich began focusing on parking management to reduce long stay parking and congestion in the city centre. As a result, overnight parkers reduced by 25% and long stay parking reduced by 40%. On-street parking charges, residential permits and better parking enforcement were just some of the measures introduced as part of an active parking management regime. By 2008, the scheme had reduced inner city car usage by 14%, cycle usage had increased by 75% and walking had increased by 61%²³.

6.3.3 Parking Permits

6.3.3.1 Permit System

A permit system involves parking users purchasing a valid parking permit online or at a physical machine and paying for their duration of stay. The parking permit is then printed off and displayed on the dashboard of the user's vehicle when using the car park. The booking system will monitor the availability of spaces.

The advantages and disadvantages of employing a permit system are shown below.

Table 28: Permit System Advantages and Disadvantages

Advantages	Disadvantages
Online parking management system for multiple parking facilities.	Regular parking enforcement must be carried out in-house to ensure parking users have purchased a valid permit for their duration of stay.
Increased ease of use for parking users as permits are purchased online or via smartphone apps.	Not all parking users may be aware of and able to use online parking permit systems.
Flexibility parking system for parking users.	
Could be integrated with public transport ticket payment.	
Real time permit information is available to in-house parking attendants to ensure vehicles have purchased a valid permit online.	

6.4 Mitigation Measures / Demand Management

Mitigation measures are often implemented to manage parking demand by encouraging a shift towards more sustainable modes of travel and thus reducing the availability of parking provision, particularly in city centre locations. Parking demand can be managed through delivery of a number of measures.

6.4.1 Promotion of Behaviour Change

The following section provides examples of behavioural change schemes in relation to encouraging active travel, use of Park and Ride sites, and public transport.

The Scottish Government developed their 'Individual, Social, and Material' (ISM) model of behaviour change which is used to examine the effectiveness of environmental behaviour change interventions²⁴. The model is shown in **Figure 10** below.

²³ https://www.europeanparking.eu/media/1279/12122014_push_pull_a4_en.pdf

²⁴ <https://www.gov.scot/publications/influencing-behaviours-moving-beyond-individual-user-guide-ism-tool/pages/2/>

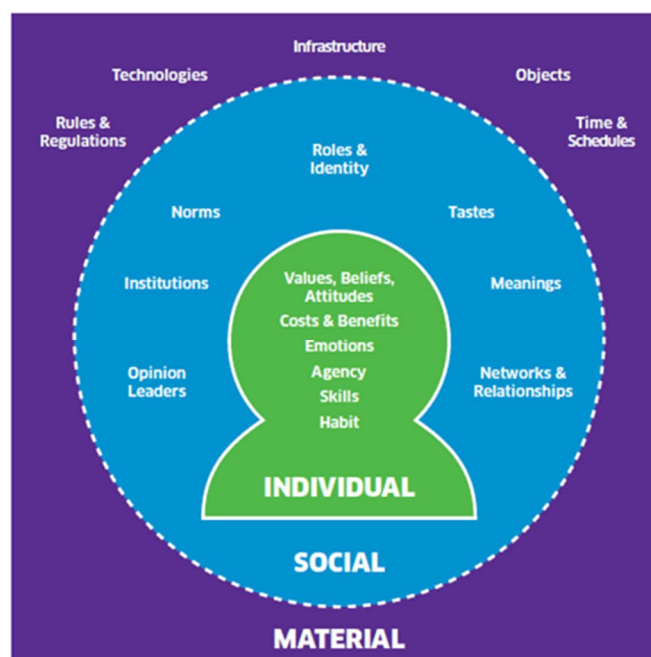


Figure 10: ISM Behaviour Change Model

One of the key principles of ISM is that interventions should take account of influences across multiple contexts; Individual, Social and Material, to achieve substantive and long-lasting change.

- Individual refers to factors influencing us at a personal level.
- Social factors influence our behaviours and decisions through our interactions with others.
- Material factors in our wider environment can constrain or shape our behaviour.

The ISM tool was originally established to encourage sustainable behaviours, but it is also applicable to a range of other policy areas and social challenges.

6.4.1.1 Active Travel

Transport Scotland Active Travel Behavioural Change Programme

Transport Scotland state that infrastructure alone will not increase the volume of people walking and wheeling. People must also be supported to choose and use infrastructure.

Transport Scotland has therefore launched a dedicated programme focused on active travel behaviour change²⁵. The programme aims to invest in activity that gives people the knowledge, skills and confidence to use the infrastructure network in the hope that these interventions will support people to walk and wheel more often.

The programme is structured around four themes: Schools and Young People, Workplace, Accessibility and Inclusion, and Capacity and Capability Building.

Active Travel Programme Northern Ireland²⁶

Since 2013, Sustrans has been the sole provider to deliver The Public Health Agency's (PHA) Active Travel programme in Northern Ireland. The key strands to the programme are:

- Leading The Way (LTW), a workplace pilot project which has been supporting public sector employers in building their capacity to encourage employees to get more active since October 2014.
- The Community Active Travel Programme (CATP), the first major behavioural change intervention to specifically target deprived communities in Northern Ireland. The aim of the programme is to support people to walk and cycle as part of their everyday lives and build capacity within communities to sustain active travel beyond the period of the project.

²⁵ <https://www.transport.gov.scot/active-travel/behaviour-change/#:~:text=Behaviour%20change.%20Creating%20a%20culture%20of>

²⁶ AECOM PHA Active Travel Evaluation Report 2023

An evaluation of the programmes was conducted by AECOM in 2023. Overall, the evaluation of LTW identified some key successes, including a reduction in the share of car journeys to work at participating workplaces in Belfast in every year of engagement and high participant satisfaction with various programme aspects. In both regions, a lack of safe infrastructure was cited as a barrier which is not being directly addressed as part of the programme, therefore this is limiting the potential for greater change.

This evaluation also found evidence of some important successes of CATP including social, wellbeing and community cohesion benefits for participants, many of whom reported a lack of opportunities to be active within their communities.

6.4.1.2 Park & Ride

Charged Park and Ride Sites

As noted in Chapter 4, there are three Park and Ride sites in the ACC area. Many Park and Ride facilities within the UK impose a parking charge for vehicles together with the cost of the bus ticket. Combined tickets are also often available which combines the cost of the car parking fee and onward bus travel. These are priced so that a significant saving is made when compared to driving and parking in the city centre. For example, in Oxford, a same day return bus ticket for two adults and up to three children (under 16 go free) is £5.00, which includes parking at a Park and Ride site for up to 16 hours.²⁷

Park and Ride facilities enable users to travel into city / town centres in a cheaper and convenient way whilst also reducing demand for city centre parking. The success of Oxford Park & Ride is attributed to high congestion within the city and the implementation of bus priority. It is worth noting that some Park and Ride facilities have restricted parking capacity and therefore other modes of transport should be encouraged when accessing the facility for the onward journey.

