



# Harpenden Parking Strategy

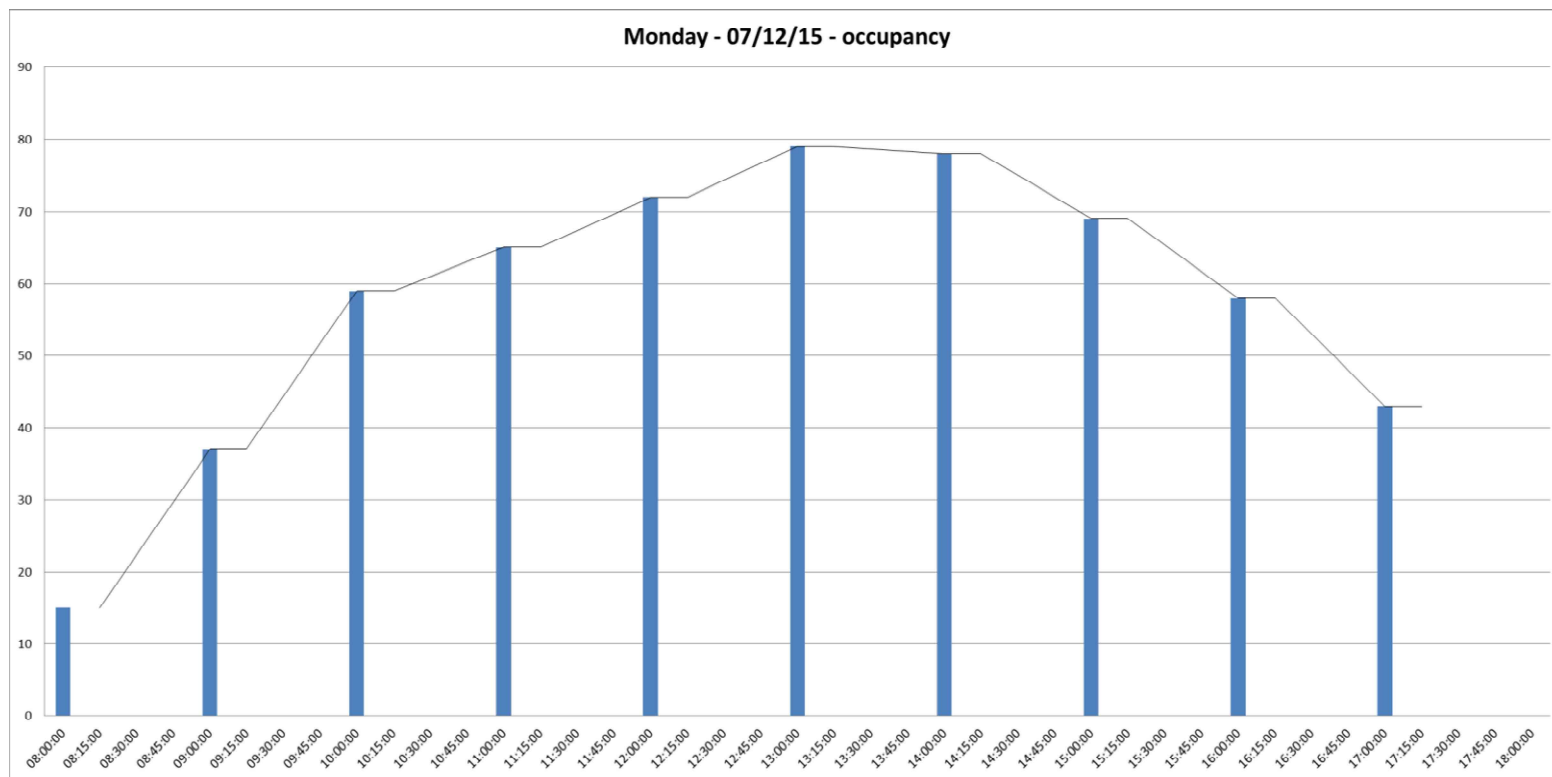
**“Parking in St Albans City and District Council is a service for residents, businesses and visitors”**

# Parking in Harpenden

- Make the most of existing car parking spaces and create more where practicable.
- Support the local economy by working in partnership with other parking providers.
- Balance traffic flows by aiming to make facilities available at key entry points.
- Ensure the service is flexible for long term growth.
- Influence developers to provide appropriate parking provision.
- Clean and safe parking facilities.
- Provide enforcement services on the basis of being cost neutral.

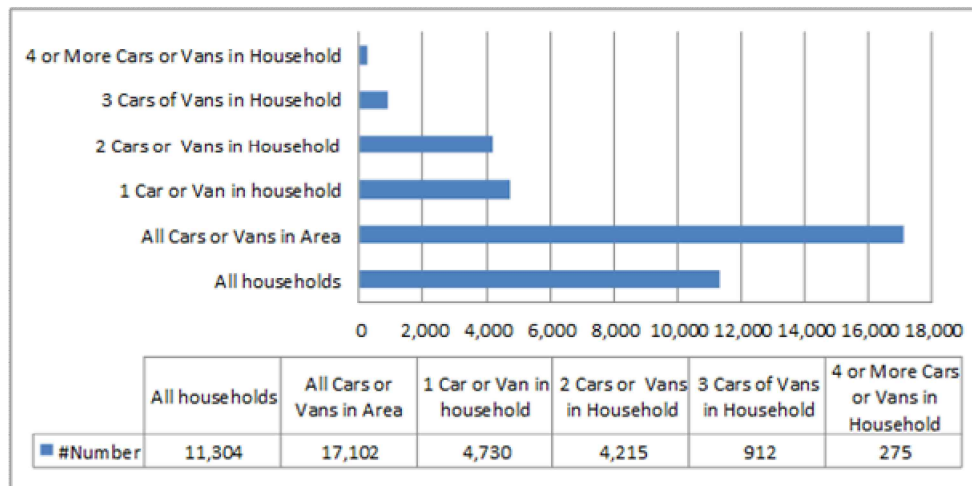
# Car Park Volumes

The Council is developing a new standard method of monitoring;

