



East Herts Parking Strategy Development

RESIDENT ENGAGEMENT REPORT

DECEMBER 2024



Executive Summary

The engagement to gather feedback on resident views on parking in East Herts ran from 3 September until 11 October 2024.



There were 1,702 total responses:

- 1641 online survey responses
- 61 attendees at the in-person events

93% of survey respondents were residents.

99% of respondents were car owners



Emission-based charges/Discounts for EVs

Respondents were concerned this would impact people who can't afford an EV. Respondents in favour of the proposal suggested including hybrids in the discount.

Off-peak/on-peak parking charges

Respondents were concerned that the charges would reduce visits to businesses. The second most common sentiment was support for the proposal.

Diesel surcharge

Respondents felt this might impact low-income people who can't replace their car. Respondents in favour of the proposal felt it would have a positive environmental impact.

Review charge levels for different groups

Respondents did not have a strong opinion on this proposal. Several were in favour of a reduced charge for carers and subsidies or support for businesses.

Review all-day tariff option

Respondents were concerned for town employees. Many were supportive of the proposal as long as these employees received concessions.



Easier, fairer, and more consistent charges

Many respondents felt charging should not be the same as each town was different. However, many respondents also felt that charges should be less complicated.

Workplace parking levy

Respondents felt this would be beneficial where public transit was in place or for larger businesses. Respondents were concerned about negative impacts on employees.

Car-sharing incentives

Respondents felt car-sharing wasn't practical for everyone and were unsure of how it would be monitored. Others felt the proposal was worth trialling.

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Introduction

Background

In response to pressing environmental, social, and financial challenges, East Herts District Council (EHDC) commissioned Citisense to lead a public engagement period to gather feedback on parking in the district. The public engagement period was conducted from **3 September to 11 October 2024**, providing residents, businesses, and stakeholders with an opportunity to share their views through an online survey or during seven in-person engagement sessions. Respondents were able to comment on 8 proposal initiatives put forward by EHDC as well as provide other comments about parking generally. This Resident Engagement Report presents a breakdown of the feedback, highlighting key themes, concerns, and suggestions raised by the community.

Objectives

Public demand for a more efficient, fair, and convenient parking system underscores the need for continual evaluation and enhancement of services. The purpose of this public engagement is to understand how EHDC can align parking practices with the council's broader goals of promoting sustainable travel, improving air quality, and fostering a healthier, more accessible environment. Engaging stakeholders—including residents, businesses, and visitors—is central to ensuring parking practices continue to meet diverse community needs. The feedback received during the public engagement will be used to shape East Herts' updated Parking Strategy, which is set to be developed later in the year.

The proposals

Engagement respondents were asked to provide feedback on the following 8 proposals, which fall under three overarching aims. The 8 proposals consulted upon seek to create a fairer and more effective parking system, reflecting East Herts District Council's commitment to sustainability and community well-being. This feedback has been carefully analysed and summarised in the Proposal Feedback section of this report.

Aim: Using parking charges to support the take-up of more sustainable and environmentally friendly vehicles:

Proposal 1: Different permit charges based on vehicle emissions including a lower charge for electric vehicles or EV discounts in car parks.

Proposal 2: Time-based pricing for parking, e.g. a higher tariff at peak times, and lower charges at off-peak times.

Proposal 3: Introduction of a diesel surcharge.

Proposal 4: Review of charge levels for Motorcycles, Carers, Off-street parking, Businesses, and Car Clubs.

Aim: Making changes to charging in car parks to make them fairer and more consistent across East Herts:

Proposal 5: Review the all-day parking tariff option for some town centre car parks.

Proposal 6: Making parking charges easier, fairer and more consistent across East Herts by reviewing existing charges, including locations and hours.

Aim: Making changes to workplace parking charges in town centres to encourage more sustainable travel to work:

Proposal 7: Introducing a workplace parking levy.

Proposal 8: Offering incentives for car-sharing/car-pooling.

Engagement

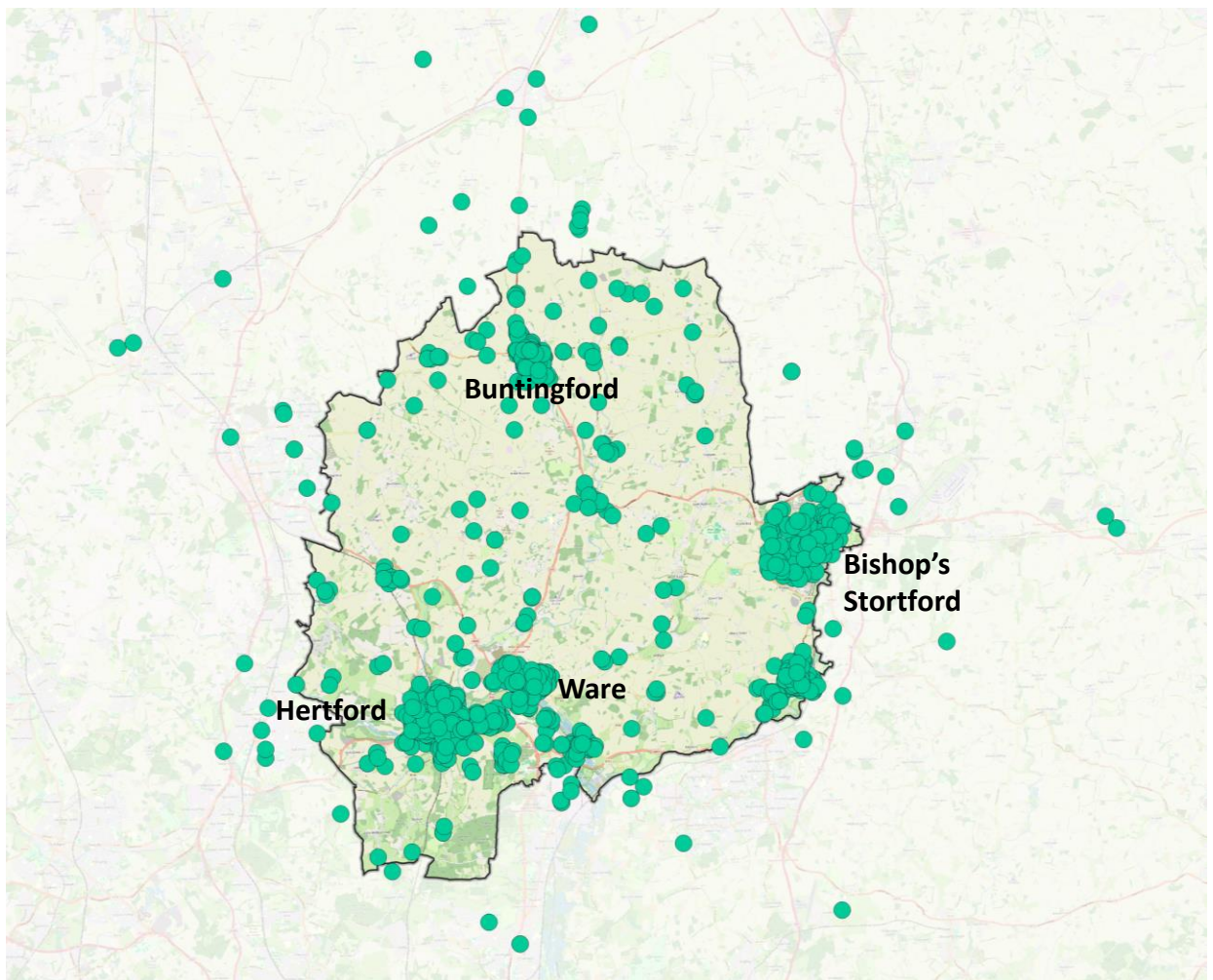
Engagement overview

Respondents could provide feedback by filling in an online survey on the [engagement webpage](#), sending comments by post or email, or attending one of multiple events held throughout East Herts.

The engagement survey included a combination of free-text and multiple-choice questions designed to understand the respondent's current concerns with parking in the area and gather their feedback on the proposals. The survey also included demographic questions.

In total, there were **1,641** responses to the engagement survey and **61** attendees at events.

Responses came from across East Herts, with the largest share of respondents from Hertford and then Bishop's Stortford. Buntingford and the surrounding are also saw a high response rate.



Data is based on voluntary responses from the online survey and may not represent all respondents.

Demographics of survey respondents

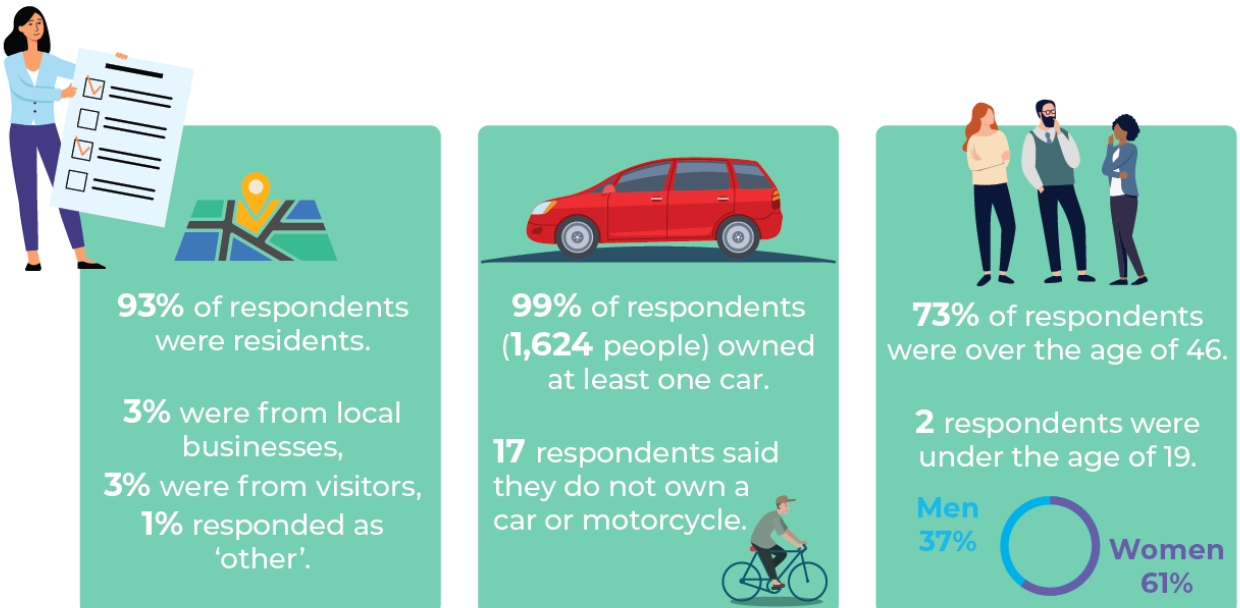
The engagement survey received **1,641** responses, with most participants being East Herts residents (93%), aligning with the district's population focus. Businesses (3%) and visitors (3%) provided additional perspectives on parking challenges.

Age Representation: Respondents were largely aged 31 and above, with 73% falling into the 46–60 and 61+ categories. Younger groups under 30 were underrepresented, comprising just 4.3% of responses, compared to 14% of the district's population aged 20–34¹.

Gender Representation: Women accounted for 61% of respondents, compared to 37% men, suggesting higher engagement from women. This imbalance may influence the nature of the feedback.

Vehicle Ownership: Reflecting the district's high car ownership rate of 88%², most respondents reported frequent car use. This underscores the importance of parking policies that balance environmental objectives with the needs of a car-dependent population.

Conclusion: While responses generally reflect the local population, gaps exist in representing younger residents. Expanding outreach in future engagement will ensure the strategy addresses the needs of all demographic groups in East Herts.



Data is based on voluntary responses from the online survey and may not represent all respondents.

¹[East Hertfordshire Demographics | Age, Ethnicity, Religion, Wellbeing](#)

²[East Herts Community Transport Strategy 2018-2021](#)

Events

7 events were held across 6 different locations throughout the engagement period. A breakdown of these is shown below.

Events were structured in a workshop style focussing on the issues and opportunities of each proposal. Attendees were invited to discuss each proposal and record their thoughts. A breakdown of comments is included within this report.