Park and Pedal Schemes

Park & Pedal schemes enable users to combine cycling with Park and Ride services. Users can drive to a Park & Ride site, park for free or at a charge and complete the remainder of their journey by bicycle, or users can cycle to a Park and Ride site, park their bicycle and then board a Park and Ride service. The latter approach is effective in managing parking demand at sites.

6.4.1.3 Mobility Hubs

Nestrans have recently assessed five sites across the North East to understand the potential to increase demand for sustainable travel and usage of the existing sites through enhancing their facilities with introduction of proposed mobility hub type components. Work is also progressing to take forward proposals for a mobility hub in Ballater in Aberdeenshire.

The Aberdeen to Laurencekirk Corridor Study includes appraisal of a Mobility Hub Package, which includes a new interchange facility at Schoolhill, north of Portlethen. The proposed facility includes approximately 400 car parking spaces including dedicated disabled, EV and car club spaces and cycle parking and hire services. This Mobility Hub is anticipated to provide foundations to deliver Aberdeen Rapid Transit along this corridor and be a viable alternative sustainable mode of transport for those travelling into Aberdeen City Centre from Portlethen and areas further south.

Future delivery of mobility hubs in locations across the North East may change patterns of access to Aberdeen City Centre and thus could have some effect on parking demand – however, it is not possible at this time to gauge the extent of any modal shift these facilities might promote. However, as with ART, mobility hubs could form part of a wider toolkit of measures that reduces usage of city centre car parks.

6.4.1.4 Car Clubs

Car clubs provide a further opportunity to manage demand for access in busy towns and cities. Since June 2022, ACC's contracted car club partner has been Enterprise Car Club – designed car club bays are located both on-street and in some ACC car parks. Co-Wheels have also been operating a car club in Aberdeen since 2012.

ACC regularly review the potential to add additional car club bays to the network with the car clubs together forming part of the wider transport offer in the city.

The current car club bay locations (both Co-Wheels and Enterprise) are shown in **Figure 11** below.

²⁷ Oxford Bus P&R tickets: <https://www.oxfordbus.co.uk/parkride-tickets>

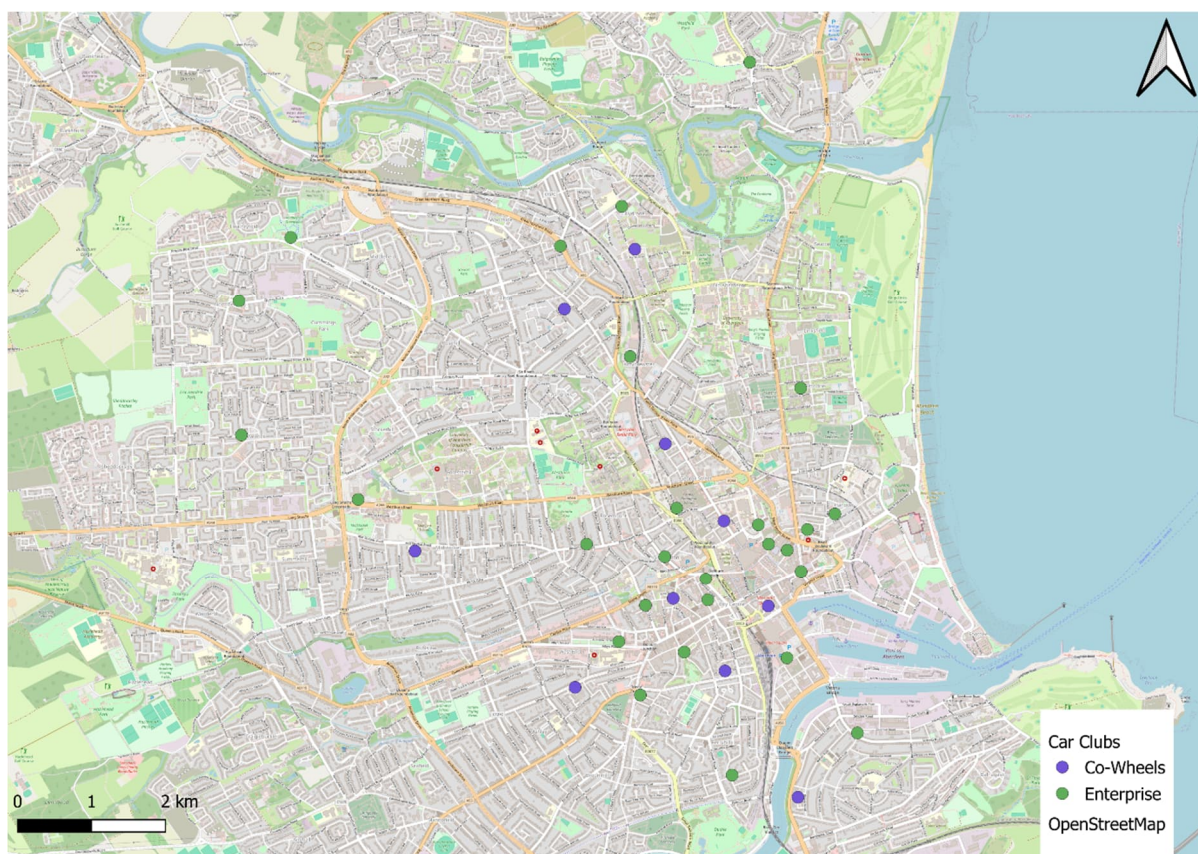


Figure 11: Co-Wheels and Enterprise Car Club Bay Locations

6.4.1.5 Case Studies

Belfast Rapid Transit (BRT) – Glider

Glider is an innovative and ambitious project that aimed to create a new and dynamic public transport system for Belfast. Belfast Rapid Transit (BRT) operates under the brand name Glider and had an overall vision to develop a rapid transit system for Belfast which would provide *“a customer-focused, high quality integrated public transport system, which is sustainable, provides good value for money, enhances competitiveness, helps sustain economic growth, promotes regional development and contributes to social inclusion”*.

Glider services commenced on 3rd September 2018 and largely replaced existing local Metro bus services on key corridors within Belfast.

The lanes used by Glider vehicles consist of both dedicated bus lanes and mixed traffic lanes. Dedicated bus lanes were introduced as part of Glider along four corridors and at two locations within the City Centre. The majority of these dedicated bus lanes operate from 07:00 to 19:00 Monday to Saturday, whilst some operate from 07:30 to 09:30 / 15:30 to 18:30 Monday to Friday, with relaxations for servicing and deliveries.

The provision of the Glider is considered by Translink to have been *‘highly successful in generating a modal shift, with a 40% increase in the number of people travelling by public transport in its first 12 months, with an associated 8% decrease in car volumes recorded on the road corridors’*.

Local feedback given to Translink by Glider users indicates that the biggest factors contributing to this behavioural change were the service frequency (operating every 7.5 minutes) and the reliability of the service.

It is considered that generally public transport initiatives have a positive effect on travel behaviour. For example, corridors where Glider operates also saw an increase in the use of adjacent leisure centres, local cafes and shops.

