

Independent Review of East Herts' Resident Permit Zone (RPZ) Schemes Operational Guidance

1. Background

East Herts District Council's (EHDC) [Resident Permit Parking Schemes Operational Guidance](#) sets out the criteria for implementing new Resident Permit Zones (RPZs) and their operational details. RPZs are designed to support residents in areas where on-street parking demand exceeds supply.

A review of the current guidance is a direct outcome of the actions outlined in East Herts' broader Parking Strategy. During engagement for the strategy, residents identified areas experiencing high parking pressure that would benefit from controlled parking measures. The following review, conducted by Citisense, aims to enhance the guidance framework to meet the evolving needs of the community, environment, and local economy.

By revisiting the guidance, the Council has an opportunity to refine and modernise parking controls to better address residents' needs, promote equitable access, reduce congestion, and encourage the adoption of greener transport options. Comparing East Herts' existing policies with those of neighbouring or similar local authorities helps identify best practices and inform improvements, fostering a balanced, forward-thinking approach to parking management that benefits everyone.

2. Recommendations for EHDC

The following table outlines the recommended updates to the current Operational Guidance and general RPZ processes. Each recommendation is accompanied by its rationale, alignment with the strategic aims of the Parking Strategy, and the proposed timeframe for implementation.

Cost: £-££; **RAG:** Green (low risk) – Red (high risk)

REF	Recommendation	Rationale	Timeframe	Cost	RAG
Changes to RPZ Criteria					
1	<p>Use additional metrics in the review of new RPZs, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Impact of vehicle emissions on air quality. Prioritise Air Quality Management Areas. • Number of schools in the area • Number of accidents in the area or emergency services concerns • Proximity to transport hubs and cycling infrastructure • Proximity to town centres/shopping hubs and public car parks • Parking displacement from nearby RPZs • 	<p>The incorporation of these metrics and others ensures East Herts takes a holistic approach to reviewing the need for new RPZs. It allows the Council to consider its wider and more long-term objectives, including those centred around the environment, health, and safety, while also addressing parking pressure and congestion concerns.</p> <p>Aim: Sustainability, Community Well-being</p>	Short-term	££	Green
2	<p>Remove the following sentence in the Guidance: <i>The kerb space occupied by non-residents should be greater than 40% at times when parking problems caused by non-residents occur (survey required).</i></p>	<p>This change allows the Council to consider a wider range of factors contributing to parking issues, such as residents owning multiple vehicles, which can exacerbate congestion. By focusing on the broader impacts of parking demand rather than narrowly defined thresholds, the Council can implement more effective solutions that discourage excessive vehicle ownership. A map of areas with high rates of multiple car ownership is in Section 4 below.</p>	Short-term	Free/ £	Green



Cost: £-££; **RAG:** Green (low risk) – Red (high risk)

REF	Recommendation	Rationale	Timeframe	Cost	RAG
		Aim: Sustainability, Community Well-being			
3	Create digital map of existing RPZs	<p>This will help support the upcoming government requirement for digital traffic orders by mid-2025 and can help East Herts better identify areas for extended or new RPZs.</p> <p>Aim: Community well-being</p>	Short-term	£	Green
Changes to Engagement Process					
4	Review requirements for participation levels, with a recommendation to reduce the current response rate requirement. At present, the guidance requires that 51% of households must respond during the engagement process.	<p>The current 51% threshold may delay action on critical issues like congestion, safety, and air pollution, especially in cases where residents are affected but less likely to participate in engagement. While the Council strives to engage all households and businesses in a proposed RPZ area, response rates often skew toward certain groups, leaving some voices underrepresented. Lowering the response requirement ensures that valuable projects can move forward while balancing resident input with broader community and environmental objectives. As an example, the London</p>	Short-term	Free/ £	Green



Cost: £-££; **RAG:** Green (low risk) – Red (high risk)