Breakdown of events and attendees:

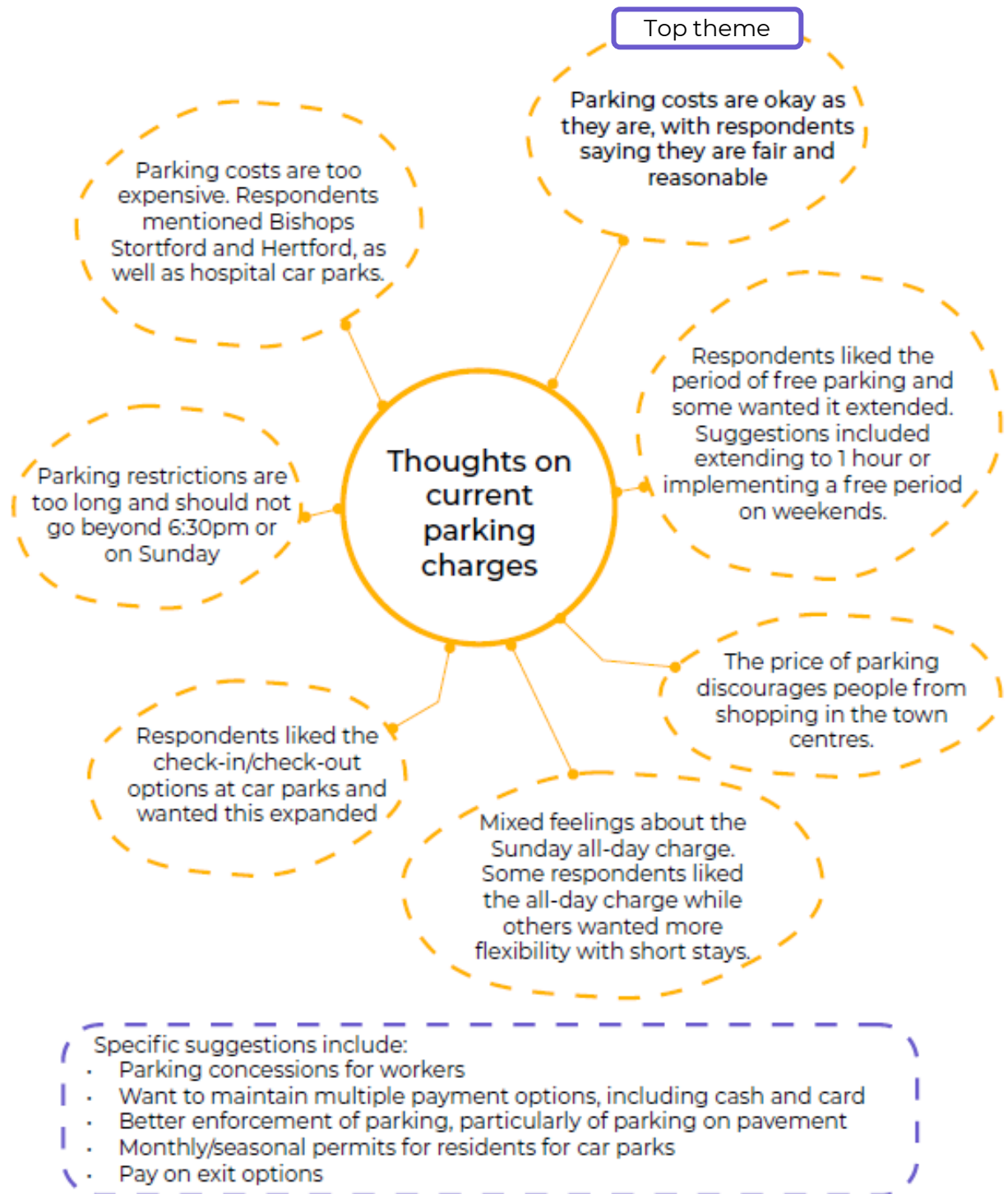
Date	Time	Location	Venue	Attendees recorded
Mon 9th Sept 2024	1pm – 2.30pm	Bishop's Stortford (1st)	St Michael's Mead Community Centre	11 total (2 public, 3 East Herts Officers, 5 Cllrs, 2 Consultants)
Weds 11th Sept	1.30pm – 3pm	Sawbridgeworth	Sawbridgeworth Town Council – Council Chamber	15 total (9 public, 2 East Herts Officers, 2 Cllrs, 2 Consultants)
Tues 24th Sept	1.30pm to 3pm	Buntingford	Seth Ward Community Centre	24 total (18 public, 2 East Herts Officers, 2 Cllrs, 2 Consultants)
Tues 24th Sept	6pm – 7.30pm	Hertford	East Herts Council Chamber	13 total (5 public, 2 East Herts Officers, 4 Cllrs, 2 Consultants)
Fri 27th Sept	6.30pm – 8pm	Ware	Ware Town Council Priory Hall	20 total (13 public, 2 East Herts Officers, 3 Cllrs, 2 Consultants)
Tues 8 Oct	6pm – 7.30pm	Bishops Stortford (2nd)	Grange Paddocks Sports Centre	7 total (3 public, 2 East Herts officers, 2 Cllrs)
Weds 9 Oct	2pm – 3.30pm	Stanstead Abbots	Stanstead Abbots parish hall	17 total (11 public, 3 officers, 2 Cllrs), 1 MP's representative

Survey feedback: Thoughts on parking

To understand the perception of current parking conditions and facilities in people's areas, survey respondents were asked:

What do you think about current car park charges in your area?

1,521 respondents provided feedback. A summary of their responses is shown below.

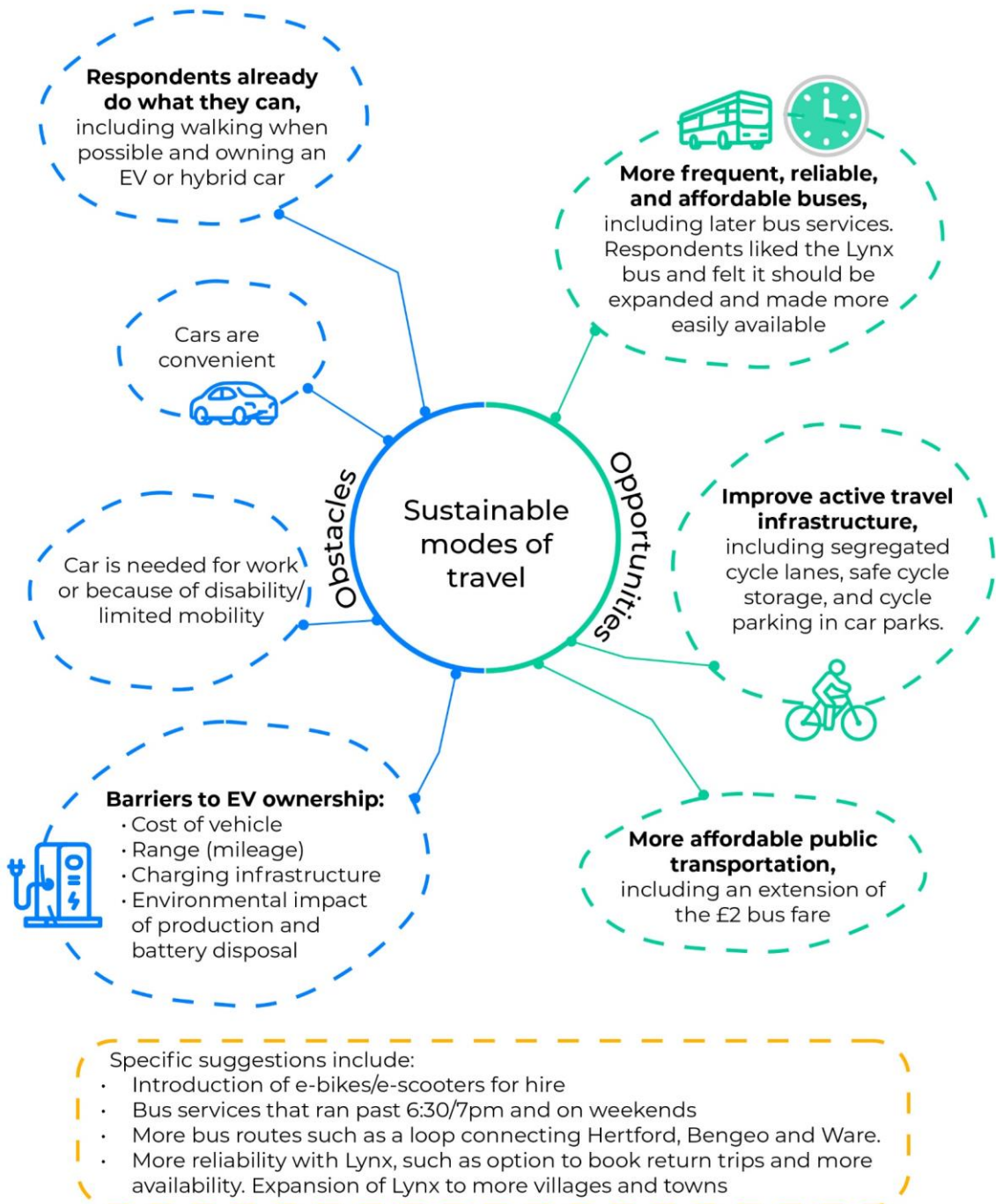


Survey feedback: Thoughts on sustainable travel

To understand issues and opportunities with sustainable modes of travel, survey respondents were asked:

What, if anything, would encourage you to switch to a more sustainable vehicle/mode of travel for regular journeys?

1,324 respondents provided feedback. A summary of their responses is shown below.



Survey feedback: Sentiment analysis

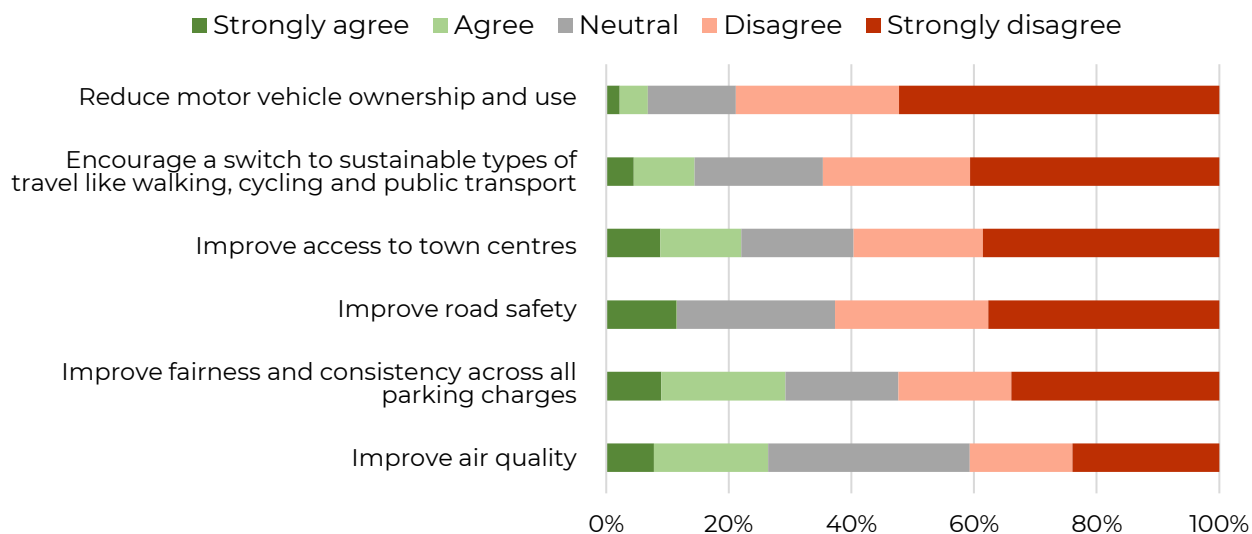
The council wants a parking strategy that supports its wider sustainable and environmental objectives. To help the council understand how the East Herts community perceives various parking proposals in connection with wider objectives, respondents were asked whether they felt the proposals would support a range of related aspirations. People were asked:

Overall, to what extent do you agree or disagree that the proposals would help:

- **Improve access to town centres**
- **Improve fairness and consistency across all parking charges**
- **Improve air quality**
- **Reduce motor vehicle ownership and use**
- **Improve road safety**
- **Encourage a switch to sustainable types of travel like walking, cycling and public transport**

A majority of respondents agreed or were neutral that the proposals would help improve air quality. Respondents were divided as to whether the proposals would improve fairness and consistency across charging. For the rest of the objectives, most respondents disagreed that the proposals would help achieve them.