The Department for Infrastructure has identified the potential to extend the BRT network to North and South Belfast, Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council and Antrim & Newtownabbey Borough Council areas. Furthermore, there is potential for the existing Glider G2 route, which currently serves Titanic Quarter, to be extended to link with Queen’s University and Belfast City Hospital.

It is also noted that ACC and Nestrans have explored the lessons learned from the implementation of the Glider as work continues to progress with the delivery of Aberdeen Rapid Transit.

6.4.2 Constanța, Romania

Constanța is a major port city in south-east Romania with a population of around 320,000 people. Historically transport policies have been primarily car-oriented which has led to high levels of private vehicle ownership in Romania. In 2015, a review of traffic and public transport provision in Constanța revealed that public transport infrastructure and services are of low quality, outdated and unsafe. The majority of parking provision within the city is also free.

A Sustainable Urban Mobility Plan was published for Constanța in 2015 which set out a vision for the city to *'achieve an efficient, integrated, sustainable and safe transport system, which supports the economic, social and territorial development and ensures a good quality of life in the Constanța Growth Pole.'*

To achieve the Plan's vision, a behavioural shift from private vehicle to more sustainable transport modes, such as public transport and active travel, needs to be encouraged. This behavioural change will be encouraged through the combined introduction of the following demand management measures:

- New Public Transport Routes – creation of dedicated public transport corridors, as well as road space reallocation and the provision of active travel space.
- Pedestrianised Streets – within central areas of the city, particularly those within tourist areas and high-density residential neighbourhoods.
- Parking Charges and Enforcement – introduction of parking charges in designated areas of the city. The city will be divided up into three core parking zones, with parking tariffs increasing incrementally within each zone.

6.5 Exemption Measures

The following section provides examples of parking schemes which offer timed exemptions as well as other initiatives which reduce and manage city centre car parking demand.

6.5.1 Exemption Measures in Aberdeen

In addition to the Evening Parking Street Trial and October/November 2024 Free Parking initiatives introduced by ACC (which are detailed in Chapter 5 in the context of the current approach of the Council to the delivery of off-street car parking), ACC also previously ran a six-month Alive @ Five scheme in Aberdeen city centre in 2018. The scheme provided free parking after 17:00 (until 08:00 the next morning) in five multi-storey car parks in the city centre including: Denburn, Chapel Street, Frederick Street, West North Street and Marischal College.

The aim of the scheme was to encourage people to stay in the city centre for longer into the evenings, improve the economic vibrancy of the area and support the aspirations of the City Centre Masterplan.

ACC produced an evaluation report²⁸ on the impacts of the scheme in which findings from the trial were compared to the same period in 2017. The key findings included:

- Occupancy: data for 2017 and 2018 occupancy rates followed a similar pattern with a slight increase noted in the period of October to December during the trial period.
- Footfall: data did not demonstrate that the parking aspect of the Alive @ Five initiative had any impact on incentivising footfall into Aberdeen City.
- Retail spend: retail spend in Aberdeen City in 2018 was lower than previous years.

Overall, the change to parking charges in off-street car parks did not significantly contribute to the success of the Alive @ Five scheme. As a result, on completion of the trial period, parking charges returned back to the original charging rates at the five car parks involved.

6.5.2 Case Studies

Newcastle-Upon-Tyne Alive After Five

The 'Alive After Five' scheme was introduced in Newcastle-Upon-Tyne City Centre in October 2010 and was launched by the Business Improvement District company, NE1.

The scheme extended retail opening hours until 20:00 throughout the year supported by free car parking after 17:00 in the seven Council-owned multi-storey car parks across the city. The aim of the scheme was to

²⁸ <https://committees.aberdeencity.gov.uk/documents/s94607/Alive%205%20-%20Final%20report.pdf>

encourage more people to use the city at night and in particular the early evening ‘gap’ between the day-time and night-time.

As a result of the scheme, an additional 13.7 million visits were made to the city during the Alive After Five hours of 17:00-20:00 from 2010 to 2017²⁹.

However, in 2022, the Council revealed plans to cease operation of the scheme with aims to reduce traffic and improve air quality in the city centre in an attempt to reduce unnecessary car travel.

Lisburn Free Weekend Parking

In the run up to Christmas 2023, Lisburn and Castlereagh City Council offered free weekend parking in Lisburn City Centre and Royal Hillsborough. Eight car parks were included in the offer on each Saturday in December 2023.

The aim of the scheme was to help attract more support for businesses across Lisburn and Castlereagh. During the running of the scheme, concerns were raised over abuse of the scheme i.e. shoppers availing of the free parking in Lisburn but travelling further to Belfast to shop.

Suggestions were made to introduce a time limit for weekend free parking to discourage abuse of the system, however no such restrictions were introduced. The scheme ran again throughout December 2024 and January 2025.

Belfast Nightmovers

Translink operate a late-night bus and train service scheme during the Christmas period. The aim of the scheme is to boost Belfast’s night-time economy and encourage the use of public transport by offering later services at cheaper prices whilst also ensuring travellers can get home safely in the later hours of the night³⁰.

The Nightmovers service includes extra buses and train services in Belfast, Derry~Londonderry and a number of other urban routes across Translink’s network. The extra services are offered on both Friday and Saturday evenings, generally until midnight. This example demonstrates how the attractiveness of public transport can be enhanced (with one outcome potentially a subsequent reduction in driving and resultant demand for car parking).

The table below outlines the positive and negative impacts of the exemption measures described above.

Table 29: Exemption Measures Impact

Positives	Negatives
Free / Reduced Tariff Parking Schemes	
Encourages visits to the city/town, potentially increasing footfall.	Cheap car parking can discourage use of public transport.
Local businesses can benefit from increased footfall and increased spend.	Cheaper car parks can increase congestion, journey times and air pollution.
Can be delivered alongside other events e.g. nighttime markets, shows etc.	Increases demand for city/town centre parking.
Reduced Public Transport Fares	
Reduced public transport fares can encourage use of public transport.	
Increased use of public transport can contribute to management of car parking demand.	

6.5.3 Workplace Parking Levies

Workplace Parking Levies (WPLs) are a demand management tool that charge employers who provide parking by placing a charge on those car parks with a view to them reducing the supply and encouraging more sustainable modes of transport. Funds raised by these schemes are required, by law, to be spent on sustainable transport projects.

The employer is normally liable for paying the licence charge if the parking spaces are provided by the employers, whether on or off-site. However, there is the opportunity for the employer to pass on the charge to

²⁹ <https://www.newcastle1ltd.com/latest/news/continued-success-newcastles-early-evening-economy>

³⁰ <https://www.translink.co.uk/corporate/media/pressreleases/nightmoversbackfor2023>

those who commute by car and take a parking space at the workplace. A WPL is a charge on parking places used by employees rather than a charge on the land available or designated for parking³¹.

