



Broxtowe  
Borough  
COUNCIL

# Garage Strategy 2015 -2020

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Housing, Leisure and Property Services



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# Introduction

The provision of garages is an integral housing related service that Broxtowe provides. Additional to the provision of garages, the Directorate of Housing, Leisure and Property Services provide a significant number of car parks attached to our stock of retirement living properties.

This new garage strategy examines all aspects of the market and seeks to provide a framework for the future development, use of garages, the sites where garages are situated and the possible rental incomes from such sites. It will also consider the extent of car parking provided for our Retirement Living properties, whether this needs to be reviewed and how we could maximise income

from such sites. It is a comprehensive strategy that covers the period 2015 - 2020 and addresses the challenges that we face as a borough, related to the provision of adequate car parking, affordable housing and cross cutting themes such as anti-social behaviour and financial income from the sites.

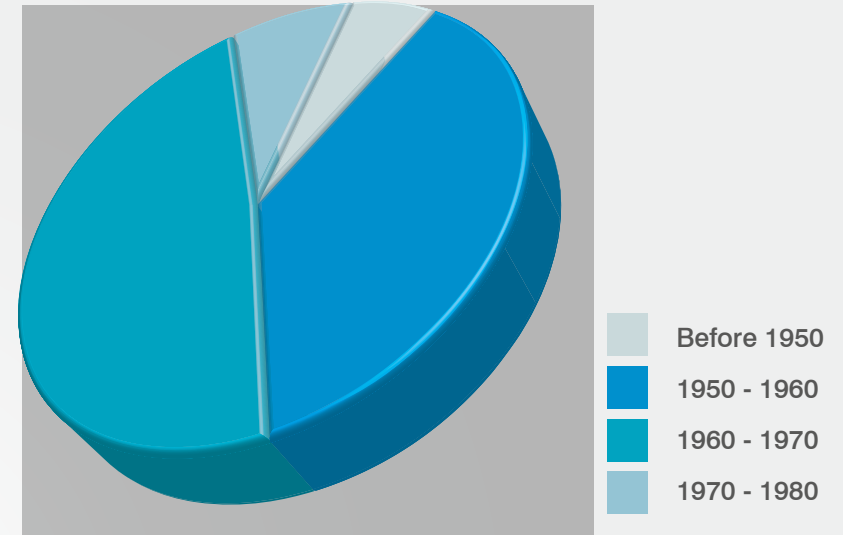
The objectives of the new garage strategy are:

- To address adequate provision of car parking challenges faced by the borough, while ensuring the Council achieves its objectives for the provision of affordable homes and retirement living complexes over the next 20 years.
- To generate a planned maintenance programme of improvements and regeneration of garage sites to ensure their future sustainability.
- To provide a framework of management actions, all aimed at providing sustainable garage sites and demonstrating value for money of housing owned land.