To what extent do you agree or disagree that the proposals would help:



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Proposal Feedback

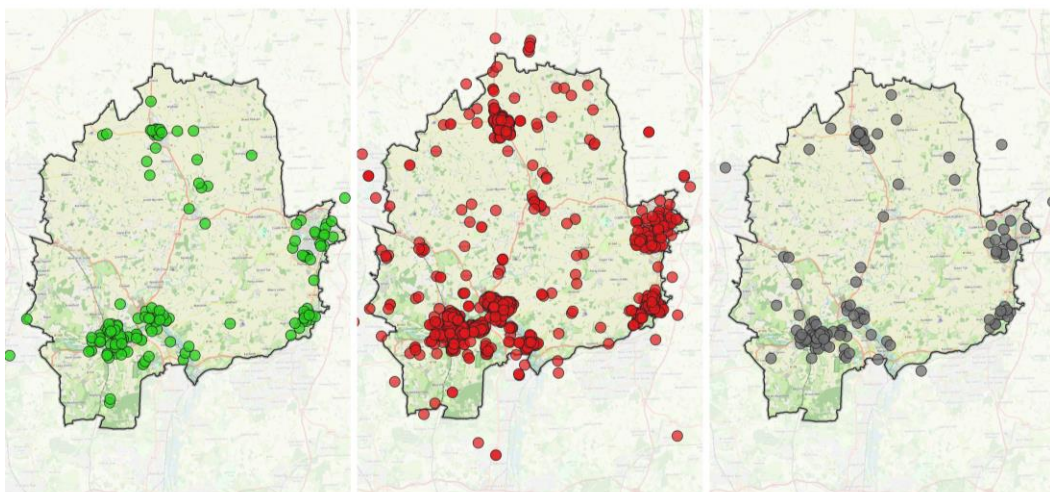
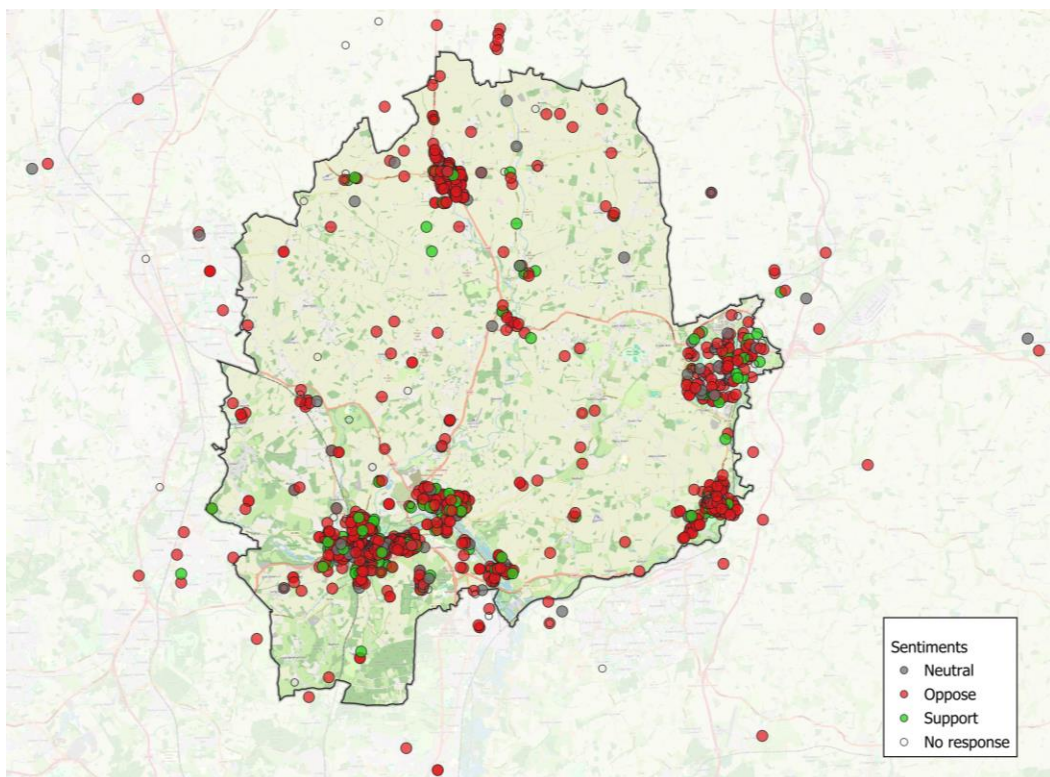
Survey feedback: Proposal 1

Different permit charges based on vehicle emissions including a lower charge for electric vehicles or EV discounts in car parks.

Survey respondents were asked:

Please use this space to give your views on either the potentially positive or negative aspects of our proposal for changes to permit charges based on vehicle emissions including a lower charge for electric vehicles or EV discounts in car parks.

1,373 respondents provided feedback. Respondents have been mapped below and their locations cross-referenced with their general sentiment towards this proposal.



Survey feedback: Proposal 1

Different permit charges based on vehicle emissions including a lower charge for electric vehicles or EV discounts in car parks.

These responses have been analysed and an overview of the top ten themes is included below. Details on all the themes expressed are available in Appendix A.

Top Theme	Details
Penalises those who cannot afford an EV	Proposal unfairly impacts motorists who cannot afford to purchase an EV. Similarly, it benefits those who can afford an EV, who are often wealthier and do not need a discount on parking charges.
Need to improve EV infrastructure	There are not enough EV charging stations. Respondents also noted that the proposal unfairly impacts households who cannot easily access charging, such as those who live in flats or with on-street parking.
Concerns proposal will have negative impact on business	Respondents felt the proposal would lead to increased charges for some, which would discourage these motorists from visiting the town centres.
EVs are not always more environmentally-friendly	EVs also have a negative environmental impact, including using electricity produced from non-renewable sources, emissions from car manufacturing, and lack of recycling procedures for their batteries.
Need improved public transportation or active travel infrastructure	Respondents commented that improvements to public transport and active travel infrastructure would be more beneficial or are needed before proposals like this are implemented. Respondents requested safer cycle/walking paths in Hertford and Stortford and more public transit serving Buntingford.
Partially supportive of proposal	Respondents were partially supportive of the proposal, particularly if EVs were given a discount but no other charges were raised. Respondents were also more supportive if the proposal covered hybrids as well or was a larger scheme based on carbon emission bands or ULEZ standards rather than simply an EV discount.
EVs are too expensive	Respondents commented that the high price of EVs was a barrier to purchasing them.
Parking charges will not incentivise a switch to EV	Discounts for EVs would not be enough of an incentive to encourage people to buy an EV. Rather, the high cost to purchase and run an EV are the real barriers.
Proposal penalises drivers	Proposal is unfair to motorists, particularly those people who need to drive, including working parents, older residents, and those in rural areas.
Oppose proposal with no details	Respondents commented that they opposed the proposal and did not provide additional feedback or reasonings.

Event feedback: Proposal 1

The themes that emerged from the feedback received at the in-person events are shown below, along with which events these themes were expressed.

BS = Bishop's Stortford; SA = Stanstead Abbots

	Theme and details	Event location
Issues	<p>Affordability EVs are unaffordable to some people, especially low-income households</p>	BS; Buntingford; Hertford; Sawbridgeworth; SA; Ware
	<p>Fairness</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Favours those who can afford new vehicles May disproportionately impact elderly people who need to drive Car tax rates are already based on emissions so people will be double-charged Previous government encouraged diesel vehicles Lack of public transportation 	BS; Buntingford; Hertford; SA; Ware
	<p>EV concerns</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> They are often larger and heavier Lack of charging infrastructure 	BS; Buntingford; Hertford; Sawbridgeworth; SA; Ware
	<p>Parking displacement People will avoid car parks if charges are higher and use on-street parking instead.</p>	Buntingford; SA; Ware
	<p>Impact on business Higher charges will discourage people from visiting businesses.</p>	Buntingford; Sawbridgeworth; Ware
	Opportunities	<p>Scrappage scheme Could also develop a scrappage scheme to provide financial support for switching to a cleaner vehicle.</p>
<p>Infrastructure improvements Links well with greater investment in EV charging infrastructure or in investment in active travel like shared cargo bikes.</p>		BS; Buntingford
<p>Other ideas</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Charge by vehicle weight or size Charge for when vehicle is in motion rather than when parked Apply discount to hybrids as well 		Hertford; SA; Ware
<p>Environmental benefits Will support cleaner air and more active travel for shorter journeys</p>		BS; Buntingford; Hertford; Ware

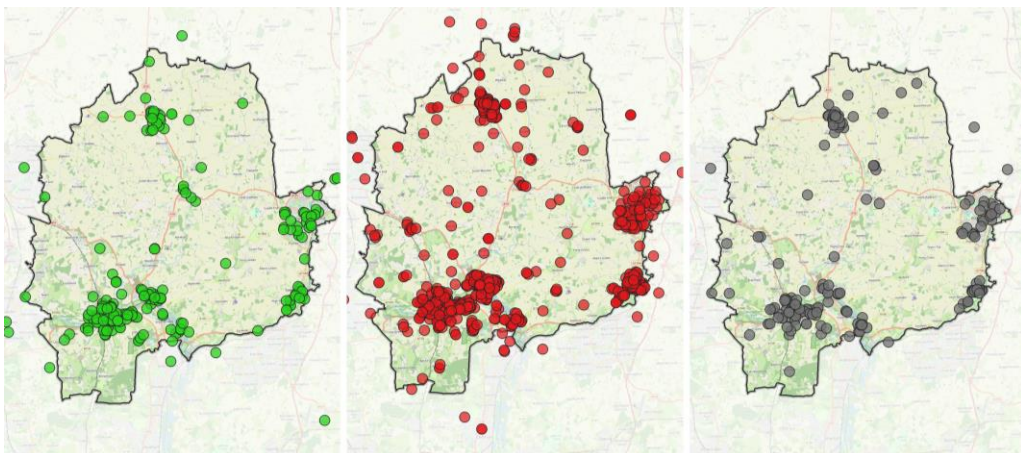
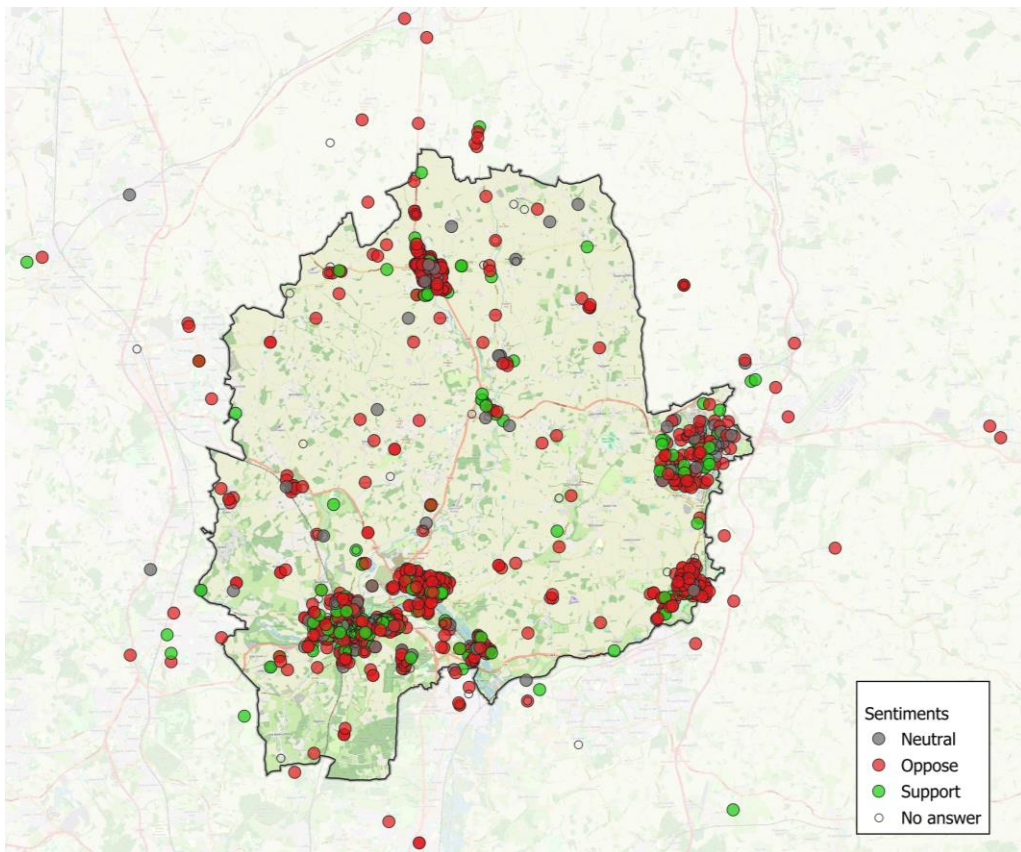
Survey feedback: Proposal 2

Time-based pricing for parking

Survey respondents were asked:

Please use this space to give your views on either the potentially positive or negative aspects of our proposal for Time-based pricing for parking, e.g. a higher tariff at peak times, and lower charges at off-peak times.

1,351 respondents provided feedback. Respondents have been mapped below and their locations cross-referenced with their general sentiment towards this proposal.



Survey feedback: Proposal 2

Time-based pricing for parking

Reponses have been analysed and an overview of the top ten themes is included below. Details on all the themes expressed are available in Appendix A.