REF	Recommendation	Rationale	Timeframe	Cost	RAG
		<p>Borough of Barking and Dagenham apply a 33% response rate requirement.</p> <p>Aim: Community well-being, sustainability</p>			
5	<p>Consider removing or reducing the requirement that a majority be in favour of the scheme and take a broader approach that East Herts will consider criteria such as congestion, safety, air pollution along with resident and District Councillor feedback.</p> <p>As part of this, consider changing the standard engagement surveys used by the Council to utilise more open text questions to gather feedback rather than referendum-type questions on a proposed RPZ.</p>	<p>Removing the requirement for a majority of respondents to support a controlled parking scheme and adopting a broader approach would give the Council more flexibility in decision-making while ensuring a more holistic evaluation of community needs.</p> <p>Considering criteria such as safety, parking pressure, and air pollution, in combination with feedback allows the Council to address pressing issues that may have more long-term benefits. This approach prioritises road safety, eases congestion, and reduces environmental impacts, ultimately creating healthier, safer, and more accessible neighbourhoods for all.</p>	Medium-term	Free/ £	Amber



Cost: £-££; **RAG:** Green (low risk) – Red (high risk)

REF	Recommendation	Rationale	Timeframe	Cost	RAG
		<p>Modifying the survey format to reflect this approach will allow the Council to gather more detailed and comprehensive feedback on the concerns or questions residents may have with the introduction of an RPZ.</p> <p>Aim: Sustainability</p>			
Changes to Permit Fees					
6	Implement RPZ permit pricing that reflects vehicle emissions, offering lower fees for low-emission and electric vehicles to promote environmental sustainability.	<p>This aligns with one of the actions in the updated Parking Strategy as well as overarching objectives to encourage a transition to more sustainable vehicles. A more long-term recommendation, this could be trialled with Resident Permits and expanded to other permit types as applicable. Other authorities with similar structures include Enfield Town Council and St Albans District Council.</p> <p>Aim: Sustainability</p>	Long-term	££	Red
7	Introduce higher fees for the third permit. East Herts currently has the same price for the 2 nd and 3 rd permit.	A higher fee for a third permit can discourage multiple car ownership and help maintain parking availability for all households in an area. Other local authorities have	Long-term	£	Amber



Cost: £-££; **RAG:** Green (low risk) – Red (high risk)

REF	Recommendation	Rationale	Timeframe	Cost	RAG
		<p>higher fees for third permits, including Stevenage, Braintree, Hertsmere, and St Albans. A third permit in St Albans is 81% higher than a second one on average. In some areas, a third vehicle is not permitted at all, including North Herts, Watford Borough, and Three Rivers County Council. More details on fees are in Section 4 below.</p> <p>Aim: Sustainability</p>			
Changes to Terms and Conditions					
8	Introduce a £10 admin fee for refunding or replacing a permit	<p>An admin fee would help cover the cost to the Council for processing the refund or replacement. This ensures that administrative resources are not diverted from other essential services and promotes responsible use of permits by encouraging residents to take greater care with them.</p> <p>Other local authorities with an admin fee include Watford and Stevenage.</p> <p>Aim: Economic Prosperity</p>	Short-term	£	Green



Cost: £-££; **RAG:** Green (low risk) – Red (high risk)

REF	Recommendation	Rationale	Timeframe	Cost	RAG
9	Remove limit on the number of visitor parking hours available for purchase. Current guidance states the quantity of visitor hours will be approximately 20% of the annual operating hours of RPZ.	Removing limits on visitor parking accommodates the diverse needs of residents, such as those who rely on frequent visits from caregivers, contractors, or service providers, and helps to foster social connection. Aim: Community well-being	Short-term	£	Green
10	Increase the price of visitor vouchers to better align with benchmarked local authorities.	Increasing the price of visitor vouchers helps to ensure fairness and that the price reflects the true value of the parking service. It encourages responsible use of the available parking, which can reduce congestion and encourage visitors to opt for alternative transport options, such as walking, cycling or public transportation. Please see the Benchmarking section below for visitor voucher prices across different local authorities. Aim: Sustainability	Medium-term	£	Amber
Changes to Monitoring Process					
11	Update monitoring language to include parking surveys as part of the six-month	A more robust monitoring process that includes parking surveys can help ensure that a new RPZ is having the	Medium-term	££	Green