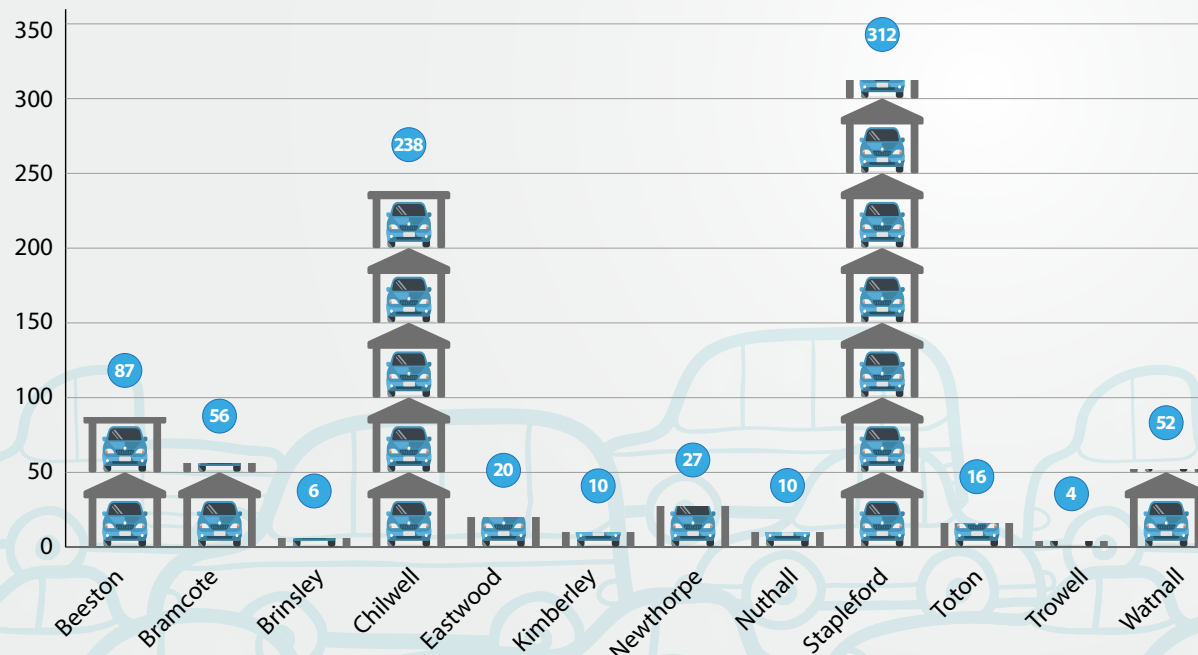


# Profile of Garages -

There are 191 Council owned garage blocks located within the borough with a total of 838 garages. These sites are located within all of the main towns within the borough. The majority of garages within the borough were built between 1960 and 1970 as shown within the chart below. Because of the age of the garages and lack of investment since construction, many are in need of refurbishment.



## Number of garages by area



# Condition of Garages -

As all of our garage stock was constructed more than 35 years ago, with the majority having been built more than 60 years ago, consideration needs to be given to the following factors that have changed since the garages and estates were designed and built:

- The garages were designed for cars which are smaller than the average car today.
- Street design and layout did not take into account two car families and on-street car parking. Neither did they consider the parking of company vehicles such as vans.
- The numbers of cars in the UK have increased from 19 million in 1971 to 31 million now and is expected to increase to 44 million by 2010. The numbers of cars per household have

increased from 0.55 in 1971 to 1.3 now Source: Car Ownership in Britain – David Liebling – RAC Foundation

- Garages provided were originally used to store vehicles, whereas now they are used for storing other items due to changes in social attitudes and lifestyles.
- Methods of construction for garages have changed. Precast concrete panels and asbestos containing sheets are no longer used.
- Garages built in the 1950's / 1960's were not designed to last over 60 years.

Over £1million needs to be spent on the existing stock to bring it up to an acceptable standard. Considering a 10 year programme, approximately £120,000 will need spending per

annum. The majority of these costs relate to roofing and hard-standing works. In some cases, over £2,000.00 per garage is required to bring a garage site up to standard. Garages have been neglected due to resources being used to assist the Council to achieve its decent homes targets.

Element	Estimated costs
Paint garage doors and frames where required	£38,000.00
Paint remaining timberwork where required	£1,500.00
Renew garage doors and frames where required	£14,500.00
Renew fascias	£350.00
Renew / repair flat roofs (including any asbestos removal)	£874,592.00
Repairs and improvements to hard-standings	£97,500.00
Repairs to concrete panels	£1,500.00
Repairs to brickwork	£14,500.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>£1,042,442.00</b>

# Demand for Garages

Due to a variety of reasons, demand for our garage stock is currently high. These include a lack of on-street car parking due to car parking enforcement; Relatively low rents for a council garage compared to other service providers; Users who are using the provided garage for other purposes than the storage of a vehicle as it is cheaper to do so. Whilst demand is high, the provision of garages needs to be balanced with the provision of adequate parking facilities and affordable housing. 54% of garages are let to Council tenants with the remaining being let to private individuals.