Top Theme	Details
Concerns proposal will have negative impact on business	Respondents were concerned peak times could coincide with businesses' opening hours and would therefore discourage people from visiting these businesses because of higher or confusing charges.
Support proposal with no details	Respondents commented that they were supportive or agreed with the proposal and did not provide additional feedback or reasonings.
It is hard for some to avoid peak times	People do not have the flexibility to adjust their driving schedules to off-peak times. Specific groups mentioned include parents and those with doctors or other time-restricted appointments.
Proposal will make charges too complicated	Concerns that remembering the off and on-peak times will be confusing and that it will be costly to implement the proposal.
Town workers will be negatively impacted	People who work in the town need to park and will be impacted by the on-peak pricing. Respondents commented that these workers are often low-income. Proposal may also make it difficult for businesses to recruit and retain workers.
Aim of proposal is to generate income for council	Respondents felt that the proposal was intended to generate income for the council and not to achieve environmental or other objectives.
Oppose proposal with no details	Respondents commented that they opposed the proposal and did not provide additional feedback or reasonings.
Respondents want reduced parking charges or longer free parking periods	Respondents commented that charges are already too high. Some respondents wanted free parking in the evenings or on Sundays.
Partially support the proposal	Respondents partially supported the proposal as long as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Concessions or considerations could be made for town workers • If charges were cheaper in the evenings and weekends • If price were reasonable
Concerns about parking displacement	Concerns that increases in charges would push people to park in surrounding residential streets or to park illegally and unsafely.

Event feedback: Proposal 2

The themes that emerged from the feedback received at the in-person events are shown below, along with which events these themes were expressed.

BS = Bishop's Stortford; SA = Stanstead Abbots

	Theme and details	Event location
Issues	Complicated May be difficult to understand	BS; Ware; SA; Hertford
	Fairness <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Person's schedule determines whether they can visit during off-peak times Not suitable in all towns/villages (e.g. Sawbridgeworth; Buntingford) 	BS; SA; Sawbridgeworth; Buntingford
	Impact on commuters Commuters need parking near the train station	Ware
	Parking displacement People will avoid car parks if charges are higher and use on-street parking.	Ware; SA; Hertford
	Impact on business Higher charges will discourage people from visiting businesses	Hertford; Sawbridgeworth; Buntingford
Opportunities	Seasonal passes Could provide seasonal parking tickets for workers/residents or a rebate system	BS; Ware; SA; Sawbridgeworth; Buntingford
	Fairness Will create a system based on supply and demand, with commuters being charged fairly	BS
	Ease congestion Higher charges during on-peak will free up spaces (especially from commuters) so people can more easily find parking.	Ware; SA; Sawbridgeworth; Buntingford
	Promote economic activity Cheaper parking during off-peak may encourage people to visit	Ware; SA; Sawbridgeworth
	Other ideas: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Could move long-stay away from town centre but make it cheaper Car parks that are more central could be more expensive. 	Hertford; Sawbridgeworth
	Environmental benefits Will reduce pollution particularly during peak times	BS

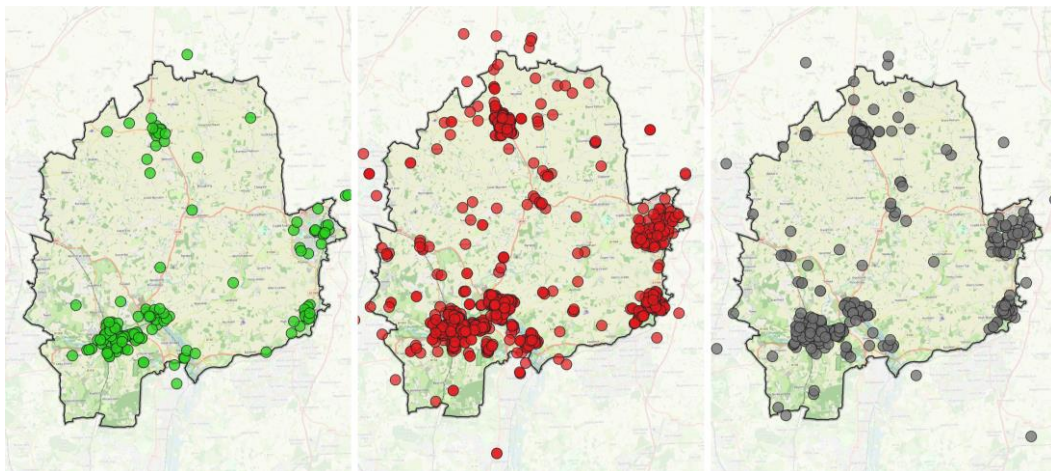
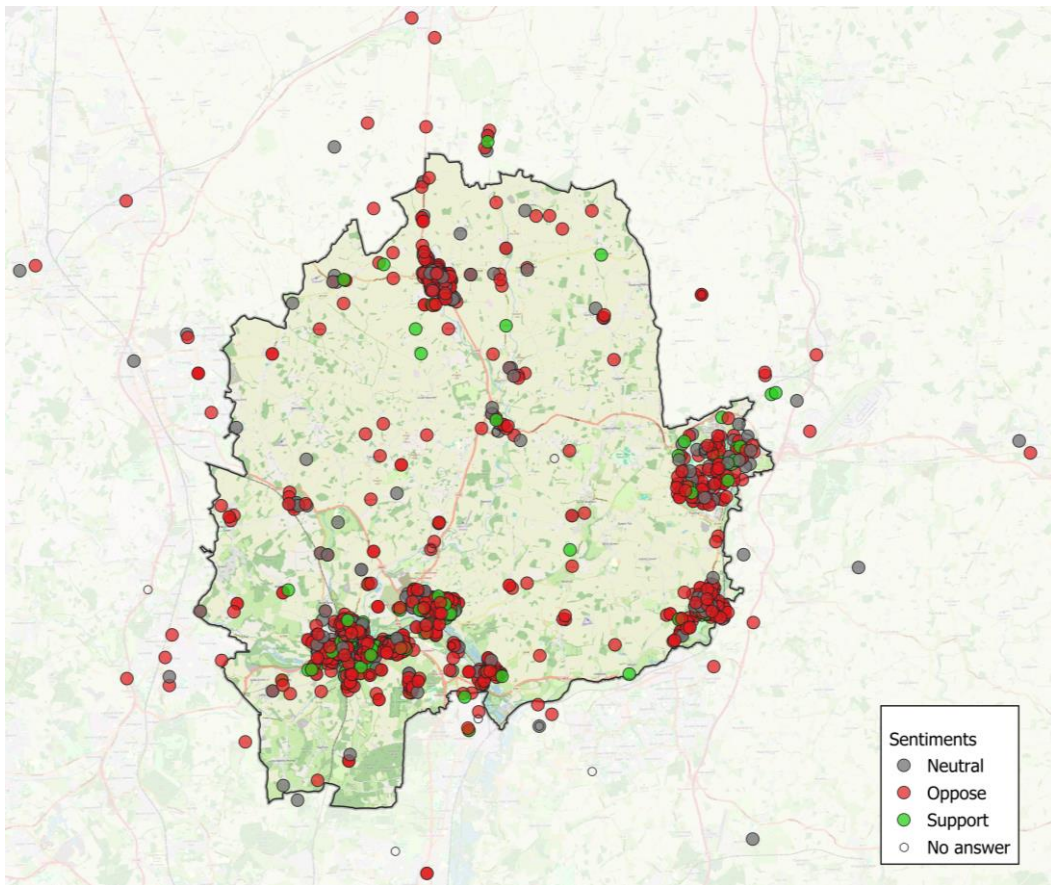
Survey feedback: Proposal 3

Introduction of a diesel surcharge.

Survey respondents were asked:

Please use this space to give your views on either the potentially positive or negative aspects of our proposal for the introduction of a diesel surcharge.

1,254 respondents provided feedback. Respondents have been mapped below and their locations cross-referenced with their general sentiment towards this proposal.



Survey feedback: Proposal 3

Introduction of a diesel surcharge.

Reponses have been analysed and an overview of the top ten themes is included below. Details on all the themes expressed are available in Appendix A.

Top Theme	Details
Impacts low-income people	Proposal penalises low-income households who cannot afford to change their diesel vehicles to a non-diesel vehicle and will have to pay the surcharge.
Unfair because government encouraged people to buy diesel	Previous government promoted the purchase of diesel vehicles as more economical and more environmentally friendly. People should not be punished for following government advice.
Proposal will hurt businesses and town centres	Higher charges will discourage people from visiting the town centres, which will negatively impact businesses. Diesels are also often used by tradespeople and farmers, who will therefore be unfairly impacted by the proposal.
Diesel can be less polluting than alternative fuels	Diesel vehicles, especially new ones, are low-emission and can be as clean as petrol vehicles. Respondents noted that some are ULEZ-compliant. Respondents also noted that EVs damage the road as they are heavier, and their production has environmental implications.
Respondents cannot afford new vehicle	Some respondents commented that they would be unable to afford to switch out their diesel vehicle for a non-diesel vehicle.
Support proposal with no details	Respondents commented that they were supportive or agreed with the proposal and did not provide additional feedback or reasonings.
Oppose proposal with no details	Respondents commented that they opposed the proposal and did not provide additional feedback or reasonings.
Proposal penalises diesel motorists or motorists generally	Proposal discriminates against people who own a certain type of vehicle. Some respondents noted that rural people or farmers may need diesel vehicles.
Proposal is not needed	Proposal is unnecessary as diesel vehicles are naturally being phased out. Some respondents commented that air pollution was not an issue while others felt the bigger issue was lorries/vans or idling.
Proposal will not work	Proposal is not enough to push people to change their vehicles. Diesel motorists will pay the extra charge or may park on surrounding roads instead.

Event feedback: Proposal 3

The themes that emerged from the feedback received at the in-person events are shown below, along with which events these themes were expressed.

BS = Bishop's Stortford; SA = Stanstead Abbotts

	Theme and details	Event location
Issues	Affordability/Fairness Some people cannot afford to replace their diesel cars, including low-income and elderly. Some people like traders and rural people are more likely to own diesel	BS; Ware; SA; Hertford; Sawbridgeworth; Buntingford
	Complicated Charges may become complicated to understand and pay	SA; Hertford
	Concerns with EVs Diesel can be more environmentally friendly than EVs. EVs are large and heavy and there is a lack of EV infrastructure	Ware; BS; SA; Hertford; Sawbridgeworth; Buntingford
	Diesel was encouraged Previous government encouraged use of diesel vehicles	SA; Buntingford
	Impact on business Concerns that charges will dissuade visitors.	Buntingford
	Parking displacement Higher charges may push people to park on residential streets	Hertford
Opportunities	Scrappage scheme Could offer a scrappage scheme or some financial support for scrapping diesel vehicle.	Ware; BS; Sawbridgeworth; Buntingford
	Monitoring Could utilise ANPR to implement the proposal	BS
	Implement slowly Proposal may work if implemented slowly, giving people enough time to switch to a non-diesel	Sawbridgeworth
	Other ideas: Would support an emissions-based charging or size-based	BS; SA; Hertford; Sawbridgeworth
	Environmental benefits Will reduce pollution for all demographics including low-income people	BS; Ware; Hertford; Buntingford

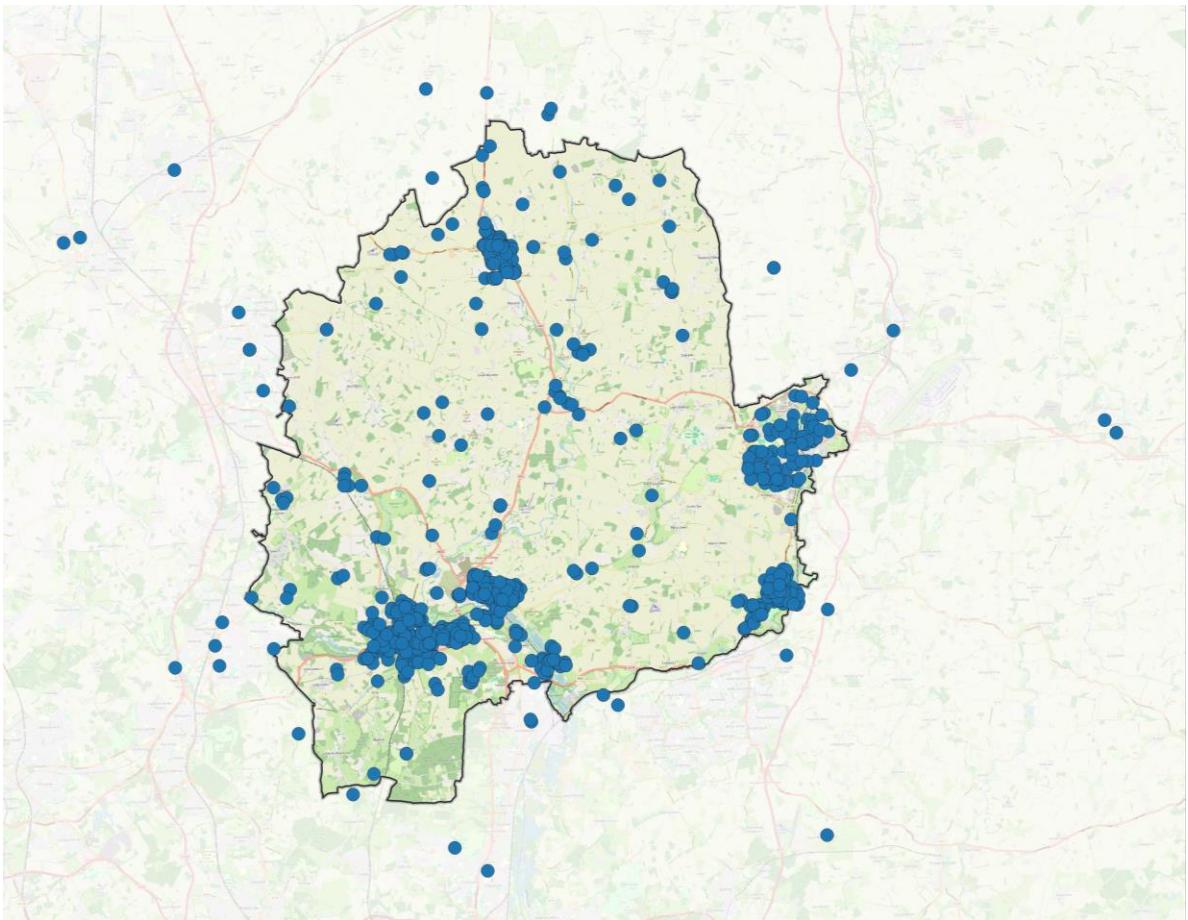
Survey feedback: Proposal 4

Review of charge levels for Motorcycles, Carers, Off-street parking, Businesses, and Car Clubs.