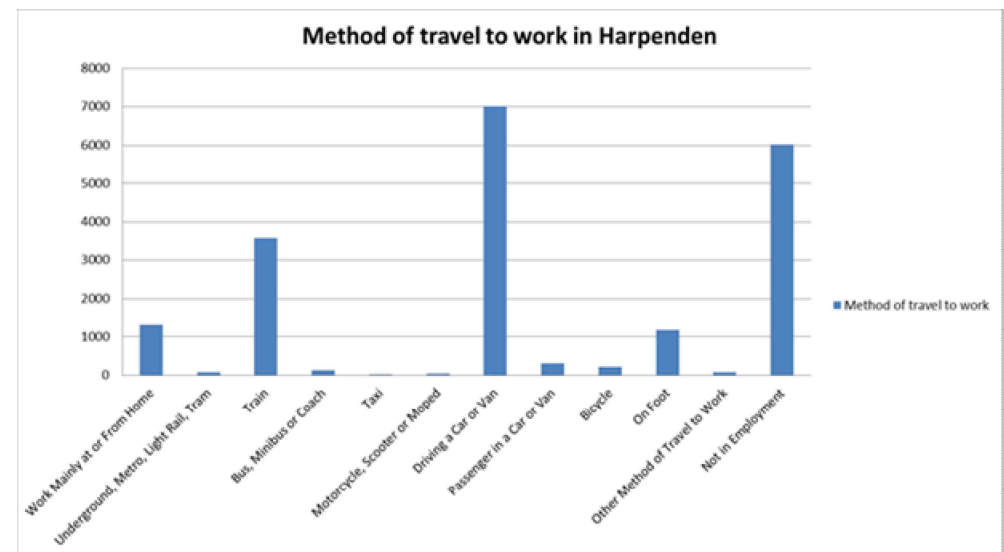


# Harpenden Growth

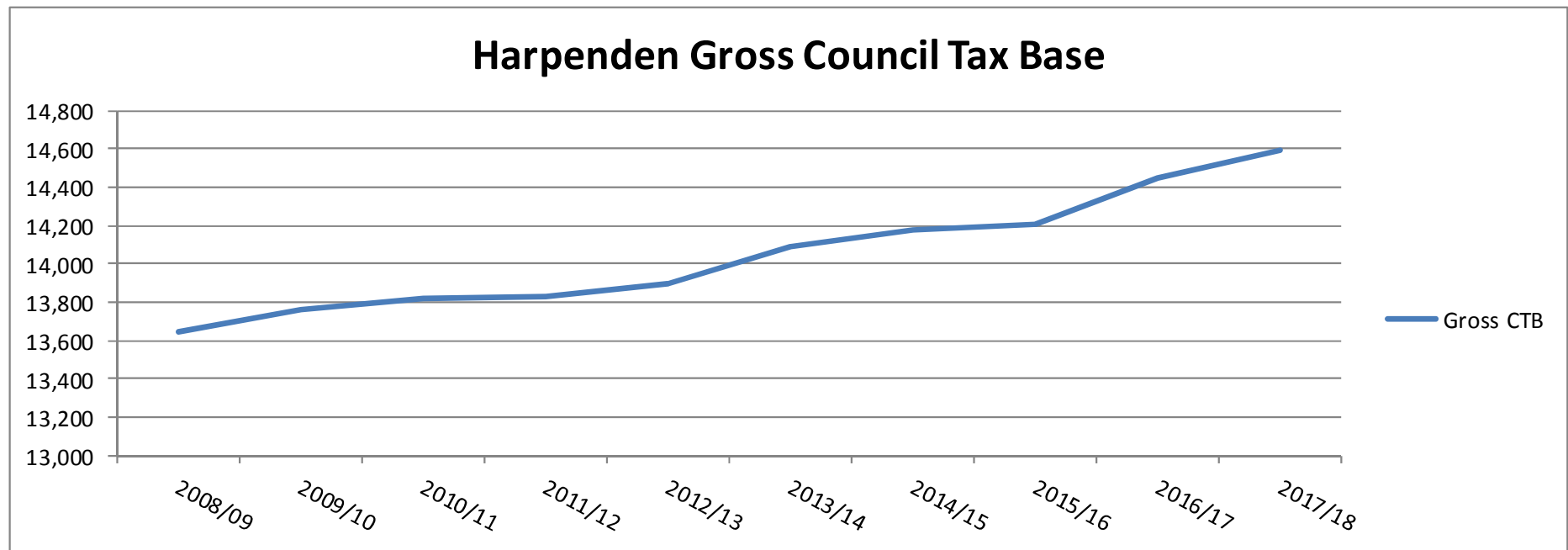
Number of cars or vans in Harpenden in comparison with number of households;



Method of travel to work in Harpenden;



# Harpenden Growth



Harpenden housing growth over last 5 years

11-12	12-13	13-14	14-15	15-16	Total April 2011 to end March 2016
26	49	29	62	94	260

Future housing growth will be subject to the Local Plan. New local plan is currently in development.

# Parking in Harpenden

- The parking issues experienced in Harpenden reflect the mixed residential, commercial and commuter use, where demand for on-street parking outstrips supply.
- This is amplified by the contrast between high value residential and low wage retail workers.
- Harpenden car parks have become very busy over recent years and finding spaces is viewed as difficult.
- On-street parking volumes are typically high, but in some areas people believe that the CPZs have grown as large as is required.

# Capacity Solutions

## ***Completed (Winter 2016)***

1. Provision of additional 20 spaces achieved through more efficient lining of Amenbury Lane Car Park.
2. Providing extra 'charity' Christmas parking with local landowners, as back-up.

## ***Short Term***

1. Provision of additional 100 spaces (approx') at Amenbury Car Park as part of the leisure development – Approx' 10% increase in Harpenden Car Park Capacity.

Subject to planning permission

## ***Medium Term - Working on Future Options***

1. Work with Train Companies to build another level on the station car park.
2. Build another level/increase spaces at Bowers Way East car park.
3. Build another level/increase spaces on Amenbury Lane Car Park.

# Harpenden Current Parking Consultations

- Manland Avenue Area Parking consultation - completed
- Holcroft Area Parking consultation.
- Station Road, West Way and Carisbrooke consultation.
- Zone Parking Consultations: 1; 2; 3; H4; LA and SW.

In 2015/16 across St Albans District there were about 120 schemes under consultation or waiting. As of March 2017 there are 44 schemes.

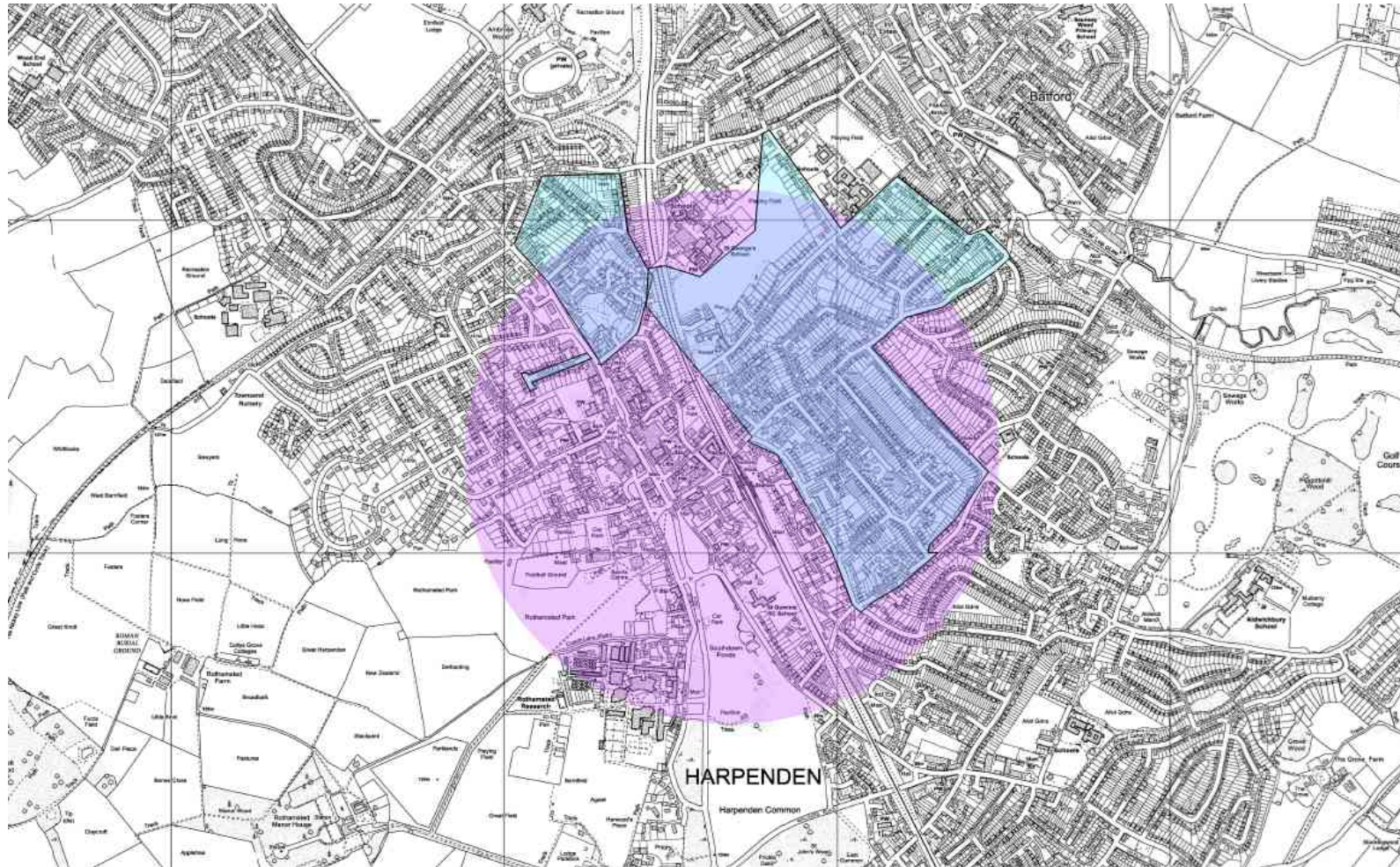
Parking Consultations and Traffic Regulation Orders:

<http://www.stalbans.gov.uk/transport-and-streets/trafficregulationorders/default.aspx>

Minutes of the Car Parking Working Party can be seen at:

<http://stalbans.moderngov.co.uk/ieListMeetings.aspx?CIId=304&Year=0>

# Map of the Harpenden CPZs



# Harpenden Car Parks Officers Working Group

In response to the parking requirements we have set up a cross organisation group consisting of:

- St Albans City & District Council
- Hertfordshire County Council
- Harpenden Town Council
- Govia Thameslink Railway (GTR)
- Network Rail

# Technology – Short Term

## Issues & Improvements

- Regular problems have been experienced due to theft and damage to ticket machines, and a shift to cashless systems will help improve the service and reduce costs.
- Pay By Phone has seen a fast take up in Harpenden.
- Contactless payment by cards and mobile phones are becoming a standard form of payment for similar size payments (e.g. coffee).
- Pay & Display by coin is not good for shopping, leisure, business or pleasure as it makes people watch their time and discourages spending more time in the town so other systems need to be considered.
- Trials using contactless/phone and limited cash will be taking place at Westminster Lodge car park St Albans with results fed back and used for any similar initiatives in Harpenden.

# Technology - Longer Term

## ***Electric Cars***

- Increase in electric car use will require a similar increase in charging points across the district. Suitable sites need to be identified and rolled out as required.

## ***Autonomous Cars***

- Self-driving cars are now a reality, taxis are in use in California and a trial is underway in Milton Keynes. This technology is expected to make a major affect on car ownership figures and may similarly reduce car parking numbers (time-scale is unknown).
- Car ownership may have peaked and traffic numbers have shown signs of reductions. These are tentative and the only certainty is that we cannot reliably predict future numbers.