Prior to commencing the review of garages, there was a waiting list of 301 applicants for a garage within the borough. During our consultations with

those on the waiting list, we asked whether they still wished to be considered for a Council garage. This exercise resulted in the numbers on the waiting list reducing to 189. Determining actual demand for garages throughout the borough is difficult to achieve due to the current methods adopted when applying for a garage. The existing application form for a garage gives applicants the opportunity to select areas in which they would like to be considered for a garage. Applicants can select from 1 up to 81 different sites. Therefore, when analysing those on the waiting list, demand does not mirror the number of applicants on the waiting list.



Despite overall demand for a garage being high, this is not the case for all garage sites. The following sites have high vacancy rates, are not highly sought after and are located on land suitable for development:

- Chilton Drive, Watnall
- Ewe Lamb Close, Bramcote
- Dunsmore Close, Beeston
- Cliff Hill Avenue, Stapleford
- Central Avenue, Beeston
- Lawrence Avenue, Eastwood
- Bexhill Court, Beeston

# Demand by Area -

Area	Number of applicants who have selected this area	Number of garages in this area	Number of applicants per garage	Ranking in order of demand
Beeston	1007	87	11	3
Bramcote	255	56	4.5	7=
Brinsley	22	6	3.6	9
Chilwell	1099	238	4.6	6
Eastwood	323	20	16	1
Kimberley	79	10	7.9	4
Newthorpe	65	27	2.4	12
Nuthall	45	10	4.5	7=
Stapleford	785	312	2.5	10=
Toton	97	16	6	5
Trowell	50	4	12.5	2
Watnall	132	52	2.5	10=

## Key outcomes:

- Whilst Stapleford and Chilwell have the most garages in the borough, demand for these garages is relatively low.
- Eastwood as an area contains a relatively low number of garages but demand for these is high. This is perhaps a reflection of the low number of garages within the north of the borough when compared to the south and central areas.



# Retirement Living Car Parking

Most retirement living properties were not designed with the knowledge that residents will still be driving past their 70's. 50% of Retirement Living sites have car parking provided on land owned by Broxtowe Borough Council with the rest using on-street facilities provided by Nottinghamshire County Council. On "A" schemes, where our most vulnerable residents reside, we currently provide 0.2 spaces on average per resident. This is mainly due to only 55% of the schemes having space available for parking. On sites where parking is available, 0.26 spaces per resident are provided. Actual demand for car parking at Retirement Living sites is not known. It is however acknowledged that our residents are living and driving longer, meaning that the provision of adequate car parking will become an issue over the next 10 years. Working with Nottinghamshire County Council will be critical to the provision of adequate parking.

Schemes where the greatest number of spaces are provided per resident are as follows:

- The Lilacs – 0.48
- The Spinney – 0.36
- The Willows – 0.34

As Broxtowe Borough Council does not own the land around many of its retirement living schemes, this land cannot be repaired or extended to accommodate additional car parking.

However, there are 10 sites where investment could be made to either, repair, improve or increase car parking provision. Considering the existing provision of car parking, a total of 167 spaces are currently provided on housing owned land.

Location	Town	No. of properties	No. of spaces
Cloverlands Court	Watnall	31	6
The Spinney	Nuthall	36	13
Phoenix Court	Eastwood	25	9
Church Close	Trowell	23	8
Greenwood Court	Chilwell	39	8
Lombardy Lodge	Toton	34	7
Richmond Court	Chilwell	35	6
Venn Court	Beeston	34	6
The Willows	Beeston	29	10
Yew Tree Court	Beeston	34	8



# Consultations

Consultation on this strategy included:

- Postal feedback from residents who currently rent a garage.
- Postal feedback from residents who are on the waiting list for a garage within the borough.
- Round table sessions with key officers.
- Discussions and presentations to members of the Homes Service Review Group, Tenancy and Estates Service Review Group, Retirement Living Service review Group and Housing Performance Group.
- Discussions with other local service providers.
- Circulation of drafts for comments, clarification and amendments.
- Consideration by cabinet.

Approximately 150 tenants in total have voiced their concerns through 1-2-1 meetings with staff, during tenants meetings over the last 12 months or through the Retirement Living Service Review Group.