Survey respondents were asked:

Please use this space to give your views on either the potentially positive or negative aspects of our proposal for a review of charge levels for Motorcycles, Carers, Off-street parking, Businesses, and Car Clubs.

1,021 respondents provided feedback. Respondents have been mapped below. An analysis of general sentiment is not available, as respondents could express support for certain aspects of the proposal while opposing others, making it difficult to categorize the overall sentiment.



Survey feedback: Proposal 4

Review of charge levels for Motorcycles, Carers, Off-street parking, Businesses, and Car Clubs.

Reponses have been analysed and an overview of the top ten themes is included below. Details on all the themes expressed are available in Appendix A.

Top Theme	Details
No view or unsure	Respondents said they did not have an opinion or were unsure of what the proposal would entail.
Carer permits – support a free or reduced fees	Respondents were in favour of reduced or free parking charges for carers, especially as they can be low-paid. Some noted that this should only be offered when they are actively working.
Proposal is too complicated	Different levels of charging may be difficult or expensive for the council to implement and manage.
Support proposal with no additional details	Respondents commented that they were supportive or agreed with the proposal and did not provide additional feedback or reasonings.
Oppose proposal with no additional details	Respondents commented that they opposed the proposal and did not provide additional feedback or reasonings.
Businesses – support subsidies or support offers	Respondents were in favour of reduced fees or support more generally for businesses and their employees. This could entail a reasonable day-rate or a seasonal pass.
Proposal will have negative impacts on businesses	Respondents were concerned about hurting businesses with increased charges or were concerned that general charge increases would discourage visitors/shoppers.
Support a reduction for all listed groups	Respondents supported a reduction in parking charges for all the groups in the proposal.
Proposal is not needed	A review is not needed and changes to charging levels would not have a big impact on these groups and their driving behaviour.
Aim of proposal is to generate income for council	Respondents felt that the proposal was intended to generate income for the council and not to achieve environmental or other objectives.

Event feedback: Proposal 4

The themes that emerged from the feedback received at the in-person events are shown below, along with which events these themes were expressed.

BS = Bishop's Stortford; SA = Stanstead Abbotts

	Theme and details	Event location
Issues	Complicated Proposal is too complicated to administer; difficult to define carers	SA; Sawbridgeworth; BS
	Affordability Parking charges might be prohibitive and don't want to penalize low-income people or town workers; there may be an intersection between low-income and blue badge holders.	Ware; Buntingford; BS
	Lack of alternative options Need better public transportation infrastructure or other options for travel	Ware; Sawbridgeworth
	Impact on business Concerns about negatively impacted businesses and workers.	BS
	Parking displacement Want to encourage use of car park over alternatives	Ware; SA; Hertford; Sawbridgeworth; Buntingford;
Opportunities	Free or reduced charges <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Car clubs – free • Business employees – allowances • Blue badge holders – free • Carers – free 	Ware; SA; Hertford; Sawbridgeworth; Buntingford; BS
	New charges <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Charges for motorcycles if they take up a space or proportional to the space they use • Charge more for bigger bays • Income-based charges for blue badge holders • Charge businesses as long as it's not based on to workers 	Ware; SA; Hertford; Buntingford; BS
	Support active travel Install more secure cycle parking or dedicated parking for cyclists in town centres.	SA; BS
	Infrastructure improvements <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need larger bays and more disabled bays • Dedicated motorcycle bays 	Hertford; Sawbridgeworth
	Incentives for local shopping Provide rebates for those visiting local shops	Buntingford

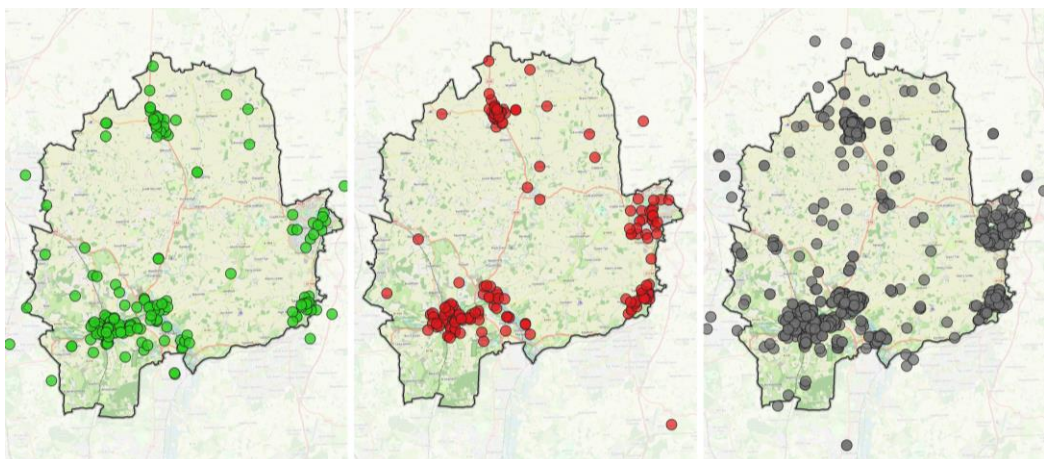
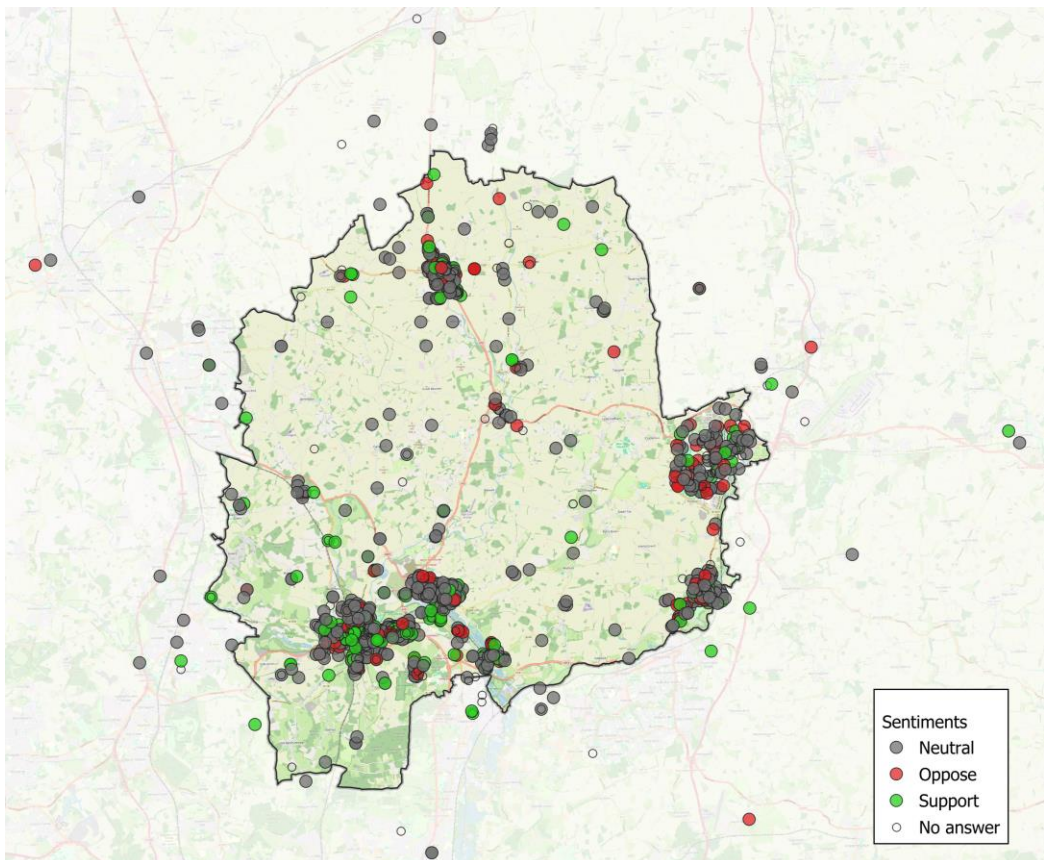
Survey feedback: Proposal 5

Review the all-day parking tariff option for some town centre car parks.

Survey respondents were asked:

Please use this space to give your views on either the potentially positive or negative aspects of our proposal to review the all-day parking tariff option for some town centre car parks.

1,250 respondents provided feedback. Respondents have been mapped below and their locations cross-referenced with their general sentiment towards this proposal.



Survey feedback: Proposal 5

Review the all-day parking tariff option for some town centre car parks.

Reponses have been analysed and an overview is included below. The full list of themes can be found in Appendix A.

Top Theme	Details
Concerns for town employees	Workers need to be able to park for long periods of time and will be negatively impacted by this proposal, especially those who do not have access to reliable public transportation.
Proposal will negative impact businesses/town centres	Council should be encouraging longer visits to town centre, not shorter ones. Proposal might decrease business for town shops if people have to pay more for parking.
Support proposal with no additional details	Respondents commented that they were supportive or agreed with the proposal and did not provide additional feedback or reasonings.
Aim of proposal is to generate income for council	Respondents felt that the proposal was intended to generate income for the council and not to achieve environmental or other objectives.
Concern proposal will cause parking displacement	Proposal might cause people, including workers and commuters, to park on residential streets instead of the car parks.
Concern for commuters	Proposal might negatively impact commuters who park to use the train station. Some felt if charges were too high, people would drive into work instead of using the train.
Partially supportive of proposal	Respondents are partially supportive of the proposal, particularly if: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is limited to town centre car parks • Considerations are made for town workers • If Check-In and Check-Out was available or the ability to add time • As long as hourly charges are reasonable
All-day parking is necessary	Some people need to use all-day parking, including nearby residents who do not other parking options, workers and commuters.
Oppose proposal with no additional details	Respondents commented that they opposed the proposal and did not provide additional feedback or reasonings.
Proposal is not needed	Proposal is unnecessary, particularly in more rural areas like Buntingford and Sawbridgeworth.

Event feedback: Proposal 5

The themes that emerged from the feedback received at the in-person events are shown below, along with which events these themes were expressed.