# **Harpenden Car Parking Strategy**

**2017 - 2021**

**October 2017**

# **St Albans City and District Council**

## **Harpenden Car Parking Strategy 2017 - 2021**

### **1.0 Summary**

1.1 The parking issues experienced in Harpenden reflect the mixed residential / commercial and commuter use, where demand for on-street parking will often outstrip supply.

1.2 All car parks over the past year have become close to capacity, and public feedback indicates dissatisfaction with the ease of parking.

1.3 The key principle of the District parking strategy is;

**“Parking in the St Albans City and District Council is a Service for Residents, Businesses and Visitors”**

1.4 It is supported by 8 objectives:

- a) To make the most of existing car parking spaces, and to create more where practical, both on-street and off-street, for the benefit of residents, businesses and visitors.
- b) To support the local economy, particularly independent small to medium businesses and retail outlets, working in partnership with other parking providers.
- c) To balance traffic flows, to and from and across the district by ensuring parking facilities are available at key entry points across the District for the benefit of businesses and visitors and their differing needs.
- d) To ensure the parking service is flexible to allow for long term growth over the next 10 to 15 years, for the benefit of residents, businesses and visitors.
- e) To influence developers of new properties to provide appropriate parking provision for the high level of car ownership within the District.
- f) To provide clean and safe car parking facilities, including the surrounding area.
- g) To continue parking enforcement services on the basis of being cost neutral.
- h) To encourage rail commuters to use relevant car parks.

- 1.5 This strategy has identified the following main actions;
- i. Review of signage and advertising of car parks;
  - ii. District's car parks to achieve and maintain Park Mark accreditation;
  - iii. Encourage turnover of on-street spaces by limiting maximum stay where located next to retail hubs;
  - iv. Identification of underused on-street spaces, and consideration to release these to support local businesses, following consultation;
  - v. Explore options for additional off-street parking. creating more time limits on duration of parking – encourage quicker more frequent turnover;
  - vi. Discourage inessential car use and encourage more sustainable transport modes;
  - vii. Review Amenbury Lane car park in line with the redevelopment of the leisure centre.
  - viii. Review station parking with current rail provider.

## **2.0 Introduction**

- 2.1 The attractiveness of Harpenden as a retail centre and rail commuter destination has led to increasing pressures on parking in and around the city centre. In Harpenden around 315,000 cars per year, equating to around 6,000 cars per week use the public car parks. An average of 1.2 million cars per year use the whole district's public car parks, equating to around 23,000 cars per week.
- 2.2 Regulated parking provision, driven by a cohesive strategy, can contribute to the effective management of congested areas and make best use of valuable road space. However, this must be balanced against the need for parking for residents, businesses, and visitors in a well-populated area.
- 2.3 Demand for parking in Harpenden outstrips supply and an effective traffic management strategy is required.
- 2.4 Vehicle emissions degrade air quality, cause health problems and are a major contributor to problems such as global warming and acid rain. The principal air-quality pollutant emissions from petrol, diesel, and alternative-fuel engines are carbon monoxide, oxides of nitrogen, un-burnt hydrocarbons and particulate matter. A comprehensive Parking Strategy can help to reduce the environmental impact of vehicles with-in the town.
- 2.5 The Harpenden Car Parking Strategy links directly and will sit within the St Albans District Car Parking Strategy when that strategy is updated in 2019. A separate strategy has been produced due to the difference in car parking provision and needs between these two main centres within the St Albans City & District Area.
- 2.6 Parking presents complex issues, which often require a balance to be found rather than a single solution. Control over parking and the issues that lead to

parking are not in the hands of one authority, and a partnership approach is required. Therefore this strategy has been developed by both Officers and Members from the Council and amended following consultation with interested parties, stakeholders and individuals.

- 2.7 The Council delivers its parking enforcement service via an agency agreement of 30<sup>th</sup> May 2001 between Hertfordshire County Council and St Albans District Council (SADC). This agreement stipulates that SADC act as agents of the County to exercise Controlled Parking Zones (CPZ's) and other auxiliary parking schemes.
- 2.8 Decriminalised parking enforcement has to operate within the legal framework of the Traffic Management Act 2004, and the guidelines set out by the Department for Transport. Any income derived from enforcement has to be ring fenced for parking and transport related initiatives.
- 2.9 The existing contracts to outsource Car Park Management and the enforcement of Controlled Parking Zones commenced on 4th October 2004. These contracts cover the management of Council owned car parks, and decriminalised parking enforcement, both on-street and off street.
- 2.10 The initial contract term of 10 years, ended on 3<sup>d</sup> October 2014 and was then extended for a period of 5 years to 3<sup>d</sup> October 2019.

### **3.0 Purpose of Strategy**

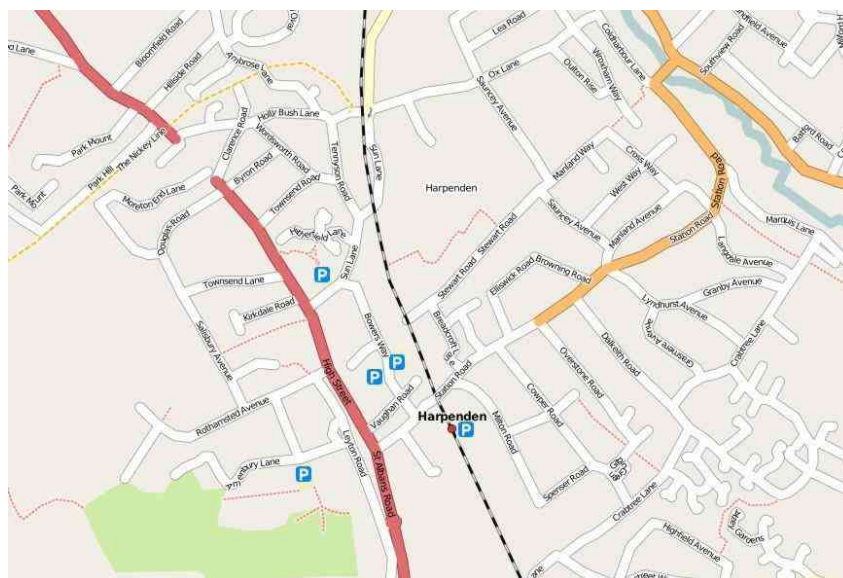
- 3.1 The purpose and overarching principle of this strategy is to set out how;

**Parking in Harpenden will be a service for residents,  
businesses and visitors.**

- 3.2 It is supported by the Council's vision, aims and commitments as set out below;
  - *Planning for the future*
  - *Attracting and developing business and the visitor economy*
  - *Enabling and delivering transport improvements*
  - *Keeping the District cleaner, greener, healthier and safer*
  - *Ensuring value for money and excellent customer service*
- 3.3 It is also specifically set out in the Council's Corporate Plan and Budget Strategy 2013-18, as part of Commitment 6, "Enabling and delivering transport improvements".
- 3.4 This strategy also supports the aims and key principles of the following Council Strategies;
  - St Albans Visitor Economy Strategy 2013 – 2018
  - St Albans District Community Safety Partnership Strategy 2016/2017.

## 4.0 Current position

### 4.1 See Appendix A



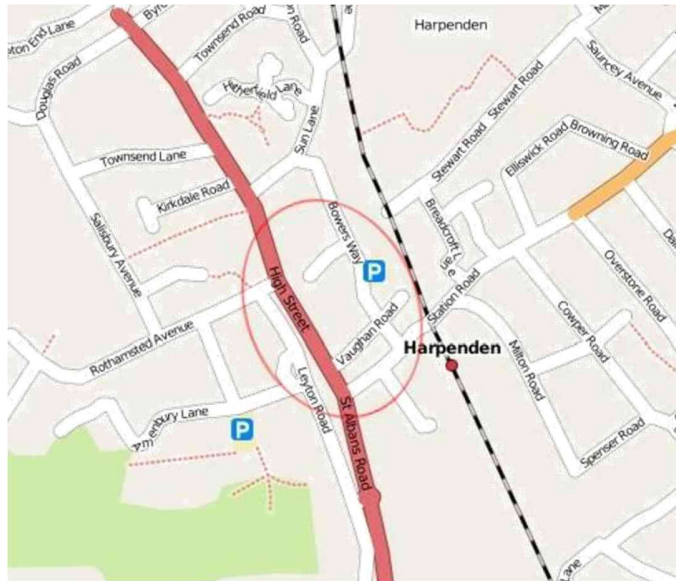
### 4.2 Harpenden has;

- 277 free on-street limited waiting car parking spaces
- 123 on-street Pay & Display car parking spaces
- 499 + 23 disabled spaces off-street NCP car parking spaces;
  - Amenbury Lane Car Park - 213 + 8 disabled bays
  - Bowers Way East – 148 + 3 disabled bays
  - Bowers Way West – 158 + 12 disabled bays
- Harpenden (Lydekker) Car Parking - 88 + 2 disabled spaces
- Waitrose Car Park – 130 spaces
- Harpenden Train Station – 653 spaces
- Southdown Road Co-op Car Park - 157 + 6 disabled spaces