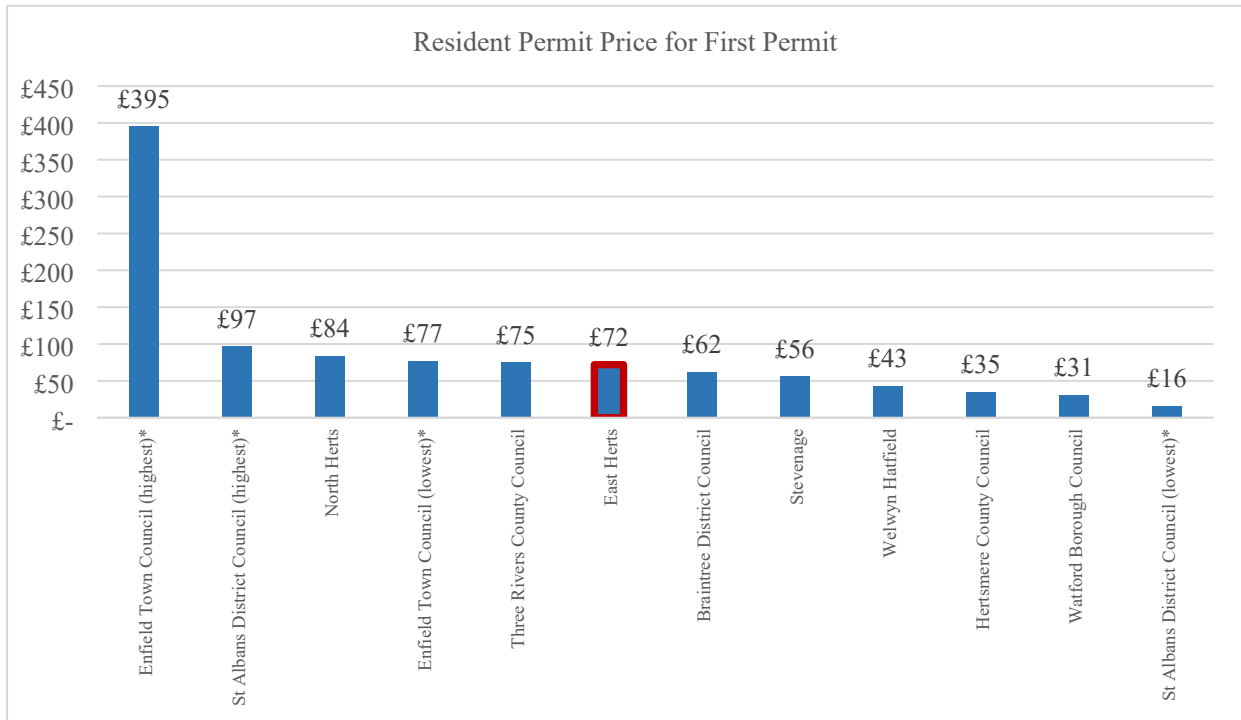
Cost: £-££; **RAG:** Green (low risk) – Red (high risk)

REF	Recommendation	Rationale	Timeframe	Cost	RAG
	review to monitor parking displacement and potential need to expand RPZ area.	<p>intended impact on managing parking stress in the area. It can also help identify if there is parking displacement as a result of the RPZ, allowing the Council to review the need to expand or modify the scheme.</p> <p>Aim: Community well-being</p>			
Changes to Implementation					
12	Ensure RPZs are equipped with adequate EV charging facilities.	<p>In alignment with East Herts updated Parking Strategy and broader climate goals, this recommendation can help encourage and support a transition to electric vehicles by expanding the EV charging network.</p> <p>Aim: Sustainability</p>	Medium/long-term	£££	Green