BS = Bishop's Stortford; SA = Stanstead Abbots

	Theme and details	Event location
Issues	Localised approach Need to apply a localised approach, where each town and car park is examined individually	Sawbridgeworth
	Safety Walk from further car parks is not safe/enjoyable (e.g. London Road car park in Hertford)	Hertford
	Impact on residents/commuters Some residents do not have parking and rely on all-day tariffs; commuters also rely on all-day parking	Buntingford; SA; Ware
	Lack of alternatives Little or no public transportation options	Buntingford
	Impact on business Concerns that proposal will lead to reduced visits to town centres.	BS; Buntingford; Hertford; Ware
	Parking displacement Proposal may push people to park on residential streets	BS; Buntingford; Ware
Opportunities	Park and Ride Could offer a park and ride service	BS
	Previous success Differential pricing has worked well in other places	BS
	Support offer Could offer monthly or seasonal permits for businesses or for consistent commuters	Sawbridgeworth; Ware
	Equalise parking levels Could use pricing to incentivise more users to Northgate End car park.	BS; Hertford; Ware
	Opportunities for resident parking Could justify or support resident parking (e.g. Church Street)	Buntingford; SA
	Parking surveys Could justify parking surveys to understand usage at car parks.	Buntingford; Hertford; Ware

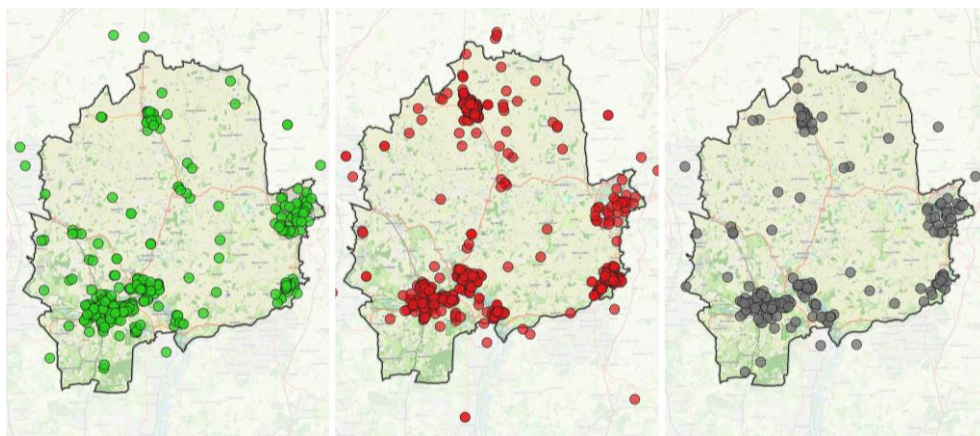
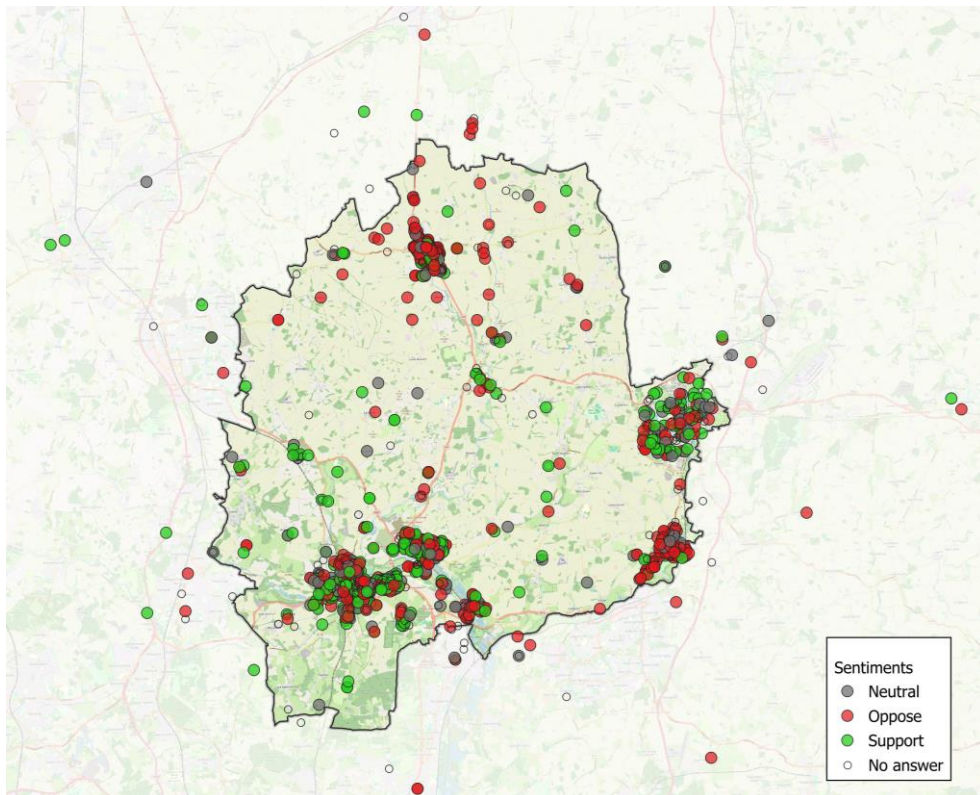
Survey feedback: Proposal 6

Making parking charges easier, fairer and more consistent across East Herts by reviewing existing charges, including locations and hours.

Survey respondents were asked:

Please use this space to give your views on either the potentially positive or negative aspects of our proposal for making parking charges easier, fairer and more consistent across East Herts by reviewing existing charges, including locations and hours.

1,185 respondents provided feedback. Respondents have been mapped below and their locations cross-referenced with their general sentiment towards this proposal.



Survey feedback: Proposal 6

Making parking charges easier, fairer and more consistent across East Herts by reviewing existing charges, including locations and hours.

Reponses have been analysed and an overview of the top ten themes is included below. Details on all the themes are available in Appendix A.

Top Theme	Details
All locations are different, so consistency is not suitable	Respondents felt that each village or town was different and offered different services. As such, charging should not be the same across East Herts. Charges should consider: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Current demand for parking • Attractions/services in the town • Size of town • Quality of parking facilities
Support proposal with no additional details	Respondents commented that they were supportive or agreed with the proposal and did not provide additional feedback or reasonings.
Opposed to higher charges as these will hurt businesses/town centres	Concerns that increasing charges would reduce visits to the town centres and shops, particularly in villages or smaller towns with fewer amenities.
Proposal is an excuse to generate income	Respondents felt that the proposal was intended to generate income for the council and not to achieve environmental or other objectives.
Keep prices affordable and/or lower prices.	Respondents suggested that prices should be lowered or kept at an affordable level. Many commented that the period of free parking (e.g. 30 minutes) should be maintained or expanded to all areas. Some suggested this be increased to 45 minutes or an hour.
Agree with consistency as this would be fairer and simpler	Respondents supported more consistency across charges as it would be helpful to know what to expect in each car park, for both charge levels and payment systems.
Partially supportive with some considerations	Respondents supported consistent charges as long as prices were not increased by too much or not all raised to the current highest charge. There were suggestions to average the current prices and apply that average.
Agree with proposal if charges do not increase	Respondents agreed with making prices fairer and more consistent as long as prices were not increased and if the lower levels of charging were used for all areas.
Proposal is not needed or too complicated	Respondents felt charging was already consistent or were okay as they were and did not need to be changed.
Unsure or no view	Respondents did not have an opinion or wanted more details on what the proposal would entail.

Event feedback: Proposal 6

The themes that emerged from the feedback received at the in-person events are shown below, along with which events these themes were expressed.

BS = Bishop's Stortford; SA = Stanstead Abbots

	Theme and details	Event location
Issues	Localised approach Need to apply a localised approach, where each town are reviewed for the attractions and transit options they offer. For example, parking that ends at 8PM is not suitable for all car parks.	Ware; SA; Sawbridgeworth; Hertford; Buntingford; BS
	Digital exclusion Ensure efforts to simplify charges do not alienate those who are not comfortable with technology. Keep payment options by cash, card or app.	Ware; SA; Buntingford
	Concerns about gentrification Concerns that some towns may become gentrified if prices increase.	Sawbridgeworth
	Loss of business/visitors Concerns more expensive parking will drive people away from the smaller towns.	Sawbridgeworth; Buntingford
	Parking displacement Proposal may push people to park on residential streets	Ware; Hertford
Opportunities	Keep or add 30-minute free period Small free period supports local economies	Ware; Sawbridgeworth; BS
	Improved parking infrastructure <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure well-maintained machines that are easy to read and use • Improve lighting and safety of car parks 	Ware; SA; Hertford
	Simplicity Would be easier to understand if all charges were the same, including same time periods. Different charges may lead to complicated signage.	Ware; Sawbridgeworth; BS
	Increase in business/visitors Might encourage new visitors if all charges are the same	Buntingford
	Parking surveys Could justify parking surveys to understand usage at car parks and in each town. For example, respondents in BS felt there was no justification for lower charges in SA.	Hertford; BS

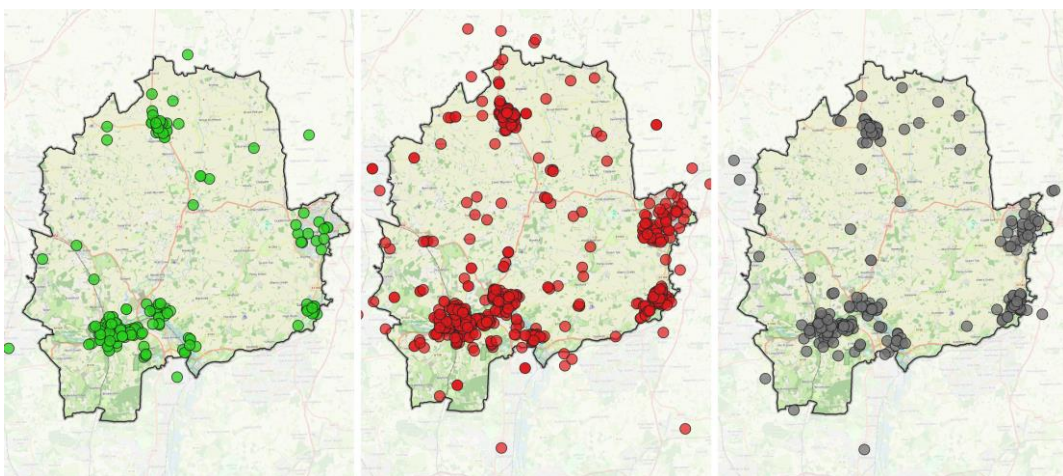
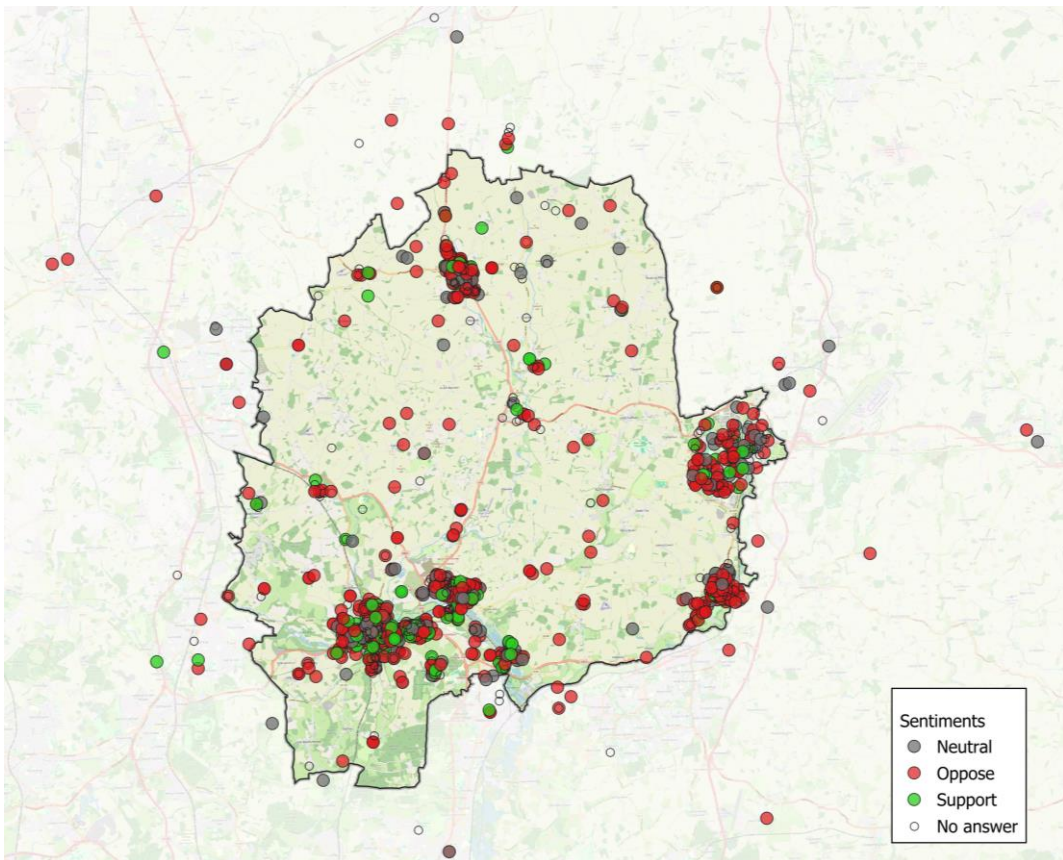
Survey feedback: Proposal 7

Introducing a workplace parking levy.

Survey respondents were asked:

Please use this space to give your views on either the potentially positive or negative aspects of our proposal to introduce a workplace parking levy.

1,145 respondents provided feedback. Respondents have been mapped below and their locations cross-referenced with their general sentiment towards this proposal.



Survey feedback: Proposal 7

Introducing a workplace parking levy.

Reponses have been analysed and an overview of the top ten themes is included below. Details on all the themes expressed are available in Appendix A.