An employer's licence must cover the maximum number of workplace parking places being used at any one time. If an employer manages their car parking so that existing parking places are used more efficiently, their WPL payment can be reduced. This could be by sharing a place between more than one employee, for example.

The following sub-section summarises the process of introducing the scheme in Scotland and how the scheme works in other areas where it has been implemented.

6.5.3.1 The Transport (Scotland) Act 2019

As noted earlier in this chapter, since the previous SCPR work was undertaken, parking provisions have been afforded through the Transport (Scotland) Act 2019. The Act introduced a discretionary Workplace Parking Licensing (WPL) power, which is available to local authorities. Providing local authorities with discretionary powers to implement a WPL scheme supports the National Transport Strategy (NTS2) outcomes including taking climate action and improving health and wellbeing.

The Act was introduced for local authorities to decide whether they wish to implement WPL locally and to shape proposals to suit their local circumstances. However, if a local authority wishes to implement a WPL scheme, they will be required to undertake consultation and impact assessments. Parking places reserved for Blue Badge holders, for healthcare workers at NHS premises, and parking places at hospices are exempt from WPL charges³².

If local authorities choose to implement the scheme, they will have flexibility over how the scheme works, with no limit imposed by the Scottish Government on how much they can charge.

Glasgow and Edinburgh have examined whether to introduce the scheme. Glasgow City Council estimates it could raise up to £30m a year if introduced to the whole city or up to £6m if confined to the city centre. They estimate it could take three years to implement the scheme. Edinburgh City Council decided not to progress with a scheme in 2024 following a public consultation.

6.5.3.2 Case Studies

Nottingham City Council WPL

Nottingham City Council (NCC) introduced Europe's first WPL in 2012 as an approach to raise funds to be re-invested into sustainable transport across the city but to also alter how people travel around the city. The scheme covered the whole City Council administrative area.

Unlike other road user charging schemes, the WPL generates a guaranteed revenue stream. Even in the middle of a very severe lockdown, significant revenues were collected through the levy. Since its inception, the WPL scheme has raised almost £90 million, which has been re-invested into sustainable transport across the city. It has also allowed NCC to secure inward investment of over £1 billion in transport, including £570 million for the tram network, £120 million for low and zero emission buses and £60 million to transform Nottingham Station into a 21st century multi-modal transport interchange.

WPL schemes can be revenue neutral for an employer as they can pass the cost on to the vehicle user i.e., staff members. Making drivers pay for their workplace parking is an effective way of changing travel behaviour. In Nottingham, 53% of liable car parking places are now subject to a car park management scheme where the vehicle user pays the levy in whole or part.

Outcomes from initial analysis highlights that 8.6% of commuters currently travelling by sustainable modes, who switched between 2010 and 2016, made the move to sustainable modes of travel at least in part due to the WPL or associated transport improvements. However, 50% of these respondents stated that it was the WPL as a standalone scheme that was an important factor in their decision to shift away from the car. This was in light of an increase in car parking or their employer removing workplace parking³³.

Overall, evaluation studies³⁴ have shown that a modal shift has been observed but mostly from a business perspective. The levy has not been a disincentive to companies locating in Nottingham but on the contrary, there is evidence that improved public infrastructure is proving attractive for businesses. High quality and affordable

³¹ <https://content.tfl.gov.uk/wpl-mayors-guidance-jan2020.pdf>

³² <https://www.transport.gov.scot/our-approach/transport-scotland-act-2019/workplace-parking-licensing-and-the-transport-scotland-act/>

³³ <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S2213624X19301063>

³⁴ <https://www.transportxtra.com/publications/parking-review/news/68005/the-workplace-parking-levy-nottingham-pioneers-the-way-ahead>

infrastructure have been instrumental in encouraging businesses to locate in Nottingham. However, it has also been noted that many businesses felt they were being unfairly targeted, therefore a strong engagement programme is essential to help build the case for introducing WPLs.

San Francisco SFpark

The city of San Francisco deployed the SFpark programme in 2011 as an approach to use demand-responsive pricing programmes to address parking demand. SFpark allowed for parking rates to change based upon average occupancy – the target occupancy range was between 60-80% per block and per time band. If average occupancy exceeded 80% in the previous period, then hourly parking rates increased by \$0.25 per hour. If occupancy rates fell between 30 and 60% or < 30% then parking rates decreased by \$0.25 and \$0.50 respectively.

Analysis of the SFpark pilot programme identified that there was a significant increase in bus ridership in the areas where SFpark was in operation. This bus user increase ranged between 10 and 21 people or 5-11% of average bus users at the pilot block per time and date. It was concluded that SFpark did lead to a mode switch from private vehicles to mass transit modes, therefore suggesting that mode choice is responsive to parking policies.

Additional findings from the pilot suggest that there is a reduction in mass transit usage during the off-peak period and an increase in mass transit usage during the morning and evening peak periods. These patterns suggest that SFpark has caused substitution from mass transit to private vehicle usage during the off-peak period, and from private vehicle to mass transit during the peak period.

The table below summarises the key characteristics of WPLs.

Table 30: Workplace Parking Levy Impacts

Positives	Negatives
Funds raised can be used to improve local services, particularly public transport.	May take a considerable length of time to introduce scheme.
Helps to reduce congestion, journey times, and air pollution.	New costs for employees – often the levy is passed onto the user.
Encourages active travel and use of public transport.	Potential impact on footfall in the place where introduced, impacting on businesses.
Councils have flexibility over how the scheme works and can alter it to suit their specific needs.	Additional cost for employers.

6.6 Alignment with Wider Policy Aspirations

This section considers how parking approaches align with wider policy aspirations. This includes an overview of potential push and pull measures; how parking can support city centre vitality; and consideration of parking policies for larger vehicles.

6.6.1 Push & Pull Measures

Parking has a major influence on the transport choices people make and can be used as a key demand management tool³⁵. Control over the availability and price of parking spaces is a key instrument in limiting car trips, thereby encouraging the relative attractiveness of other modes.

Transport demand management involves various types of measures, ranging from measures of restricting/discouraging use of private motorised transport, namely push measures; to promoting the use of other sustainable modes of travel such as public transport and active travel, namely pull measures.

6.6.1.1 Push Measures

Congestion Charging Scheme

A congestion charging scheme is a defined area whereby users are charged payment for daily entry into the zone during its operational hours.

The scheme was introduced in central London in 2003, alongside complementary public transport and traffic management measures, with the aim of reducing congestion and encouraging a modal shift towards the use of

³⁵ CIHT Parking Strategies and Management Guidelines 2005.

sustainable travel modes. Transport for London (TfL) monitored the impacts of the scheme and found that traffic in the central zone reduced by 20%, there were 40-70 fewer traffic accidents per year, emissions and pollution reduced and around £100m worth of revenue was available for reinvestment within the London Transport network³⁶.

Reduced vehicle use within city centres reduces the demand for city centre parking. However, whilst this can be a useful demand management tool, it can also lead to increased parking within areas on the periphery of the scheme which would have a detrimental impact on these areas, especially if adequate parking provision is not available.