3. Benchmarked Prices

3.1 Resident Permit Price: First Permit



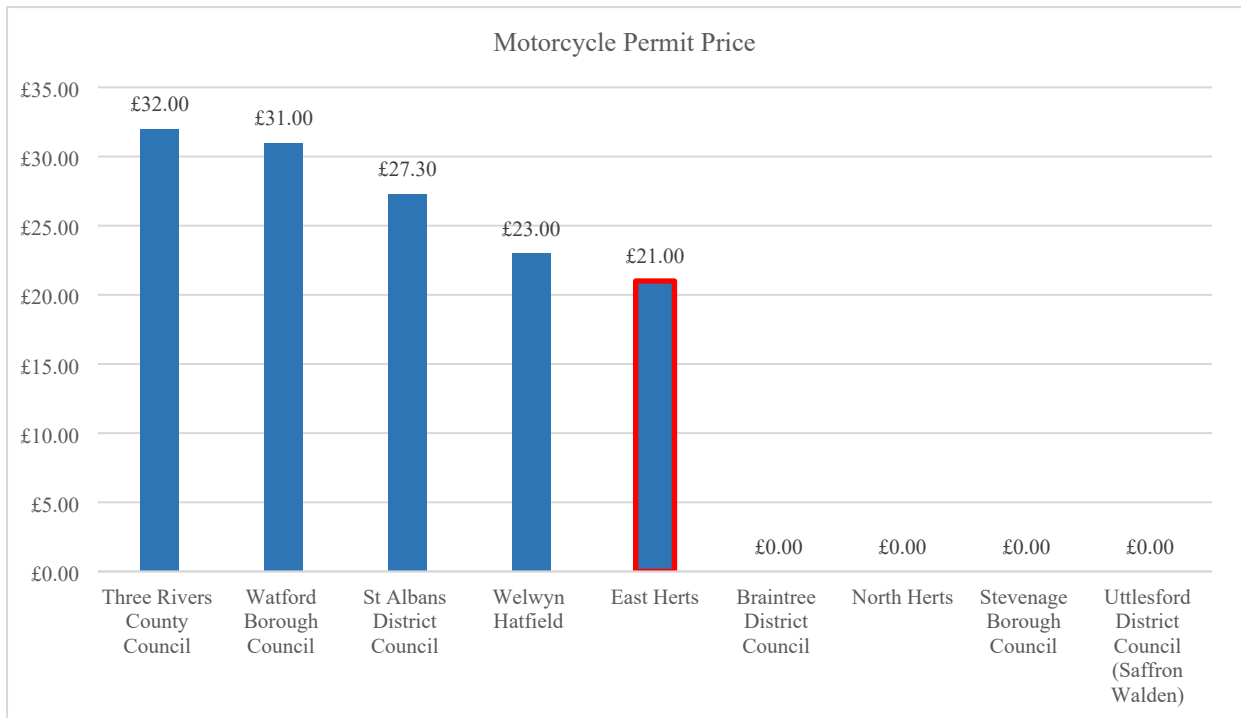
*Local authority uses emissions-based charging