Top Theme	Details
Need to improve public transport / active travel infrastructure	A workplace parking levy might be beneficial but only if there are public transport alternatives or better infrastructure for active travel.
No view or unsure	Respondents did not have an opinion or were not impacted by the proposal. Some did not understand the proposal.
Will hurt businesses	Concerns that the levy might negatively impact businesses, particularly small businesses who already having financial difficulties. Concerns it would also make it harder to recruit staff if there is less parking.
Will hurt workers/employees	Concerns that the levy cost would be passed onto the employees
Will deter future businesses or cause businesses to relocate	Concerns that the levy would either push existing businesses out of the area or would discourage new businesses from setting up here in the future.
Partially supportive with some considerations	Respondents were supportive of the proposal if the following were considered: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Applied only where public transport is available • Applied only for some businesses, depending on size • If prices are reasonable or applied gradually • If could ensure prices are not passed onto employee
Supportive of proposal with no other details	Respondents commented that they support or agree with the proposal and did not provide additional feedback or reasonings.
Oppose proposal with no other details	Respondents commented that they opposed the proposal and did not provide additional feedback or reasonings.
Unfairly penalises businesses	Respondents felt that it was unfair to penalize businesses with the levy, especially when they are offering a service to the town.
Employers already pay enough for taxes or for their parking	Businesses already pay high business taxes. Furthermore, businesses have already paid for the land for their private parking and should not be charged again for it.

Event feedback: Proposal 7

The themes that emerged from the feedback received at the in-person events are shown below, along with which events these themes were expressed.

BS = Bishop's Stortford; SA = Stanstead Abbots

	Theme and details	Event location
Issues	Business implications It is an additional burden for businesses and may discourage new businesses. May also be hard to attract employees.	BS; Buntingford; Sawbridgeworth; SA
	Cost to consumer Cost might be passed on to the consumer through increased prices,	Buntingford
	Suitability for some areas Might not be suitable for workplaces in rural areas.	Buntingford; Sawbridgeworth; SA
	Concern for schools Schools should not be charged.	SA; Hertford
	Concern for employees Cost of levy may be passed onto the worker; might support if could ensure this does not happen.	Hertford
Opportunities	Shift work patterns Could incentivise more flexible working.	Sawbridgeworth
	Support offers/initiatives <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Companies could offer cycle schemes • More education/communication with businesses • Seasonal passes for local workers • Business permits 	BS; Buntingford; Sawbridgeworth; SA
	Suitable for certain companies Levy might work well for larger companies that are more accessible by alternative modes of travel; could be implemented on a voluntary basis.	BS
	Reimagining car parking spaces Levy might free up spaces which can be used for other uses.	BS
	Encouraging active travel Would help promote more active travel and car-sharing, especially for very local workers.	Buntingford; Hertford

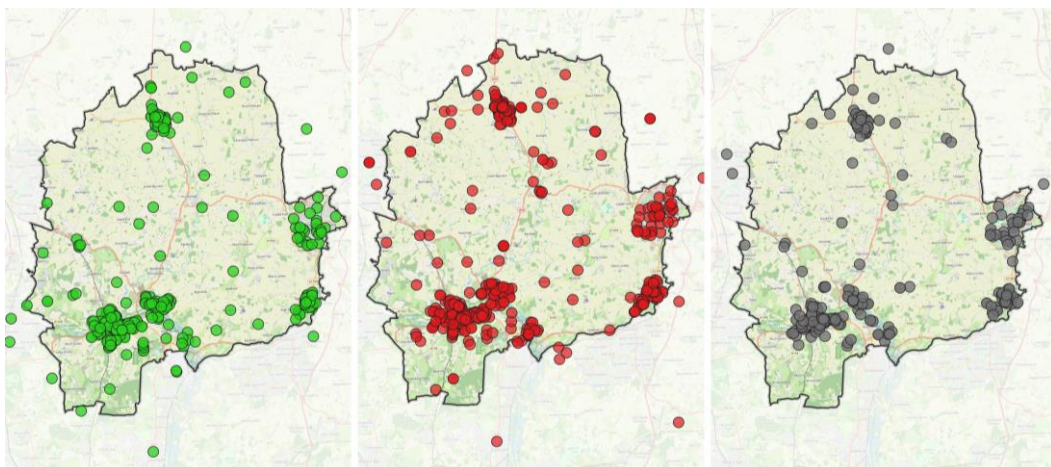
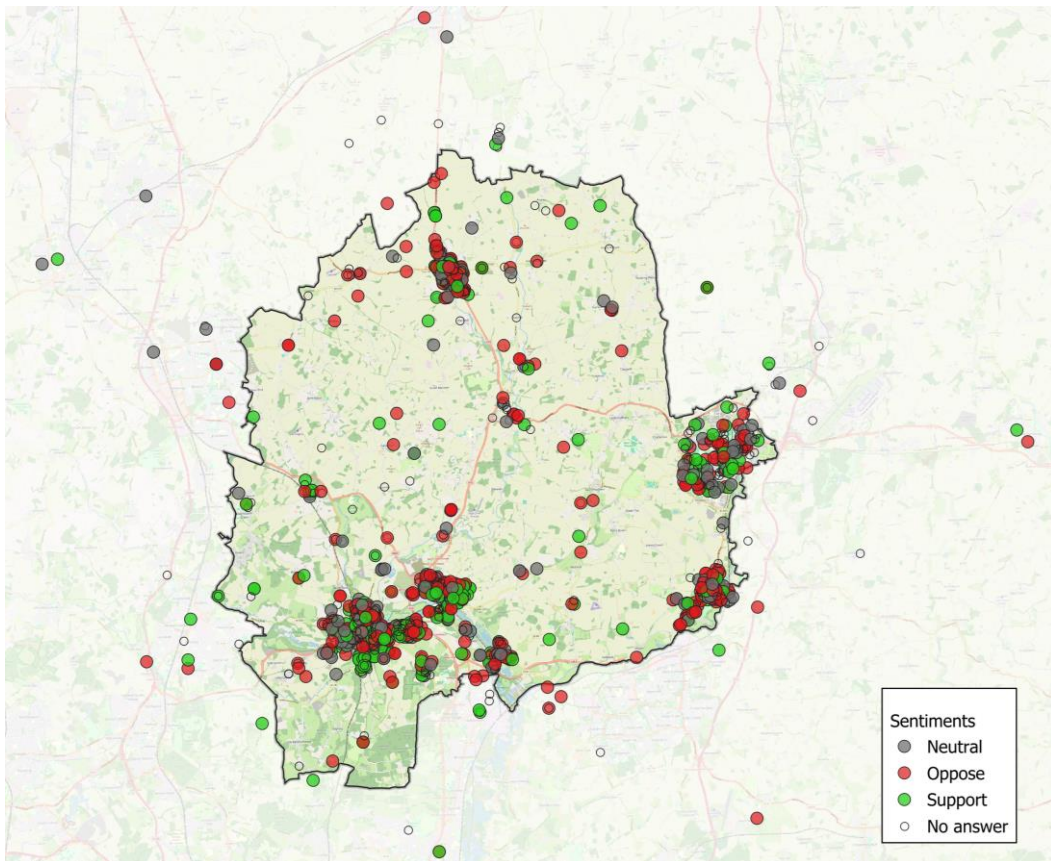
Survey feedback: Proposal 8

Offering incentives for car-sharing/car-pooling.

Survey respondents were asked:

Please use this space to give your views on either the potentially positive or negative aspects of our proposal for offering incentives for car-sharing/car-pooling.

1,007 respondents provided feedback. Respondents have been mapped below and their locations cross-referenced with their general sentiment towards this proposal.



Survey feedback: Proposal 8

Offering incentives for car-sharing/car-pooling.

Reponses have been analysed and an overview of the top ten themes is included below. Details on all the themes expressed are available in Appendix A.

Top Theme	Details
Car-sharing is not practical for everyone	Car sharing is not practical, especially for the following reasons/people: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Different work patterns (including flexible working) • Shift workers • Parents • In rural areas like Buntingford • If no colleagues live nearby
Car-sharing incentives would be difficult to implement	Questions about how car-sharing would be monitored to verify compliance. Concerns that it may be expensive to do so or that some people might abuse the system to receive the incentive.
Supportive of proposal with no other details	Respondents commented that they support or agree with the proposal and did not provide additional feedback or reasonings.
Car-sharing/the proposal will not work	Concerns that car-sharing is not reliable and difficult to organise. Sentiments that the proposal will not work to incentivise car-sharing.
Positive sentiments about the proposal but questions/ concerns about implementation	Support car-sharing and incentives for car-sharing as long as it is possible/easy to implement and enforce.
Proposal is worth considering and trialling	Respondents felt the proposal was worth trialling and that it might work to help encourage car-sharing. Respondents specifically suggested it would work well for large businesses, for towns with alternative modes of transport and if done in conjunction with the Workplace Parking Levy.
No incentive is needed as people already car share when possible	An incentive is not necessary as people already car share when they are able to, especially to benefit from cost savings.
Proposal will be expensive to implement	Concerns that car-sharing will be costly to enforce and the costs will outweigh the benefits.
Oppose proposal with no other details	Respondents commented that they opposed the proposal and did not provide additional feedback or reasonings.
Want improved public transport	More frequent and reliable public transportation would be better to encourage a shift to more sustainable modes of travel.

Event feedback: Proposal 8

The themes that emerged from the feedback received at the in-person events are shown below, along with which events these themes were expressed.

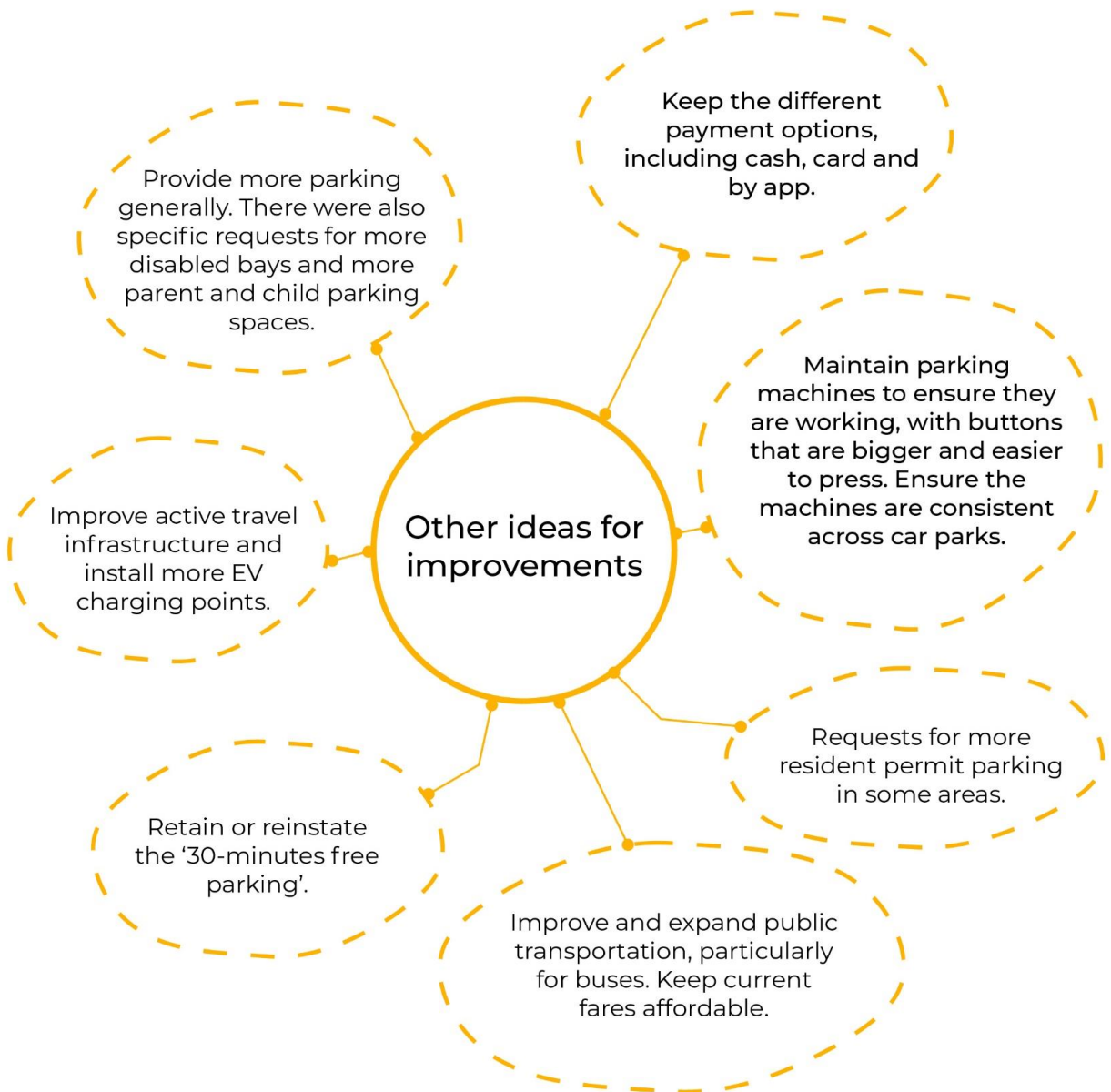
BS = Bishop's Stortford; SA = Stanstead Abbots

	Theme and details	Event location
Issues	Not suitable for all Car sharing is harder for workers on different shifts or in more rural areas. May not also be suitable for working parents.	BS; Buntingford; SA
	Lack of alternative options Public transportation is not a sufficient alternative to private car use	Buntingford
	Complicated to enforce Might be difficult to enforce car-sharing	Sawbridgeworth
	Difficult to coordinate Car-sharing may be hard to coordinate amongst many people or employees may not want to participate	Hertford
Opportunities	Mental health benefits Could offer benefits to mental health through increased social interaction.	Hertford
	Encouraging participation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Could offer discounted business rates as an incentive to participate • Education and communication with businesses; education on bus services • Could offer a shuttle bus 	BS; Buntingford; Sawbridgeworth
	Promote active travel Will encourage a shift to active travel; opportunity to provide more cycle parking in car parks	Buntingford
	Promote public transportation This would help promote town council bus which is excellent	Sawbridgeworth
	Implementation ideas Could utilise a car-sharing app	Sawbridgeworth

Survey feedback: Additional Improvements

Do you have any other comments on these proposals, or ideas for how we can make improvements to parking in East Herts?