Road Space Reallocation

Road space reallocation involves re-distributing space away from motor vehicles, including car parking and carriageway space, towards other uses. Typical measures include pedestrianisation, bus priority lanes and cycle lanes. The purpose of this reallocation is to promote a shift to more sustainable travel modes³⁷ by providing an enhanced offering for these modes whilst also making it more unappealing to use private vehicles. As outlined above, a reduction in private car use would have a beneficial impact on managing parking demand.

The re-allocation of road space has been identified by the Multimodal Optimisation of Roadspace in Europe (MORE) as the most effective measure in contributing towards less car dependent cities. MORE notes that there is no standardised road space re-allocation scheme in that the measures are designed to need the needs specific to an area.

Removal of Parking

Paris, France

In 2020, the French government announced plans to halve the number of car parking spaces provided in Paris from 140,000 to 70,000 spaces. This will free up around 65 hectares of space.³⁸

The purpose of removing these car parking spaces, particularly along narrow roads and residential streets, is to free up space for leisure, public realm and more sustainable travel modes. Potential measures that may be introduced include cycle lanes, vegetable allotments, wider footways, Electric Vehicle charging points, art installations, water fountains and roadside gardens.

Car ownership levels and existing travel modes also influenced the government's decision, as private car journeys in the city account for 13% of all journeys and only 30% of Parisians own a car.

Amsterdam, The Netherlands

In 2019, it was announced that by the end of 2025 there would be around 11,000 fewer car parking spaces in Amsterdam city centre in order to provide more space for cyclists, pedestrians and public transport users.³⁹

In order to assist with this, in summer 2019, the city began reducing the number of car parking permits issued in the city centre by 1,500 annually, with the cost of a permit also increasing to act as a deterrent to parking permit demand.

Both of these measures aim to reduce the level of parking supply provided in the city centre as well as reducing parking demand going forward.

Emissions Based Parking

As a result of the need to reduce transport-related carbon emissions and encourage more sustainable travel solutions to address the climate emergency, many Councils throughout the UK are introducing emissions-based parking charges⁴⁰ as a means of reducing the number of trips made by higher polluting vehicles.

Parking charges are based on the level of carbon emissions emitted by a user's vehicle and therefore, vehicles with low emissions will be charged less than those vehicles with higher emissions.

It should be considered that emissions-based parking also affects resident and business parking permit schemes. This requires effective management to ensure all existing and new permits are charged at the correct rate, based

³⁶ Transport for London Congestion Charging in Central London: A Retrospective

³⁷ Road space reallocation in Scotland: A health impact assessment (Journal of Transport & Health, 2023)

³⁸ <https://www.connexionfrance.com/news/calmer-safer-greener-paris-to-cut-parking-spaces-by-50/429260>

³⁹ <https://www.fleeteurope.com/en/last-mile/netherlands/news/amsterdam-removing-almost-12000-parking-spots?curl=1>

⁴⁰ <https://octopass.co.uk/sustainability/emissions-based-parking-charges-uk/>
<https://www.royalgreenwich.gov.uk/news/2023/emission-based-parking-charges>

upon their vehicle's emissions. In June 2023, the Royal Borough of Greenwich introduced emissions-based parking charges. The Pay & Display parking tariffs varied by location, with charges of £2, £5 and £7 per hour in place. Parking users using the mobile app could avail of up to a 65% discount on their parking tariff, depending on the emissions of their vehicle.



Figure 12: Royal Greenwich Emissions Based Parking

Traffic Restrictions

In 2016, Mexico City introduced the 'Hoy No Circula' scheme to reduce pollution in the city. The scheme restricts driving determined by a coloured sticker based on a vehicle's registration plate number.

Hybrid/electric and vehicles that are less than four years old are exempt from the scheme as the emissions from these vehicles are zero/low.

Vehicles with a registration plate ending in an odd number are not permitted to drive in the city between 05:00 and 22:00 on the 1st and 3rd Saturday of each month. Vehicles with an even numbered registration plate are not permitted to enter the city between the same hours on the 2nd and 4th Saturday of each month.

In addition to the weekend restrictions noted above, the colour of a vehicle's sticker also prohibits vehicles from entering the city centre on one stated weekday. For example, vehicles with yellow stickers cannot drive into the city on Mondays and those with blue stickers cannot enter the city on Fridays.

Analysis of the scheme's impact and air pollution in Mexico City revealed that the scheme had no discernible effect, despite initial expectations that the scheme would reduce vehicle emissions by 15%⁴¹.

The scheme had a negligible impact on air pollution because residents utilised carpooling, taxis and purchased extra vehicles to avoid the vehicle restrictions. There was also no increase in public transport uptake. However, despite this, the scheme continues to operate within Mexico City.

6.6.1.2 Pull Measures

Parking Benefit District (PBDs)

A Parking Benefit District (PBD) is an area where the local governing body spends revenue generated from parking meters on public services situated in the metered area.

It aims to make increased parking rates more palatable to the public by using a portion of the revenue to improve the surrounding area. If the funds are used to encourage alternative transportation, parking demand should decrease, therefore bringing the price of parking down with it. They also aim to reduce the provision of free or cheaper parking in towns and reduce vehicle circulation.

West Campus University in Austin, Texas experienced a large influx of long stay parkers in neighbouring residential areas. As a response, the city piloted a PBD from 2006-2011. The 96 meters of PBD generated \$163,000 in the first year, \$40,000 of which was spent on footpath and curb enhancements, benches, public transport shelters and two-way bike lanes.

⁴¹ <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/science-environment-38840076>

Following the pilot, in 2012, the West Campus University PBD was established, expanding the previous PBD and adding a further 254 meters. The PBD generated \$150,000 in its first full year, while the area saw a 10% growth in sales tax revenue⁴².

Discounted Public Transport

The [£2 bus fare cap](#) was launched by the Department for Transport (DfT) on 1 January 2023 until the end of December 2024. During this period, bus operators could voluntarily implement a £2 cap on eligible single tickets for adults. The scheme had the aim to encourage more people back on buses and save passengers money.

An interim evaluation report⁴³ was published in February 2023, two months after the scheme launched. Findings showed that there had been an increase in the number and proportion of single bus journeys. More than 50 million single tickets were sold over January and February 2023, over 34 million (around two-thirds) of which had a previous fare of over £2. The report also stated that people making additional bus trips with the £2 bus fare cap in place were likely to be existing bus users making a small number of additional trips. The research also showed that the scheme is perceived as making a positive impact on the cost of living.

Transport Scotland conducted a 'Fair Fares Review'⁴⁴ in March 2024 in response to the Scottish Government's aim to advance towards making the public transport system more accessible, available and affordable, with the costs of transport more fairly shared across government, business and society.