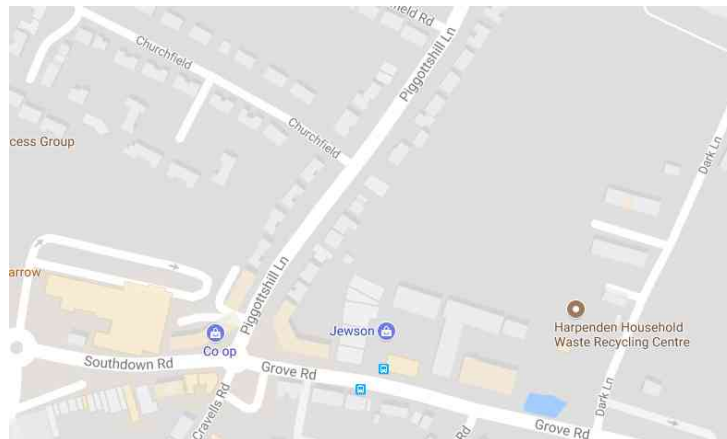
### 4.3 Car Park Occupancy

	Spaces	Disabled	Total
Amenbury Lane Car Park	193 + 20 (new)	8	221
Bowers Way East	148	3	151
Bowers Way West	158	12	170
Lydekker	88	2	90

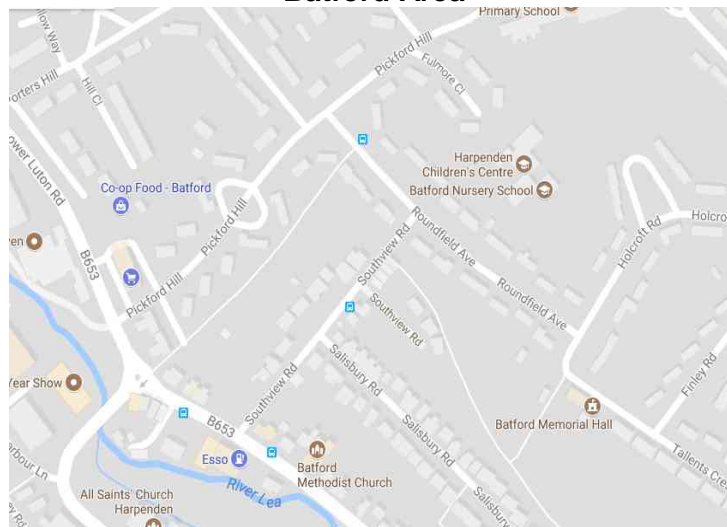
#### 4.4 Harpenden Commercial Centres: Central Area



#### Southdown Area



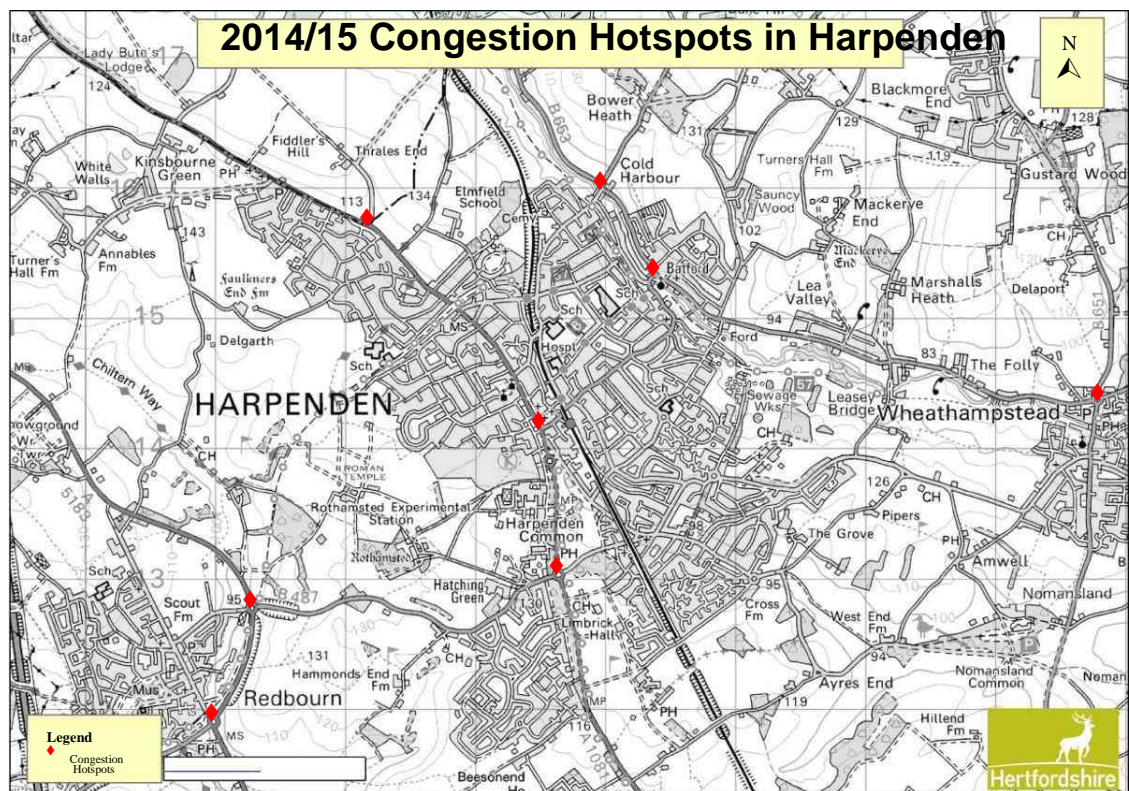
#### Batford Area



Parking in commercial areas will be reviewed and improvements made where necessary. The strategy should aim to achieve a holistic focus which finds a balance to support business, residents and visitors.

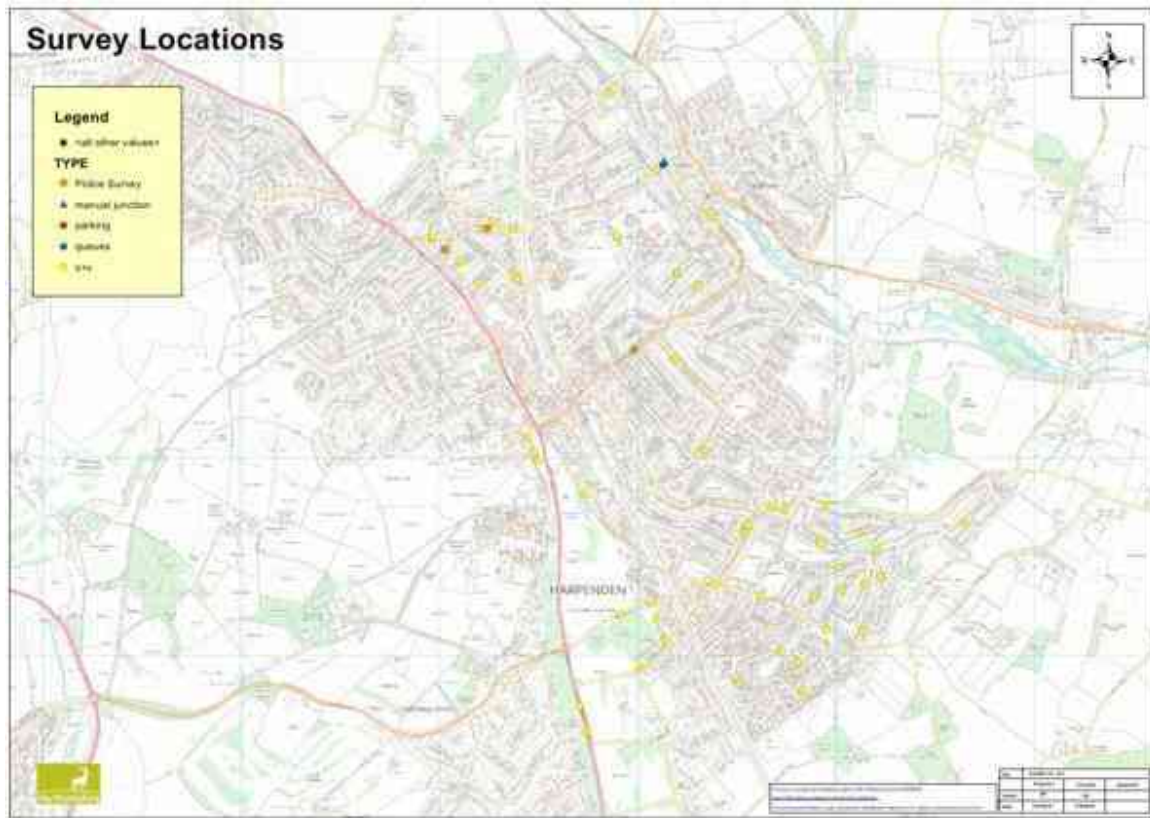
#### 4.5 Traffic Flow- Current congestion hotspots in Harpenden.