996 respondents provided feedback. A summary of their responses is shown below.



Recommendations and Next Steps

Recommendations

1. Maintain a **localised approach** to charging across East Herts, include charge levels and times.
2. Conduct **parking surveys of car parks** to understand their usage and help inform proposal development. Surveys should cover use of all-day tariffs (e.g. when, by who, and to what extent is the all-day option used) and utilisation levels at each car park throughout the day and week.
3. Review **current car park infrastructure**. Specific suggestions that came out of the engagement include providing more disabled and parent and child spaces, improving the parking payment machines to ensure the buttons are working, and ensuring signage and payment instructions are clear.
4. Collaborate with Hertfordshire County Council and local transport operators to **improve public transportation**, particularly the expansion of the Lynx bus service to cover more areas, run longer, and to have more availability.
5. Review opportunities to **simplify tariff structures**, as many engagement respondents felt charges could be confusing and should be made easier to understand.
6. Ensure payment methods across car parks are consistent and flexible. Many respondents liked the **Check-in and Check-Out option** that is available. However, some feedback suggests that not all users are aware this option is available in all but one car park. The council may wish to strengthen promotion efforts to increase awareness of this payment method. Respondents also requested that cash and card are retained as payment options.
7. Define the purpose and benefit of the **free 30-minutes period** in the context of strategy outcomes, including improving air quality and encouraging the use of more sustainable modes of travel.
8. Consider the impact of future proposals on **local businesses** and apply concessions for small businesses and employees where possible.
9. Explore **emissions-based charging** that uses bands of emissions rather than simply a discount for EVs. This could utilise carbon emissions or replicate the ULEZ system which is based on nitrogen oxides and particulate matter.
10. Explore the possibility of **location-based charges**, where car parks located further outside of town centres are cheaper and/or offer all-day tariffs. Car parks closer to town centres would be more expensive or could be short-stay only.
11. Explore the option of expanding **parking fees for motorcycles** to all car parks.
12. Review requests for **Resident Parking Schemes** that came out of the engagement to explore the introduction of these schemes in the areas mentioned.
13. Create a **communications plan** to accompany the strategy, to include messaging and information about the final proposals taken forward. This should be created in partnership with other relevant council teams to incorporate environmental and sustainable messaging and should serve to inform and educate the East Herts community about each proposal and the overall aims and objectives of the strategy.

Next steps

All of the feedback gathered during this engagement period will be used to inform the development of an updated Parking Strategy for East Herts that aligns with local priorities and needs. The updated Parking Strategy will provide the framework for how to manage parking and transport in a way that help make streets better and safer for all means of transport and to improve the environment for all. Further updates will be shared as the development of the Parking Strategy progresses and there will be an opportunity for the public to provide feedback on a draft Parking Strategy.

Appendix A: Survey feedback

Appendix A

The full list of themes that were expressed in the engagement survey responses are provided for each proposal in the following pages.

Please note that the number of respondents that expressed the themes may exceed the total number of survey respondents. This is because respondent feedback could fall under multiple themes.

Appendix A

Proposal 1: Different permit charges based on vehicle emissions including a lower charge for electric vehicles or EV discounts in car parks.

No. of respondents	Theme
487	Penalising those who cannot afford an EV
151	Need improved EV infrastructure/Some do not have easy access to EV charging
131	Proposal is bad for businesses
110	EVs can have a negative environmental impact
84	Need better public transport and active travel infrastructure
83	Partially support proposal
75	EVs are too expensive
70	Parking charges are not enough to incentivise a switch to cleaner vehicles
61	Proposal penalises drivers
57	Opposed with no reasons
56	Aim of proposal is to generate income
50	Support with no reasons
47	Too complicated
45	Proposal is not needed
44	EVs still taking up the same amount of parking space as non-EVs
38	Proposal will not work
35	EVs are often heavier and bigger
34	Concerns proposal will displace parking onto side streets
32	Proposal will be good for EV users
26	Respondent supports the objectives of the proposal
24	Will encourage switch to less polluting vehicles or reduced car use
23	Proposal is needed and sensible
23	EVs are less safe (too quiet or heavier)
21	Out of scope
21	No view/Unsure
20	EVs already receive other incentives
18	Concern about cost to implement proposal
17	Unfair (general)
14	Respondents want free parking or lower parking charges
14	Proposal is too restrictive
12	Proposal will have environmental benefits
10	Buying a new car is less sustainable
7	Proposal should go even further
3	Similar schemes have been successful elsewhere
1	Would encourage more people to visit the town

Appendix A

Proposal 2: Time-based pricing for parking

No. of respondents	Theme
333	Will negatively impact businesses
144	Support with no reasons
142	It is unfair to people who cannot avoid peak times (e.g. parents, those with appointments)
125	Too complicated
111	Penalises town workers
106	Aim of proposal is to generate income
90	Oppose with no reasons
84	Respondent wants free parking, longer free period of parking or cheaper parking.
82	Partially support with considerations (e.g. concessions for town workers, if charges are reasonable)
81	Concerns proposal will cause parking displacement
72	Not needed
41	Unsure/Need more details
41	Will reduce congestion
33	Support proposal if off peak charges are lower or free
30	Proposal will not have an impact on congestion levels
27	Concern about impact on low-income households
26	Need improved public transport
24	No view
16	Respondent feels this is already in place (e.g. free parking in the evenings)
15	Out of scope
10	Proposal is penalising motorists
10	Will encourage more business activity
5	Car parks are congested

Appendix A

Proposal 3: Introduction of a diesel surcharge.

No. of respondents	Theme
217	Discriminating against poor
146	Government told us to buy diesel
130	Will hurt business/town centres
118	Diesel is or can be less polluting
105	Can't afford new car
94	Purely Supportive
89	Purely opposed
82	Penalising diesel drivers or motorists generally
73	Not needed
71	Will not work
49	Unfair
47	Suggestion
45	Proposal is too complicated
44	Aim of proposal is to generate income for council
42	Diesel drivers already pay more in road tax and other charges
30	EVs and/or EV infrastructure is not suitable yet
23	Unsure/No view
22	Positive environmental impact
20	Partially support
20	Cost passed onto customer
20	Suggestion to charge more for lorries, trucks and bigger cars
19	Will be costly to implement
17	There are no public transport alternatives
15	Will displace diesel cars to residential roads
15	Diesels are polluting
15	Understand objectives of the proposal
14	Necessary and/or fair
13	Out of scope
10	Doesn't impact space of parking
10	Buying a new car is not good for the environment
8	People are already struggling financially
7	Will help encourage a switch to cleaner vehicles
6	Will be good for health
3	Agree that higher emissions should pay more

Appendix A

Proposal 4: Review of charge levels for Motorcycles, Carers, Off-street parking, Businesses, and Car Clubs.

No. of respondents	Theme
157	Respondent supports free or reduced fees for carers
110	No opinion
102	Complicated/expensive to implement
85	Unsure
84	Support with no reasons
79	Opposed with no reasons
64	Support subsidies or help for businesses
53	Proposal is not good for business
49	Support a reduction (for all the groups listed)
47	Not needed
44	Aim of proposal is to generate income
39	Support for free or cheaper motorcycle parking
35	Do not want any parking charges
34	Support reduced rates or more promotion for car clubs (e.g. dedicated spaces)
27	Charge motorcycles as much as cars; do not give them free parking
26	Opposed to price increases
23	Not feasible to use car clubs
20	Comments about existing congestion in their area, concerns about displacement, and/or requests for resident parking permit
17	General comment that charges should be fair
17	Proposal penalises motorists
13	Concerns about parking displacement
13	Concerns about misuse of any reduced charges
12	Support – could help reduce congestion and pollution
9	Support for charging businesses/Do not want reduced charges for businesses
9	Motorcycles should be more regulated and are still polluting vehicles
8	Out of scope
7	Support charging for off-street parking
6	Do not want decreased parking availability/need to increase parking availability
5	Need more disabled parking bays
4	Motorcycles need designated parking spaces
3	Support higher charge for car clubs

Appendix A

Proposal 5: Review the all-day parking tariff option for some town centre car parks.

No. of respondents	Theme
349	Concern for employees who need to park for long periods
162	Will have a negative impact on business/town centres
108	Support with no reasons
95	Aim of proposal is to generate income
94	Concern for parking displacement/should be promoting use of car parks
74	Concern for commuters
73	Partially supportive
62	All day parking is necessary
57	Negative with no reasons
55	Not needed (general)
49	Need improved public transport first
45	Leave as is
41	No opinion
38	Concern for visitors
37	Would help free up parking spaces
37	Need more information/need to conduct a review of parking demands
35	Flexibility is good/provide a mix of parking options
32	Too complicated
17	Out of scope
17	Would help encourage more business activity
16	Not needed because parking congestion is not an issue
16	Might work
15	Do not want higher prices
10	Will encourage more sustainable travel and help improve the environment
7	Will create more emissions if people need to move their cars to comply with short-stay

Appendix A

Proposal 6: Making parking charges easier, fairer and more consistent across East Herts by reviewing existing charges, including locations and hours.

No. of respondents	Theme
366	Against consistency because locations are different
208	Agree with no reasons
91	Higher charges will hurt town and businesses
90	Aim is to raise prices and generate income
83	Keep prices affordable/Want more free parking
79	Agree because it would be fairer and simpler
75	Partially agree
63	Agree as long as charges do not increase
48	Unsure/No view
48	Not needed/too complicated
35	Do not make any changes
33	No increase in charges
26	Negative with no reasons
18	Out of scope
8	Proposal penalises motorists
5	Keep current amount of parking/need more parking
3	Support proposal for environmental reasons

Appendix A

Proposal 7: Introducing a workplace parking levy.

No. of respondents	Theme
194	Need better and more affordable public transport
143	Unsure/No view
123	Concerns it will hurt business
120	Penalises workers (worried cost will be passed onto employees)
111	Will deter future businesses or force existing businesses to relocate
80	Might work but only for with some considerations (e.g. depending on availability of public transport, size of business)
73	Agree with no reasons
65	Disagree with no reasons
62	Unfairly penalises business
52	Businesses already pay taxes or have already paid to provide their private parking
49	Proposal penalises motorists (including those who need to drive)
48	Aim of proposal is to generate income
47	Unfair
41	Concerns about parking displacement
40	Not needed
30	Might impact consumer (higher prices of goods/services)
27	Proposal is reasonable and fair
20	Proposal will not work
19	Too restrictive
13	Could help ease congestion
10	Council needs to seek business input
7	Will encourage a shift away from private vehicles
5	Too complicated
2	Will improve air pollution/health

Appendix A

Proposal 8: Offering incentives for car-sharing/car-pooling.

No. of respondents	Theme
223	Not needed or not practical
155	Incentive would be difficult to implement/monitor
138	Support proposal with no reasoning provided
113	Car sharing does not work
77	Positive but unsure about implementation
65	Could work/worth looking into
56	People already car share when possible
45	Expensive to implement
37	Oppose proposal with no reasoning provided
32	Need to improve public transport first
21	Concern for businesses
19	Car-polling is too restrictive
19	Worried people would abuse the system
18	Waste of council resources
15	Concerns about other complications
14	No view on proposal or would need more details
14	Would mean fewer cars on the road
12	Concerns about safety with car-sharing with strangers
11	Want free parking and/or more parking
11	Respondent would support car-share discounts
10	Aim of proposal is to generate income for council
7	Car-sharing saves money
5	Could reduce emissions/improve environment
5	Has worked well in other places
4	Engagement is not real/council should be leading by example
3	Would create more pollution/traffic
3	Would improve health and/or social connectivity
2	Unfair - People already pay road tax
1	Encouraging sustainable transport is good