The Review outlined the challenges facing public transport and set out actions to transform the public transport system in the short, medium and long-term. Short term actions include the potential introduction of a bus flat fares pilot scheme and the extension of concessionary fares to more user groups. Medium to long-term actions include developing options to introduce a national and/or regional integrated ticket and fare structure and considering the cost of public transport to make sustainable travel modes more attractive and supporting people to take fewer journeys by car.

Active Travel Infrastructure

Transport Scotland states that new and upgraded infrastructure that makes active and sustainable travel safer, easier and more convenient is essential to meet their 2030 vision in which 'Scotland's communities are shaped around people, with walking or cycling the most popular choice for shorter everyday journeys'⁴⁵. Various active travel infrastructure programmes are funded.

Furthermore, the National Cycle Network (NCN) is developed by Sustrans alongside Transport Scotland. With nearly half of Scotland's population living within 1km of the NCN, there is opportunity to promote an alternative to car travel.

6.6.2 City Centre Vitality

Events

In Aberdeen, there are numerous events which take place each year across the city, including both annual events and less frequent, but major events. These generate a demand for movement and hence a challenge to cater for parking demand.

Annual events include the Aberdeen Highland Games at Hazlehead Park, the Spectra light festival, the Granite Noir crime writing festival, and various other cultural events held at various locations throughout the city.

Further to these, the Tall Ships Races will return to Aberdeen in July 2025. Plans are currently being prepared for the Tall Ships which focus on promoting Park and Ride (including designation of one-off Park and Ride venues) to reduce vehicle volumes and pedestrian conflicts in the city centre during the event. Ensuring accessibility for those who are mobility impaired, and pedestrians, is a priority for the event.

Considerations

Due to the nature of these events, parking provision provided for both event organisers and attendees is likely to be limited. Therefore, effective parking management and wider management of travel demand is required, otherwise it could result in:

- Congestion.
- Increased circulation time looking for available parking spaces.

⁴² [PRN-Parking-Benefit-District-Playbook.pdf](#)

⁴³ £2 bus fare cap evaluation: interim report February 2023. Department for Transport.

⁴⁴ <https://www.transport.gov.scot/our-approach/strategy/fair-fares-review/>

⁴⁵ <https://www.transport.gov.scot/active-travel/infrastructure/>

- Negative impact on the overall event experience such as missing the beginning of the event. This can result in reduced satisfaction levels and people may not be willing to return to the same event next year or in the future.

However, by ensuring travel and parking demand is effectively managed this can:

- Provide a safe environment for all road users, pedestrians, cyclists and staff.
- Provide protection to event participants, organisers, staff and the general public from traffic hazards that may arise as a result of the event.
- Minimise disruption, congestion and delays to all road users.
- Ensure access to adjacent/nearby commercial and residential premises is maintained at all times.

Potential Measures to Manage Parking and Travel Demand

If event organisers and attendees need to drive to Aberdeen City Centre for events, the following measures could be considered to manage parking demand:

- Event organisers could identify appropriate car parks near to the event location and advise people to park there when sending out communications regarding the event. Furthermore, a phased parking approach may be needed to effectively manage parking demand, particularly if/when car parks become full.
- Signage must be efficiently utilised, including the use of Variable Message Signage (VMS) and tactile event signage, to provide information on vehicle routing towards the event location and parking information. The use of VMS on strategic routes approaching and within the city, and tactile signage closer to the event site can positively influence event and non-event traffic.
- Effective traffic/parking enforcement is required near the event site to ensure vehicles are not parking along footways and in contravention of yellow line markings. Otherwise, this could impede attendees from reaching the event site and lead to traffic delays and congestion.
- Events should encourage the use of Park and Ride sites by attendees where they can travel into the city centre via bus before interchanging in the city centre, if required. This will reduce parking demand and traffic volumes in the city centre which in turns reduces congestion and delays.

Each of these potential measures need to be implemented in conjunction with encouraging and promoting the use of public transport and active travel modes as a means of travelling to city centre events in order to reduce vehicular traffic movements and delays in the city on event days.

Case Study: Eurovision Song Contest 2023, Liverpool

The Eurovision Song Contest was held in Liverpool in May 2023. To manage the increase in people within the city, Liverpool City Council and Liverpool City Region Combined Authority collaborated to introduce various initiatives to manage travel to/from the site and parking demand.

A free Park and Ride service was offered to event goers. A surface level car park next to Anfield Stadium was converted into a temporary Park and Ride in which users took a 15-minute journey to the Bus Station which was situated near the event arena. Return buses were provided and the car park remained open and accessible until midnight. The aim of this was to minimise congestion in the city centre on the day of the event and reduce stress for those attending the event.

During the EuroFestival – held to celebrate the city's hosting of the contest – Liverpool City Council also made all of their city centre car parks operational for 24-hours a day, seven days a week. This provided more than 15,000 car parking spaces across Council and private car parks and on-street parking.

Additionally, Merseyrail network operated a special timetable during the event with additional services and capacity provided. Additional bus services were also provided such as free shuttle buses between bus stations from midday to midnight.

6.7 Larger Vehicles Policy

6.7.1 UK Parking Design Guidance

The typical UK guidance on parking bay dimensions recommends that car parking bays should be 2.4m x 4.8m⁴⁶. This design guidance was originally published in the 1970s when cars were considerably smaller and shorter than they are now. Changes to car dimensions are shown below.

Table 31: Parking Model Dimension Comparison

Car	First Model (m)	Latest Model (m)	% Bigger (area)
Mini One	1.4 x 3.0	1.9 x 3.8	53%
Fiat 500	1.3 x 3.0	1.6 x 3.6	48%
Toyota Corolla	1.5 x 3.6	1.8 x 4.3	36%
VW Golf	1.6 x 3.8	2.0 x 4.3	34%
Ford Fiesta	1.6 x 3.6	1.9 x 4.0	28%
Porsche 911	1.7 x 4.3	1.9 x 4.5	16%

In 2023, the Institution of Structural Engineers (IStructE) re-published their car park design guidance which recommended that the size of parking bays should be increased to 2.6m x 5m⁴⁷.

6.7.2 Aberdeen Planning Guidance 2023

In 2023, non-statutory Planning Advice documentation was adopted by ACC in the form of Planning Guidance documents. These documents sit alongside the Aberdeen Local Development Plan 2023 and provide more detailed information on its policies and sites.

The Planning Advice Policy on 'Delivering Infrastructure, Transport and Accessibility - Transport and Accessibility' provides guidance on the dimensions of car parking bays. It states that car parking bays should 'generally be 2.5m x 5m with a 6m aisle width between bays.'

6.7.3 Consideration of Modern Vehicle Dimensions

Research by the Which? Consumer Group⁴⁸ revealed in 2018 that 129 car models were too long to fit within an average UK car parking space measuring 2.4m x 4.8m, examples of which are shown below. It is noted that three of the five models shown in the table exceed the current car parking bay length outlined in Aberdeen's Planning Guidance 2023.