This information is based on journey time data (taken from in vehicle GPS devices operated by Trafficmaster). Hertfordshire County Council as the highways authority has defined hotspots at junctions where registered speeds are significantly below the published speed limit on two or more approaches for a defined length.



The plan below shows the location of traffic counts undertaken in the last 3 years (2013 – 2016). HCC have also recently developed a Countywide Transport Model (COMET) which covers the Harpenden area. This is due to be enhanced

and validated in the district so it can be used for assessment of the Local Plan. Once this work is completed it will provide a means of predicting future traffic volumes on the key roads in the town.



<b><u>Harpenden</u></b>				
<b><u>Hotspots</u></b>				
Hotspot	Approach Arm	Survey Number and Data	AM peak hour flow	PM peak hour flow
B653 Lower Luton Road / B652 Bower Heath Lane	B653 Lower Luton Road North	Site 371 - Oct 2016	1372	1340
	B653 Lower Luton Road South	-	-	-
	B652 Bower Heath Lane	Site 332 - Nov 2016	94	71
	Westfield Road	20120021 - Jan 2012	470	323
B653 Lower Luton Road / B652 Station Road	B653 Lower Luton Road North			
	B653 Lower Luton Road South	St Albans Model Study	1154	1166
	B652 Station Road	20130431 - Jul 2013	905	826
A1081 Luton Road / Thrarles End Lane	A1081 Luton Road North	Supplied by consultant - Jul 15	606	901
	A1081 Luton Road South	St Albans Model Study	985	1060
	West Hyde Rd	St Albans Model Study	151	149
A1081 St Albans Road B652 Station Road	A1081 St Albans Road North			
	A1081 St Albans Road South	St Albans Model Study	1334	1396
	B652 Station Road	St Albans Model Study	933	110
	U696 Station Road			
A1081 St Albans Road B487 Hatching Green / Walkers Road	A1081 St Albans Road North			
	A1081 St Albans Road South	20160512 - Jul 2016	1108	1237
	B487 Hatching Green	M1 - Nov 2016	1841	1668
	Walkers Road	20130561 - Jun 2013	1156	1059

## **5.0 Where we want to be**

5.1 The overall principle of the parking strategy is;

**“Parking in Harpenden is a Service for residents,  
businesses and visitors”**

## **6.0 How this will happen**

### **6.1 Key Objective 1**

*To make the most of existing car parking spaces, and to create more where practical, both on-street and off-street, for the benefit of residents, businesses and visitors.*

6.2 This strategy and on-going discussions relating to the current parking management contract provide an opportunity to define the main use of the car parks. (NB: Lydekker Car Park is not part of the NCP Contract). Discussion with partners and other car park providers will be developed with consideration to considering making car parks.

6.3 Consideration to categorising car parks within Harpenden.

Leisure Use – Short to Medium Stay  
Shopper Use – Short to Medium Stay  
Commuter Car Parks – Long Stay  
Mixed Use – Short to Long Stay

6.4 Amenbury car park is defined as Leisure use will have their primary use associated with the nearby leisure activity. Shoppers also use the car park.

6.5 Long term parking by commuters or non users of the facilities will be discouraged by way of limiting the maximum period of stay and/or by a high long stay tariff.

### **6.6 Shopper Use – Short to Medium Stay**

Car parks defined for shoppers use will be those located near to key retail areas.

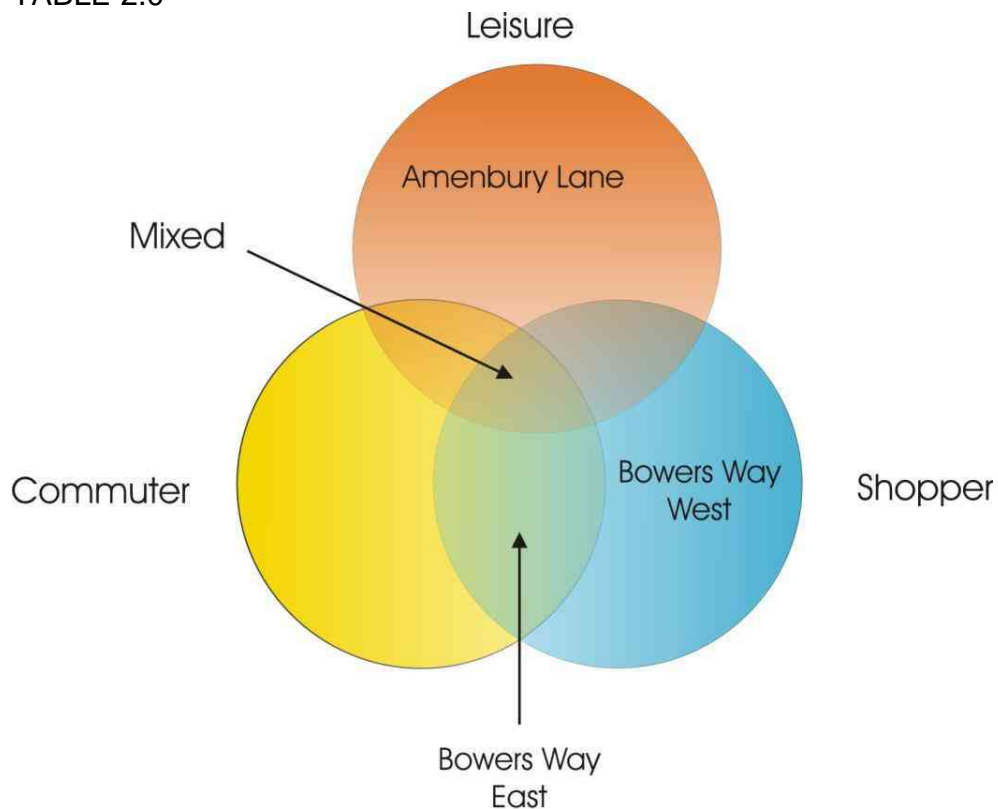
6.7 The aim of these car parks will be to provide convenient and high turnover of spaces providing a reasonable opportunity for drivers to park without circulating looking for a space adding to congestion and increasing damaging emissions.

6.8 These car parks will generally be classed as short/medium stay car parks and are likely to have a maximum stay of between 2 - 4 hours, or a high all day tariff.

- 6.9 It is assumed that on-street parking close to retail hubs will fall into this category.
- 6.10 ***Commuter Car Parks – Long Stay***  
Commuter car parks will generally be located near to centres of employment, and railways.
- 6.11 The car park would encourage all day parking by having a reduced all day tariff when compared to a shopper car park and fewer tariff bands to discourage short term parking.
- 6.12 ***Mixed Use – Short to Long Stay***  
Car parks defined as mixed use will generally be the larger car parks and situated in the heart of economic activity.
- 6.13 Mixed use car parks will cater for all users whether short stay or long stay.
- 6.14 The tariff structure for mixed use car parks will neither, encourage or discourage one type of user over another as the larger car parks are likely to have sufficient capacity to cope adequately with all types of user.
- 6.15 The Council will review annually the categorisation, and applicable tariff structure of its car parks, to ensure that their use remains current, and of most benefit to residents, businesses and visitors.

6.16 Table 2.0 sets out which car parks sit within each category;

TABLE 2.0



NOTE: Currently some outward commuters park on-street

6.17 ***Park and Ride***

Harpenden does not have the capacity to support a Park & Ride Scheme.

6.18 ***On Street parking (including Residential Street Parking and Controlled Parking Zones)***

Each year the council receives a considerable number of requests for new or for the revision of existing parking restrictions. Experience shows that pressure on on-street parking occurs within ½ mile radius of the train station and Town centre. Controlled Parking Zones (CPZs) are driven by residents demand and balanced by the requirements for business and other kerb side users.

- 6.19 On street parking will be considered either at the request by residents and or Ward councillors where uncontrolled parking is inconsiderate and causing congestion /capacity or safety concerns. This is dependent upon road layouts and safety concerns within each area and local Councillor and Portfolio Holder approval.
- 6.20 Any such requests for the review of existing schemes or implementation of new schemes will be considered by the Car Parking Working Party. Zones 1, 2 and 3 within Harpenden were reviewed in 2016.
- 6.21 In order to provide an objective decision making framework to consider each request, the Council will assess by applying a score. This currently considers the following;
- The type of request
  - The type of problem
  - Proximity to something that creates a demand for parking
  - Funding available
  - Level of complexity
- 6.22 The application of this scoring framework will generate a score to enable a decision to be taken to proceed with considering requests for new or revised parking schemes.
- 6.23 The Council will review this scoring framework when necessary to ensure that it meets the needs of the district.
- 6.24 It is the Council's policy to proceed, stage by stage, with a request for resident parking restrictions when the consultation exercise has a response rate of more than 60%, with also the majority of respondents in favour of parking controls (over 50%). Therefore if 50% +1 or more of residents, who responded, support the need for controls, a draft scheme will be prepared for further consultation. Where a response does not meet the level of support, a scheme may not continue be pursued.
- 6.25 Requests for yellow lines will be based on the highway need and the Council's scoring matrix. Yellow line schemes do not require a 60% response rate.
- 6.26 Where on street parking is located close to retail areas, this will be controlled by way of a maximum stay to encourage turnover of spaces. If appropriate, parking will be provided free of charge.
- 6.27 Clarify policy on use of parking spaces by businesses situated within controlled areas, or near to car parks.
- 6.28 In areas where unused space in controlled area is evident throughout the day, consideration will be given to releasing some of these spaces to support proprietors of local businesses or commuters. Residents will be consulted on any proposals which are under consideration. Any released spaces are likely to be charged on the basis that will be set at a level higher than local resident parking permits.