3.1 Resident Permit Price for Multiple Permits

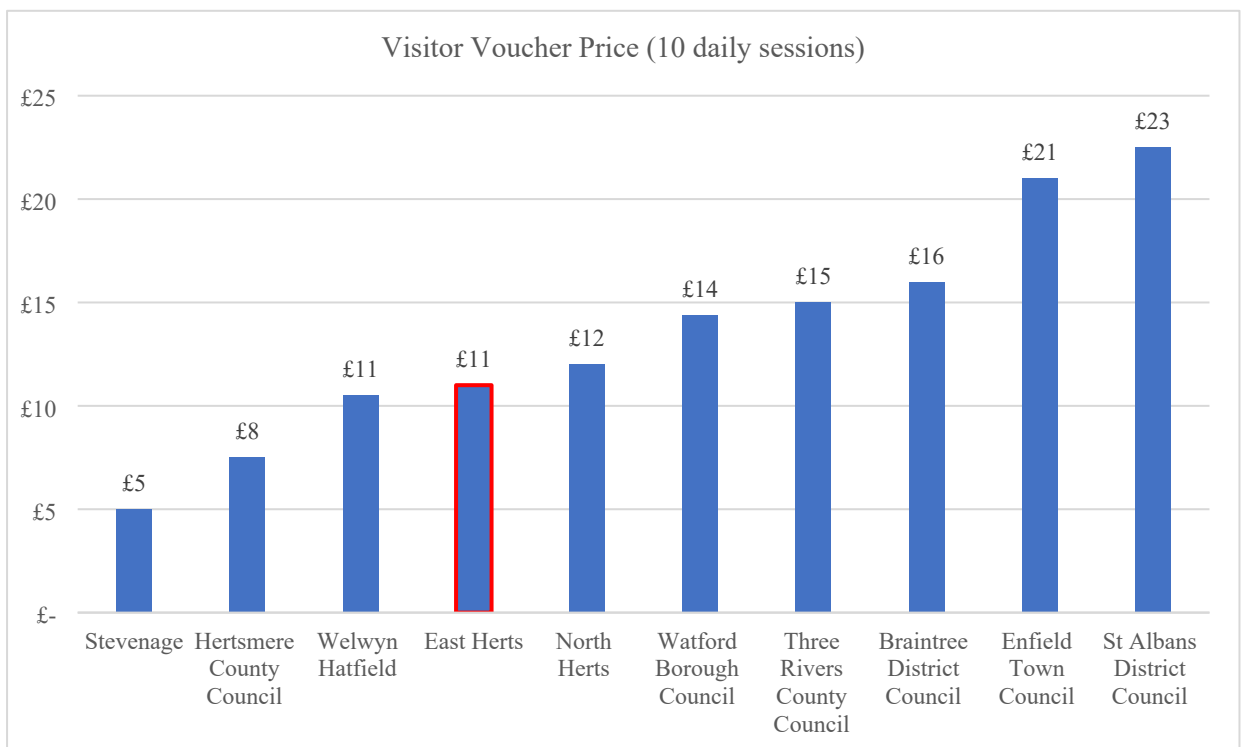


*Local authority uses emissions-based charging

3.3 Motorcycle Permit Price



3.4 Visitor Voucher Price for 10 Daily Sessions

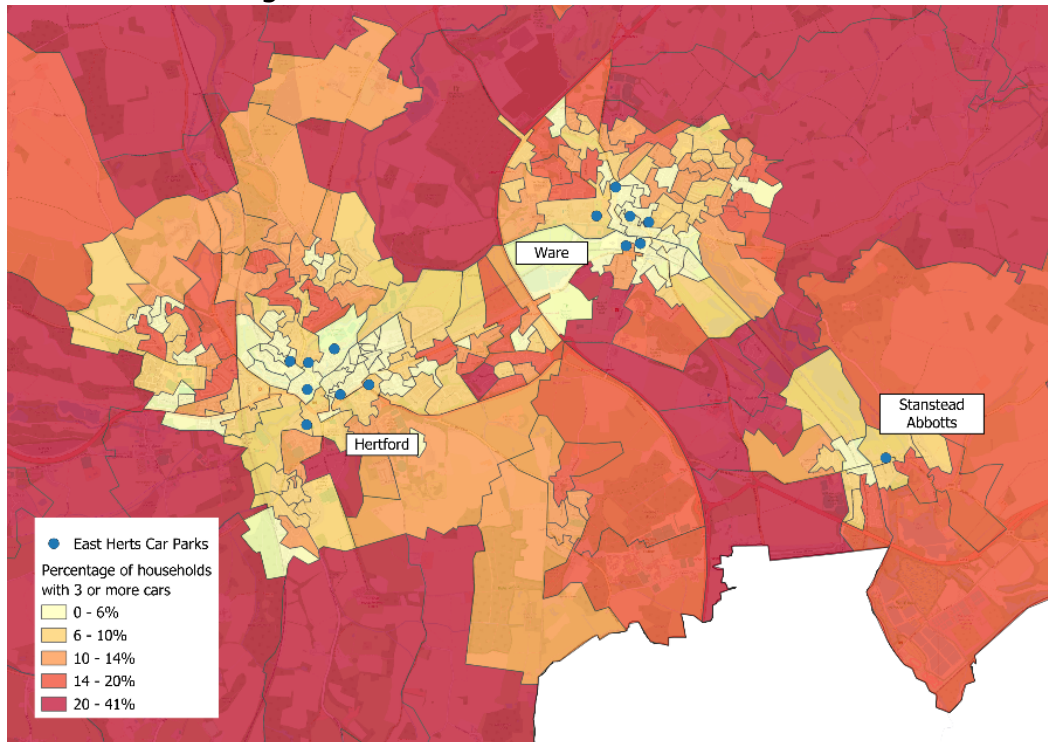


Note: For East Herts, it assumes 10 hours of RPZ operation at £0.11/hour.

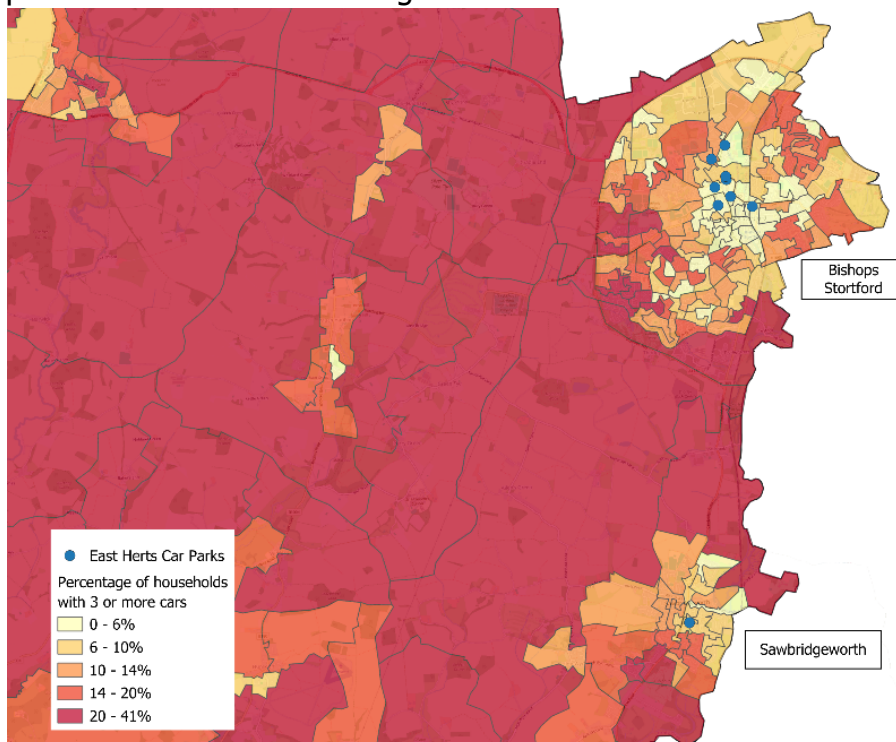


4. East Herts Car Ownership Data

4.1 Percentage of households with 3 or more cars in Ware, Hertford, and Stanstead Abbots and surrounding areas.



4.2 Percentage of households with 3 or more cars in Sawbridgeworth and Bishops Stortford and surrounding areas.



4.3 Percentage of households with 3 or more cars in Buntingford and surrounding areas