Table 32: Modern Parking Model Length

Car Model	Car Length (m)
Mitsubishi L200 Warrior / Barbarian	5.29
Nissan Navara	5.23
Range Rover Vogue	5.00
Volvo XC90	4.95
Ford Mondeo	4.87

6.8 Parking Management Impact on Different Sectors and Population Groups

6.8.1 Parking Demand

The Chartered Institution of Highways and Transportation (CIHT) provides parking management guidance within its document Parking Strategies and Management (2005). This guidance recommends that parking interventions should seek to ensure that demand does not utilise more than 85% of available capacity during peak periods.

⁴⁶ <https://www.theaa.com/breakdown-cover/advice/parking-space-size?msockid=1a16f55523096ab81aace67f22c26b34>

⁴⁷ <https://www.newcivilengineer.com/opinion/we-are-moving-away-from-the-standard-2-4m-x-4-8m-parking-space-but-should-we-be-17-05-2024/#:~:text=The%20Institution%20of%20Structural%20Engineers%20%28IStructE%29%20re-published%20their,to%204.9m%20long%2C%202m%20wide%20and%202m%20high.>

⁴⁸ <https://www.theaa.com/breakdown-cover/advice/parking-space-size?msockid=1a16f55523096ab81aace67f22c26b34>

If parking demand exceeds the 85% threshold, this indicates there are a lack of available spaces for parking users which may increase driver frustration and vehicle circulation in searching for an available space, adding to congestion in town and city centre locations.

6.8.2 Workers, Business Owners and Visitors

Having no restrictions effectively limits the number of people who can park in a given place per day. This can result in businesses seeing lower footfall, and limited parking supply will mean visitors find it harder to park. Rather than providing more parking, the solution in constrained areas is to increase space turnover so that spaces become available more often. It is also worth noting that research⁴⁹ in other areas has shown that shopkeepers consistently overestimate the share of their customers coming by car. In some cases⁵⁰, this is by a factor of as much as 400%.

There is a balance that needs to be struck between providing sufficient space for all day parkers (typically local workers and business owners) and short stay parkers who are often the customers of the same businesses or visitors to the area. All day parking is typically located in peripheral areas of towns and cities as these sites have low space turnover with local workers and business owners parking for long periods of time. It is therefore important that key desirable car parks located within the heart of the town or city centre are for short stay parkers such as shoppers and visitors who are parking for a shorter period of time; encouraging space turnover so that the spaces become available more often.

In settlements, there is not one type of user and therefore the parking restrictions in place need to be cognisant of this by providing a range of tariffs. For example, charging higher tariffs for short stay parking will discourage car journeys by people who live within walking distance of a given car park, as well as discouraging parking acts by all day parkers. In other areas such as at tourist attractions, a set time period may be reasonable to allow visitors to see the attraction and then depart, freeing up space for other users, however this may not be appropriate in cities.

6.8.2.1 The Cost of Parking

If parking is provided free to the end user, the car park provider has to bear the construction, ongoing maintenance and enforcement costs of the car park (even free sites require some enforcement). Related to this, if the car parks are publicly owned, local residents who do not need to park in the car parks can effectively be subsidising visitors who do need to park. However, with car park charges in place, this subsidy burden is removed from local residents.

There are also costs to people who are unable to find a parking space. They either have to keep circulating until they find their space, or they may not make the trip again. Costs are also experienced in terms of environmental damage from the congestion associated with circulating vehicles and there are associated impacts on personal health and the visual amenity of individual towns.

The following information outlines those who bear the cost associated with parking acts:

- The user – the price of goods includes the cost of parking;
- The non-user – should people pay for something that they do not use?;
- The provider – people pay to provide the service i.e. rate-payers?;
- The opportunity – if people use a parking space, another person cannot utilise that space;
- The duration – long stay parking reduces opportunities; and
- The environment – traffic congestion, displaced parking, health problems, public realm etc.

It should be highlighted that parking price is not generally a big consideration for retail customers. Numerous research publications⁵¹ have come to this conclusion, and they note that location/convenience and personal safety rank above parking price. Furthermore, research⁵² into parking conducted by the Welsh Assembly Government noted the following:

“Car park charging should not be viewed in isolation from other factors (availability of parking, signage, traffic flow) which affect willingness to drive in town centres”

“there is very little published evidence which links changes in car park charges to changes in town centre footfall.”

⁴⁹ <http://chrisabrunsb.blogspot.co.uk/2009/10/shoppers-and-how-they-travel.html>

⁵⁰ ‘The relevance of parking in the success of urban centres’ - A review for London Councils, October 2012

⁵¹ Key Success Factors, ‘In-Town Parking: What Works?’ Association of Town Centre Managers

⁵² ‘Impact of Car Parking Charges’, Welsh Government, 2015

“General availability of spaces is felt by visitors to be more important than cost in their overall decision about visiting. Traffic flow and parking signage are felt by visitors to have the same, if not greater, effect on their decision to visit the town centre, how long they spend there, and how much money they spend.”

This research reinforces the point that the introduction of parking charges/controls does not in isolation have a detrimental impact on how town centres perform. The key factor is availability and in locations where space is at premium, the proven way to ensure availability is through parking pricing. Therefore, if people cannot locate a space or feel unsafe when parking, these are regarded as more important reasons for not returning than the actual cost of parking itself.

Therefore research continually shows that parking price is not a big consideration for retail trips, and that other factors have an impact such as variety of retail and service provision; parking location and availability; and localised issues. These are all issues that could be explored locally in an Aberdeen context by ACC.

6.8.2.2 Elderly, Mobility Impaired and Disabled Users

Disabled spaces should be clearly marked and provided at an appropriate location within a car park and also provided within close proximity to the entrance of a destination. Disabled parking bays are currently provided in Aberdeen at various on-street and off-street parking locations. It is important that parking enforcement monitors the use of disabled spaces to ensure illegal misuse of the spaces does not occur.

A Blue Badge entitles holders to park in certain restricted areas for free, including at on-street parking meters, in Pay and Display bays, in disabled parking spaces, and on single and double yellow lines if it is safe to do so and there are no loading restrictions in place⁵³.

The predicted ageing of the population may induce additional demand for designated blue badge parking in the future. Whilst this is not understood to be a current requirement, there is a potential requirement for additional provision to cover a future increase in demand.

High quality ramps, lifts, guard rails and footways should be in place to allow ease and flow of movement for elderly, mobility impaired and disabled users within and near to parking facilities. The provision of tactile paving close to crossing / conflict points within the car park should also be considered.

The Disabled Parking Accreditation (DPA) is owned by Disabled Motoring UK and managed by the British Parking Association. The DPA has the following purposes:

- Ensure accessible bays meet Building Regulation requirements;
- Reduce disabled bay abuse;
- Ensure disabled users are not penalised for requiring extra time when using parking facilities;
- Enables disabled users to easily locate suitable car parks;
- Provide guidance to parking owners, operators and developers on the recommended number of accessible bays to be provided; and
- Raise awareness of the car park and highlight guidance has been considered and where appropriate, action has been taken to implement suitable parking facilities for disabled users.