- 6.29 The Council recognises that there are some properties, commonly known as “orphan properties” that are within controlled parking zones but are outside a permit zone and do not have access to off street parking. The Council will review this when the permit policy is next reviewed.
- 6.30 **Parking Scheme Assessment**
- 6.31 The current assessment policy is published on the Council’s website at: <http://www.stalbans.gov.uk/transport-and-streets/trafficregulationorders/Requestsfornewrestriction/default.aspx>web-link which enables new requests to be prioritised and evaluated effectively.
- 6.32 As set out in the preceding section the on-street Parking Permit Policy will be reviewed to ensure that it meets the needs of both residents and businesses. The policy will consider the balance of needs which can in some locations be conflicting. The policy will look at (not exhaustive) eligible properties, zone capacity, times of operation and size. Specific local area needs will be addressed during specific scheme design and consultation with stakeholders.
- 6.34 **Key Objective 2**  
To support the local economy, particularly micro, small to medium businesses and retail outlets, working in partnership with other parking providers.
- 6.35 The demand for parking in and around the Town Centre often exceeds the supply and therefore the way space is used has to be regulated. There are difficult decisions to be made about how space is prioritised. The aim should be to balance the needs of businesses, visitors and shoppers, by placing the emphasis on shorter stays in the centre, and longer stays in peripheral car parks, with the exception of Amenbury Lane Car Park, which is categorised as a Leisure car park given its proximity to the leisure centre, and Park, which provides a hub for many community events. However, it is recognised that “essential users”, those who need a vehicle to conduct their business should be a special case, and that some provision should be retained in and around the city centre.
- 6.36 **Parking for Businesses and Local Workers**  
The breakdown of small to medium businesses in the district compared nationally is in the following table;

6.37 TABLE 1.0

St Albans City and District			England
Micro (0-9 staff)	7,000	87.2%	83.1%
Small (10-49)	835	10.4%	13.6%
Medium (50-249)	175	2.2%	2.9%
Large (250+)	20	0.2%	0.4%

SOURCE: ONS UK Business: Activity, Size and Location

- 6.38 In order to support this sector from a parking perspective the needs of all businesses will be sought during the consultation process of new car parking schemes, where this is deemed appropriate. It should be noted that the average income for some local residents can be higher than that of employees. The retail sector in particular employs staff at a lower wage than some other sectors making the cost of parking a major factor for these workers. The majority of workers tend to park on street.
- 6.39 Similarly, any reviews of existing car parking schemes (on or off-street) will seek the views of local businesses in the area affected.
- 6.40 It is proposed to continue to investigate potential locations for free short stay on-street parking locations in the Town centre as per the Corporate Plan, where there is deemed to be robust evidence of surplus capacity. However residents potentially effected will be consulted on any proposals.
- 6.41 To support businesses in their day to day trading, an effective means of communication will be investigated, to advise of changes to enforcement and parking restrictions which may significantly affect their business.
- 6.42 Harpenden Town Council provide a limited number of 'Workers Permits' for use in Lydekker Car Park.
- 6.43 **Key Objective 3**  
To balance traffic flows, to and from and across the district by ensuring parking facilities are available at key entry points across the Town for the benefit of residents, businesses and visitors.
- 6.44 It is essential that car parks are situated in locations that are easily accessible to drivers entering the town. Any proposals for significant planning applications that could substantially alter existing patterns of traffic flow would need to address their impact in relation to existing parking facilities.

- 6.45 The ability for drivers regardless of their reason for visiting Harpenden to easily identify and locate the most suitable and convenient car park is paramount to ensuring further visits and recommendation that Harpenden is an easy place to visit if travelling by car.
- 6.46 Quality and relevant signing to aid drivers is paramount, in particular visitors. Therefore signage should be clear and easy to understand.
- 6.47 The Council's website reflects the categories of car parks, and will actively work with the parking contractors to take advantage of emerging technological developments including Visitor Mobile Phone Apps.
- 6.48 There are 2 levels of parking related signs currently used to assist drivers coming into the Town Centre.
- 6.49 **Level 1 – Named Distributor Signs**
- 6.50 Once the driver has passed the CPMG signs, named distributor signs are then placed at relevant junctions to direct the driver to the relevant car park.
- 6.51 The distributor signs name the car park, e.g. Amenbury Lane, Bowers Way, etc.
- 6.52 These signs are provided and maintained by Hertfordshire County Council.
- 6.53 **Level 2 – General Parking Signs**
- 6.54 General "P" signs will be in place close to the entrance of the car park to act as a final guide for drivers.
- 6.55 Once, at the entrance of the car park there will be a number of additional signs specific to the car park, e.g. lane direction, tariff and opening hours.
- 6.56 These general signs will be the responsibility of the car park operator or St Albans City and District Council.
- 6.57 The Council will proactively work with the parking contractors to achieve this principle, where appropriate.
- 6.58 **Key Objective 4**  
*To ensure the parking service is flexible to allow for long term growth over the next 10 to 15 years, for the benefit of residents, businesses and visitors.*

- 6.59 The work carried out by the Car Parks Contract Working Party developed a number of conclusions and recommendations. The following have been adopted as furthering this particular key principle;
- a. Any new contracts to be partnerships with contractors, and partners to be proactive in suggesting improvements rather than being reactive.
  - b. Consider flexible tariffs to change behaviour e.g. encouraging greater use of car parks at times of low occupancy, using different tariffs for different car parks.
  - c. The contract and service is flexible enough to cope with changes to the local commercial operating environment. e.g. Annual review to see what is working and what can be improved, with particular emphasis on taking advantage of emerging technologies that can improve service delivery and be of benefit to the customer.
  - d. The contract needs to allow the use of data collected by new technology to improve services to residents. e.g. adjusting CPZ's.
  - e. New contract(s) to allow Council to benefit from service improvement and cost saving opportunities offered by technology developments.
  - f. Use of Key Performance Indicators (KPI's) in the contract to ensure monitoring is more effective than using defaults.
- 6.60 All on-going negotiations with existing or new contractors will require that the above form a framework of pre-requisites upon which any future parking contract is based.
- 6.61 **Electric Vehicle Charging Points.**
- 6.62 There is currently only one electric charging point within Harpenden. Given that there are some 122,000 plug-in and hybrid cars on the UK streets as at September 2017, it is inevitable that the demand for charging points will grow. Within the UK overall there are 13,900 charging points for vehicles. St Albans City & District Council will continue to work with Hertfordshire County Council and private providers to improve the provision of charging points within the town.

6.63 The Harpenden electric charging point is in Bowers Way East car Park.



6.64 **Key Objective 5**

*To influence developers of new properties to provide appropriate parking provision for the high level of car ownership within the District.*

6.65 In line with the Harpenden Neighbourhood plan ideals and through the pre-application and planning application processes, officers should seek to influence developers of new properties to provide appropriate parking provision; including taking into account the high level of car ownership within the District. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) advises that Local Authorities should seek to improve the quality of parking in town centres so that it is convenient, safe and secure, including appropriate provision for motorcycles. They should set appropriate parking charges that do not undermine the vitality of town centres.

6.66 The NPPF advises that in setting local parking standards for residential and non-residential development, local planning authorities should take into account;

- the accessibility of the development
- the type, mix and use of development
- the availability of and opportunities for public transport
- local car ownership levels and
- an overall need to reduce the use of high-emission vehicles.

6.67 When new standards are set, this will provide practical opportunities to acknowledge the different roles of different settlements and parts of settlements across the district. For example, the availability and opportunities for public transport vary both between and within settlements and this should be acknowledged through appropriately varying standards.

6.68 **Key Objective 6**

*To provide clean and safe car parking facilities, including the surrounding area (lighting and safety standards inc)*

6.69 Ensure all car parks achieve and retain the British Parking Association standard of a "Safer Parking Scheme".

- 6.70 Parking is able to support the aims of the St Albans City and District, Community Safety Partnership Strategy. The strategy has a stated priority of;  
*“Preventing and Reducing all crime with particular focus on house burglary, theft from person & fraud offences that are specifically targeted at the vulnerable and elderly.”*
- 6.71 The safer parking scheme managed by The British Parking Association provides an opportunity to support the Community Safety Partnership Strategy.
- 6.72 ***Safer Parking Scheme***
- 6.73 The safer parking scheme is an initiative of the Association of Chief Police Officers aimed at reducing crime and the fear of crime in parking facilities.
- 6.74 The award of Safer Parking Status, “Park Mark” means that the requirements of a risk assessment conducted by the Police have been met.
- 6.75 Achievement of the assessment will require the Council to ensure it has measures in place that help to deter criminal activity and anti-social behaviour, thereby demonstrating that we are doing everything we can to prevent crime and reduce the fear of crime within our parking facilities.
- 6.76 It is the intention that all District Council car parks managed by a contractor will achieve and maintain the Park Mark standard.
- 6.77 An opportunity exists to work with the parking contractor to develop Key Performance Indicators which will contribute to this objective.
- 6.78 ***Parking for Disabled Residents and Visitors***
- 6.79 It is recognised that cars are often the only viable form of transport for some residents and it is essential that those drivers with mobility problems have sufficient parking provision. It is also important that a sufficient number of blue badge holder spaces are situated close to the Town centre.
- 6.80 Disabled parking and designated spaces is available in all fee paying Town Council and NCP car parks. In addition disabled drivers can park in any parking space within a car park free for the first 3 hours when displaying a valid disabled badge and clock set to the time of arrival.
- 6.81 If a disabled driver requires longer than 3 hours they must pay and display. The council currently recommends that drivers pay for any additional time and display the pay and display ticket alongside their disabled badge and clock.
- 6.82 The Council will seek to increase the amount of disabled spaces (including elongated spaces) where possible and will ensure that if some Town centre parking spaces are reduced in line with the local plan allocations, then this will not result in an overall reduction in the number of dedicated disabled bays provided. We will also aim to achieve best practice guidelines for car park spaces where possible as follows;

- over 200 spaces in a car park – 4 disabled bays plus 4% of total capacity
- less than 200 spaces in a car park – 6% of total capacity

**6.83 Key Objective 7**

*To continue parking enforcement services on the basis of being cost neutral.*

6.84 Ensure all contractors are flexible and adaptable to political and legislative changes.

**6.85 Key Objective 8**

*To manage on street parking space in a balanced manner.*

6.86 The introduction of parking controls through limited waiting e.g. single yellow line changed to limited waiting to better manage the road space. This will free up short stay parking but displace longer stay parking to other areas or move them into car parks.

Commuter parking at the train station overflows into the surrounding streets and can have a major effect on the finite kerb space. We will work in partnership with the train operators to find solutions.

**6.87 Fees and Charges**

6.88 The Department for Transport's Full Guidance on Local Transport Plans, states that local authorities should have policies aimed at tackling congestion and changing travel behaviour. These can include restricting and / or charging for car parking.

6.89 It is St Albans City and District's Policy to review all fees and charges relating to parking on an annual basis and to ensure they are set at the appropriate level to reduce car use, reduce congestion and maintain use of car parks in accordance with their designated primary use.

**6.90 Traffic Regulation Orders (TRO's)**

The introduction of parking controls requires the preparation and completion of a Traffic Regulation Order (TRO). TRO's are legal documents which allow restrictions to be placed on the road and enforcement to take place.

6.91 The control of on street parking is maintained by the use of Traffic Regulation Orders (TRO's). These are generally implemented following requests from local Councillors and / or residents, who have raised concerns regarding unregulated parking which results in an unmanageable demand for parking.

- 6.92 By using TRO's demand can be reduced and prioritised in favour of specific groups; e.g. residents. Within the TRO, charges can be introduced and used to further dampen demand by limiting the number of permits and / or the cost.
- 6.93 With increasing pressures to reduce the environmental impact of our day to day activities there is an opportunity to consider the part parking could play in reducing greenhouse emissions.
- 6.94 The District Council within its agreement with Hertfordshire County Council only deals with parking related matters. Any issue relating to traffic movements would have to be considered by the County Council. A restriction cannot be implemented and enforced until a TRO is in place. The introduction of a TRO must follow a statutory process. The details are contained within *The Local Authorities' Traffic Orders (Procedure) (England and Wales) Regulations 1996*.
- 6.95 The process of introducing parking restrictions can lengthy; this will vary depending upon the complexity, level of feedback and extent of the scheme. The most complex and detailed schemes may take up to 2 years to implement. This will depend on the level and extent of feedback received.
- 6.96 Traffic Regulation Orders require at least two stages of consultation however if the scheme is complex then further consultation may be necessary. In the case of residents parking requests the process is different to that of other waiting restriction requests – such as yellow line implementation.
- 6.97 The initial request *must demonstrate that 60%* of the road supports residents parking implementation or changes.
- 6.98 Following assessment and the processes mentioned above a review will be undertaken of the area and during this review other roads may be included within the residents parking which would cater for issues such as displacement (cars moving to nearby streets to find unrestricted parking); etc. the stages are as follows;
- (a) The next stage is **Initial Consultation** to identify whether the majority of residents would support the introduction of parking controls, once they have been presented with the controls that could be introduced. The consultation will also ask residents to indicate their wishes for the design of the scheme.
  - (b) **Then comes the Informal Consultation** prepared based upon officer and Highway assessment of the area. The scheme will take account of resident feedback received during the initial consultation process.
  - (c) The **Formal Consultation follows** once the legal documents have been checked and the draft Traffic Regulation Order is ready for formal consultation. Formal consultation of a Traffic Regulation Order takes the form of an advert in the local paper, Public Notices placed near the proposed restrictions (where

appropriate) local resident and any other interested bodies will also be sent consultation letters. The views of Local Councillors, Emergency Services, The Freight Transport Association, The Road Haulage Association and local public transport operators are also sought.

- 6.99 The consultation period is for at least 21 days from the start of the notice. Objections to the proposals and comments of support must be made in writing to the address specified in the notice or submitted via email during the consultation period. All objections must be considered.
- 6.100 The decision to formally seal the TRO will be made by the Head of Legal, Democratic and Regulatory Services in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Community Engagement and Resources. Both will need to be satisfied all required procedures have been followed and the proposal is supported by either the Local Councillors or the Car Parking Working Party. The Council's decision on the Order will be notified to those that responded to the consultation.
- 6.101 If the scheme is to be implemented any lining and signing works need to be arranged and then the Order can be sealed. A made Order Notice is then advertised and the local residents will be notified of the start date of the restrictions.
- 6.102 ***Non permit parking schemes*** are slightly different as the initial consultation stage may not be necessary. There is no need for the initial consultation stage unless the scheme is likely to be contentious. The 60% policy does not apply to non-permit schemes.
- 6.103 ***It should be noted that*** each year the District Council receives a considerable number of requests for new or the revision of existing parking restrictions. In order to provide an objective framework each location or scheme is scored using an assessment scoring framework.

**This document will be revised and updated biennially**

## **Solutions**

### ***Completed Winter (2016)***

1. Provision of additional 20 spaces achieved through more efficient lining of Amenbury Lane Car Park
2. Provision of extra Christmas parking with local landowners.

### ***Short Term***

1. Provision of additional approximately 100 spaces at Amenbury Car Park as part of the new gym development.

### ***Medium Term – Future Options***

1. Working with train companies to increase car parking capacity at Harpenden Station car park.
2. Build another level/increase spaces at Bowers Way East car park
3. Build another level/increase spaces on Amenbury Lane

## **Action Plan Summary**

1. Review tariff structure to change car park user behaviour (K.P 1)  
*Implementation date: 1<sup>st</sup> April 2017*
2. Clarify policy on use of parking spaces by businesses located within CPZ's (K.P 1)  
*Implementation date: 2017*
3. Continue current work to identify on-street under used parking spaces to support local businesses subject to consultation. (K.P 2)  
*Implementation date: On-going*
4. Share information with contractor on future high profile community events (K.P 2)  
*Implementation date: On-going*
5. Update advertising of car parks to direct shoppers and visitors to appropriate car parks. (K.P 2)  
*Implementation date: Annual Review – next review date 1<sup>st</sup> April 2017*
6. Actively work with parking contractors to identify flexible products to assist part-time and low paid workers. (K.P 2)  
*Implementation date: Due to be implemented by NCP 2016/17*

7. Work with parking contractors to develop mobile phone apps to encourage smarter use of car parks (K.P 3)  
*Implementation date: Due to be implemented by NCP 2016/17*
8. Planning department to work with developers to provide appropriate parking facilities which are clean secure and safe (K.P 6)  
*Implementation date: On-going commitment*
9. Planning department to work with developers to ensure that planning applications reflect The National Planning Policy Framework (K.P 5)  
*Implementation date: - On-going commitment*
10. Annually review categories of car parks and tariff structure. (K.P 7)  
*Implementation date: 1<sup>st</sup> October 2017, and on-going commitment*
11. Consider “orphan properties” during the next planned review of the Council parking permit policy.  
*Implementation date: On-going as each CPZ requires review – this will be carried out as part of this work.*

## **Bibliography**

1. “Findings of the Car Park Contract Working Party – Principles for Future Contracts”
2. St Albans Visitor Economy Strategy 2013 – 2018
3. The St Albans District Community Safety Partnership Strategy 2013/2014
4. Harpenden TC Cllr Car Parking Analysis 2016
5. The Community Survey 2012.
6. Full Council Briefing Note: Emissions based permitting.
7. St Albans City & District Parking Strategy 2014-19

## Appendix A

### A1 The Current Position

- A1.1 The scope of the service covers the management of Council owned car parks and the enforcement of CPZ's on-street, and enforcement of parking in car parks (off-street), through the drafting and implementation of Traffic Road Orders (TRO's)
- A1.2 The car parks outlined in Table 1.0 are managed under the existing Car Parks Management contract, currently awarded to NCP.
- A1.3 On-street and off street parking enforcement is carried out under contract by NSL.
- A1.4 Developing and implementing TRO's is carried out in house, by the Council and processing of Penalty Charge Notices (PCN's) is carried in partnership with the parking enforcement contractor NSL.