Furthermore, the Park Mark Safer Parking Scheme was launched by the Police Crime Prevention Initiative. It aims to reduce crime and the fear of crime in parking facilities. The Park Mark is a national UK parking standard awarded to car parks which meet the challenging requirements: low crime rates and safety measures to ensure the safety of the parking facilities' vehicles and users. Over 4,500 car parks throughout the United Kingdom hold the award. Accredited car parks are located at a variety of locations such as retail centres, town centres, train stations and leisure facilities.

The Park Mark Standard demonstrates the Police have vetted the facility and appropriate measures are in place to create a safe environment for users relating to quality management, appropriate lighting facilities and clean environment.

⁵³ <https://www.mygov.scot/apply-blue-badge/using-your-blue-badge>

7. Summary

7.1 Overview

The proceeding text provides a summary of the findings presented in the previous chapters of this 2025 SCPR. This information will be used to form the basis of the *Outcomes Report* where they will be further interpreted to provide direction for ACC going forward.

7.2 Changes to Parking

Changes to parking since the previous SCPR are summarised below:

- The Transport (Scotland) Act 2019 banned pavement parking, double parking, and parking at dropped kerbs, with these measures now being enforced in Aberdeen. The Act also introduced a discretionary Workplace Parking Levy (WPL) power, allowing local authorities to decide whether they wish to implement a WPL and to shape proposals to suit local circumstances;
- The implementation of the Aberdeen Low Emission Zone (LEZ) has not significantly impacted on the accessibility of city centre car parks. Whilst a small number of car parks are located within the LEZ boundary, the vast majority are still accessible to those using compliant vehicles;
- Similar to the above, city centre traffic management changes do not preclude the ability for people to access car parks in the city centre;
- Parking charges for both on- and off-street car parks and the cost of residential parking permits increased from 1st April 2023;
- ACC has undertaken significant work to digitise car parking, through replacing and modernising parking infrastructure, and improving the customer experience. This includes the introduction of virtual parking permits, replacement and rationalisation of parking meters, and deployment of Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) vehicles, allowing intelligence-led and directed enforcement;
- As part of the lease agreement with Shell (following their relocation from Wellington Road to Union Street), the Chapel Street car park has been refurbished, although there are now fewer spaces available to members of the public on weekdays; and
- Options are currently being reviewed by the Council for improvements to the Denburn and West North Street multi-storey car parks.

7.3 Data Analysis

It is noted that since the previous SCPR, there has been a reduction in the quality and availability of data relating to both ACC car park assets and privately operated car parks. This means that it is not possible to provide robust commentary on changing trends in car park occupancy and consumption between the two pieces of work. The progression of this review has therefore identified an opportunity for ACC (and for ACC through discussion with third parties including private car park operators) to develop and maintain an efficient approach to monitoring car parking demand and usage in the city, going forward. This will be of particular importance as complementary projects which have the capability to affect how parking is consumed in the city (such as Aberdeen Rapid Transit (ART)) are progressed.

The previous SCPR concluded that the combined off-street capacity (ACC and privately operated) within the city was adequate to support the demand for parking with the collective car parking capacity operating at or less than 85%. Whilst there is no updated parking occupancy data to further validate this (as noted above), given the significant changes in city centre usage in recent years (particularly since the COVID-19 pandemic), it is reasonable to suggest that there is a reduced demand for parking within the city centre, and as such the collective city centre parking capacity remains adequate for the levels of demand, though further data analysis would be needed to reinforce this rationale.

Where data analysis has been possible during the 2025 SCPR, the key findings are as follows:

- Bus-based Park and Ride sites in the region remain underutilised, however some rail-based sites are at or beyond capacity, namely Dyce, Inverurie and Stonehaven;
- The introduction of additional car parking charges in Council car parks on a Sunday is unlikely to be a significant deterrence to visiting the city centre. Between 0900 and 1300 (when Council car parks are free), the occupancy of private car parks where charges apply is greater than that of the free Council car

parks, however the location of these car parks is also likely to be a key factor. In Council car parks, there is no clear and obvious correlation between the introduction of charges at 1300 and a drop in occupancy;

- Car parking charges for privately operated car parks are significantly higher than the Council's tariff structure. For example, the maximum charge for a 10-hour stay at Chapel Street car park is £13.50 compared to £18.00 at Union Square and Trinity Centre;
- Private car parks typically have charges for 24 hours, with ACC having a charging structure that generally applies for 12 hours a day Monday-Saturday and on Sunday afternoons;
- The cost of a full day of parking in a city centre car park (£13.50) is more expensive than the cost of a bus day ticket (e.g. £9.20 from Inverurie) or rail return ticket (e.g. £9.70 from Inverurie);
- The cost of city centre car parking in Aberdeen is significantly lower than in Glasgow and Edinburgh, although higher than Dundee. For example, the cost of a full day's parking in the city centre in Aberdeen is £13.50, compared to just £10.70 in Dundee, but £32 in Glasgow and £82 in Edinburgh;
- When comparing ACC car parking charges alongside those of some comparator UK cities (Dundee, Glasgow, Belfast, Nottingham and Plymouth) the below conclusions can be identified:
 - Charges at council operated car parks are slightly higher than the equivalent tariffs in Dundee, Belfast and Plymouth, but are significantly lower than the charges applied in Glasgow and in comparison for some durations in Nottingham;
 - On-street parking tariffs in city centre locations is higher in Aberdeen than those of the other comparator cities except for Glasgow. However, on-street parking tariffs in the outer area of the city centre in Aberdeen are higher than the equivalent for Glasgow; and
 - Resident and business parking permit tariffs in Aberdeen are higher than all comparator cities other than Glasgow. Not all comparator cities offer a business parking permit.
- There was an overall uplift in occupancy levels at Denburn car park during the October 2024 Free Parking Initiative. Occupancy levels increased by up to 169% compared to average weekend occupancy during the rest of 2024, and by up to 267% compared to approximately the same period in 2023. It is however important to note there are multiple variables that are expected to influence weekend off-street parking demand in the city centre, as well as broader travel behaviours.

Additional key points of information which were raised within this review are summarised below:

- Research indicates that the cost of parking is not generally a primary consideration for retail customers. Considerations such as location/convenience and personal safety are more important factors for users. This assertion is supported by data suggesting that paid-for parking at Union Square and Trinity Centre is better utilised than free parking in Council car parks on Sunday mornings and that the introduction of parking charges/controls does not in isolation have a detrimental impact on the performance of town/city centres;
- Parking has a major influence on the transport choices people make and can be used as a key demand management tool. Control over the availability and price of parking spaces is a key instrument in limiting car trips, thereby encouraging the relative attractiveness of other modes of transport; and
- Travel demand management measures (such as further increasing parking charges) are crucial to achieving transport modal shift, particularly the successful delivery (and maximisation of the benefits) of ART.