### A2 Car Parks in the District

- A2.1 There are a total of 48 car parks in the district.
- A2.2 12 owned by the Council and managed under the current car parks contract (See Table 5.0).
- A2.3 24 owned and managed by the Council (See Table 6.0).
- A2.4 7 privately owned / or leased by external organisations (See Table 7.0).
- A2.5 The Council is responsible for the management of the following car parks under the existing car parks contract.

**TABLE 5.0: Car Parks owned by the Council and managed under the car parks contract.**

<i><b>Harpenden</b></i>	<i><b>St Albans</b></i>
Amenbury Lane	Drovers Way (Multi-storey)
Bowers Way West	Russell Avenue (Multi-storey)
Bowers Way East	Adelaide Street
	Bricket Road North
	Gombards
	Keyfield Terrace
	London Road
	Townsend Avenue
	Verulamium (St Michaels)

**TABLE 6.0: Car Parks owned and managed by the Council**

<b><i>Harpenden / Redbourn / Wheathampstead</i></b>	<b><i>St. Albans / Park Street / Sandridge / London Colney</i></b>
Cravells Road (Harpenden)	Civic Centre (St. Albans)
Marquis Lane (Harpenden)	Westminster Lodge (St Albans)
Nomansland Common (Wheathampstead)	Clarence Park (St. Albans)
East Lane (Wheathampstead)	Batchwood Hall (St. Albans)
High Street (Redbourn)	Southview Road (St. Albans)
Cumberland House (Redbourn)	The Ridgeway (St. Albans)
	Albert Street (St Albans)
	Park Street (Park Street)
	Church End (Sandridge)
	Haseldine Road (London Colney)
	There are a further 7 car parks which are held for residents via license in the City Centre.

**TABLE 7.0: Car parks privately owned/or leased by external organisations**

<i><b>Harpenden</b></i>
Harpenden Station (West) (FCC – APCOA)
Harpenden Station (East) (FCC – APCOA)
Lydekker Car Park (Harpenden Town Council)
BAA Lambs (Harpenden Town Council)
Leyton Road (Harpenden Town Council)
Harpenden Public Hall (Harpenden Town Council)
Kinsbourne Green (Harpenden Town Council)

- A2.6 The lease agreement provides the Council with guaranteed revenues, each year, over the 10+5 year term, rising year on year. The agreement details a schedule of parking tariffs relating to car parks which can be varied only with the agreement of the Council. Under the lease the contractor is responsible for all operating costs and commercial risks. During the first 18 months of the contract the contractor invested approximately £2.7m with £1.8m relating to the multi storey car park in Drovers Way.
- A2.7 Under the lease, the contractor is responsible for all operating costs and commercial risks.
- A2.8 Any variations from the agreed schedule of future charges will need the agreement of the Council. They will also need the consent of the contractor as changes may impact on the financial model that has been agreed.
- A2.9 The current tariff structure can be found on the Council's website. At present, it provides a one size fits all approaches and does not take account of the main usage of the car park in question.

### **A3      Parking Enforcement in the District**

A3.1      St Albans City and District Council presently has 6 CPZ's (including 27 zones) in operation across the district;

A3.2      Details of the CPZs and Zones Within Each CPZ;

CPZ 1      consists of approximately 21 residential zones (zones T, U, PR1 & PR2 were added to the zones that were in operation in 2004)

CPZ 2      area around the Hospital in St Albans (zone HA)

CPZ 3      covers only Orient Close (zone OC)

CPZ 4      covers only Havercroft Close (zone HC)

CPZ 5      covers some residential streets in Harpenden (zone 1)

CPZ 6      covering additional streets in Harpenden (zone 2 & 3)

A3.3      In 2014/15 the Council issued;

- 562 Residents permits -
- No figures are available for the number of Residents vouchers sold vouchers for Harpenden. However in 14/15 11,830 voucher books of 4 hrs vouchers we sold and 5,195 books of all day vouchers – both these figures represent vouchers sold for St Albans & Harpenden residents.
- Health care permits – 4

A3.4      The average recovery rate of Penalty Charge Notices, 2012/13, increased to 91.83%, from 83.33% the previous year.

A3.5      The number of Penalty charges notices served over the past 7 years is;

- 2010/11 – 21,408
- 2011/12 – 20,433
- 2012/13 – 17,709
- 2013/14 – 18,770
- 2014/15 – 18,127
- 2015/16 - 18,967
- 2016/17 – 20,694

A3.6      The existing contractor is required to provide Civil Enforcement Officers (CEO's - previously known as Parking Attendants or Traffic Wardens) to patrol the District and enforce the relevant parking restrictions within these CPZ's. The patrolling rationale and policy is set by the Council, through the Car Parking Working Party which advises the Portfolio Holder for

- A3.7 The Parking enforcement service currently provides 24 hour telephone payment lines.
- A3.8 The District is currently responsible for 37 pay and display machines that are not situated within the NCP car parks. The contract provides for NSL to maintain and service these machines.
- A3.09 In 2016 18 Pay and Display machine were replaced with new machines which have advanced security features, less maintenance and provide real-time information.
- A3.10 In October 2015 a PayByPhone trial was initiated in 3 areas in Harpenden (Milton Road, Breadcroft Lane and Devonshire Road) after identifying an 80% take up in the new technology. This approach could be incorporated for other areas where pay and display machines exist.

#### **A4 The Contracts**

- A4.1 The contract from St Albans to outsource Car Park Management and Parking Enforcement to NCP commenced on 4<sup>th</sup> October 2004. In 2005, the contractor's parent company decided to split the off-street parking business into National Car Parks – which was subsequently sold in March 2007, to be known as NCP Services. In April 2009 the company rebranded as NSL. Since 2009, NSL have dealt with on and off street enforcement and NCP have managed the car parks. In terms of payments, NSL invoiced NCP, who in turn invoiced the Council. Both companies have been separately monitored by the Council.

- A4.2 On the 18<sup>th</sup> March 2013 the contract was novated to reflect corporate restructuring, and a recommendation from an Internal Audit Report resulting in the car park management contract being held by NCP and the Civil Parking Enforcement contract being held by NSL Services Limited. The contract was for 10 years, and ended on 3<sup>rd</sup> October 2014 but was subsequently extended by 5 years up to 3<sup>rd</sup> October 2019.

## **A5     *Local Democracy at Work in Parking***

- A5.1 Parking within the district, falls under the remit of the Business and Community Portfolio. The Portfolio Holder also chairs a cross party Car Parking Working Party, which meets each quarter to discuss new and on-going parking schemes. These meetings are open to the public.
- A5.2 Any aspect of the work carried out in parking can be and is subject to call in by the two Scrutiny Committees in operation (Internal Performance and Local Services). The Internal Performance Scrutiny Committee formed a Working Party to consider how both parking Contracts were working, and developed a suite of recommendations and improvements which were agreed by Cabinet and where applicable incorporated into this document.

## **A6     *External Stakeholders***

- A6.1 The Council works with Hertfordshire County Council to develop Road Traffic Orders and Controlled Parking Zones. It also meets every six months with officers from County Road Traffic Section, to discuss new and on-going initiatives.

## **A7     *External Drivers for Action***

- A7.1 The survey supporting St Albans Visitor Economy Strategy 2013 – 2018 identified reduced levels of satisfaction compared to the level of importance, for;
- Ease of Parking
  - Cost of Parking

A7.2 The St Albans District Community Safety Partnership Strategy 2013/2014 has identified as one of their six priorities to tackle during 2013/14;

*“Preventing and reducing crime in particular burglary and motor vehicle crime”*

A7.3 The Community survey results identified a 13% increase in levels of satisfaction in relation to parking between 2010/11 and 2012.

A7.4 The Internal Performance Scrutiny Committee, Car Parks Contract Working Party, commissioned a survey which identified the following area of concern to residents and visitors to the district;

- Less than 505 of respondents were satisfied with the security of the car parks.
- Qualitative comments suggested that the cost of car parking in the district is perceived as high compared to Welwyn and Watford, discouraging some from parking here.
- Of the 80% of respondents who had use controlled on-street parking in the last six months, 35% found it easy to pay, and 33% found it difficult.

## Appendix B

### Car Parks within St Albans District