## Key results

With those who currently rent a garage

- 48% of users considered the garage was not wind / water tight
- 10% of users considered the rent to be 'good value for money'
- 47% of users were happy to pay more rent if the garage was modernised

With those who have applied to go on our waiting list

- 28% advised they were hoping to use the garage for storing items other than a vehicle
- 37% considered the rent to be good value for money. This confirms resident's views are different once they have rented a garage

- 72% were happy to pay more rent if the garage was modernised
- The main reason for wanting a garage is the locality to their home
- Increased the variety of methods used to involve residents, including the use of interactive Qwizdom handsets

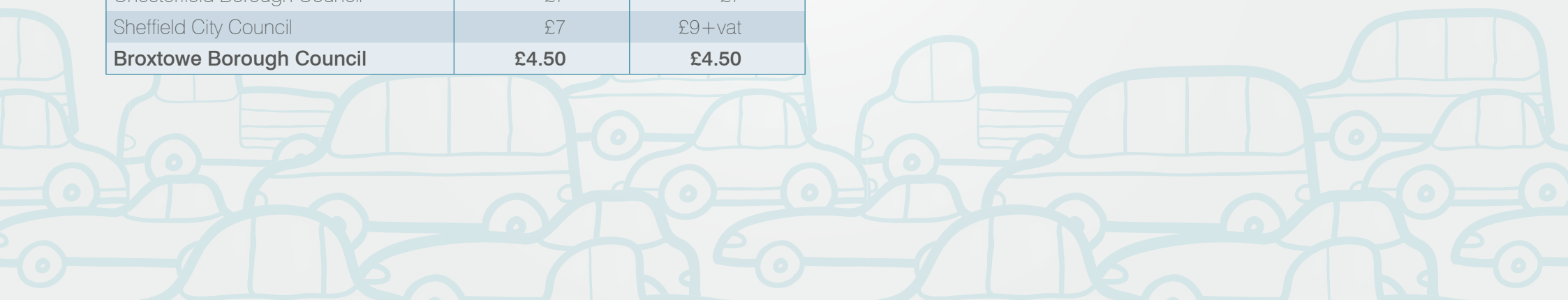
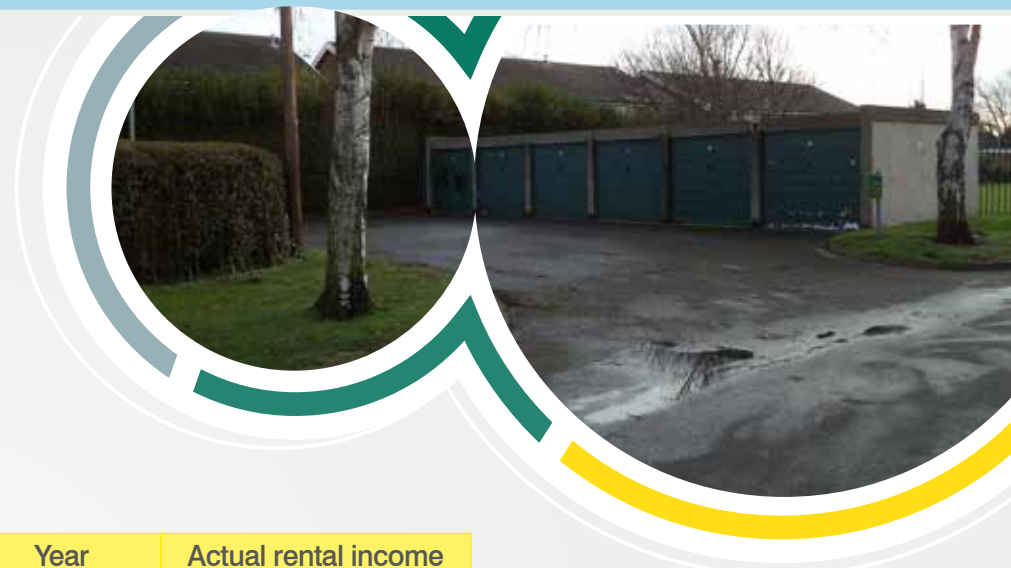


# Rental Income

Rental income at Broxtowe is lower than other service providers, mainly due to the amount of rent charged per month. Rental income is less than other comparative service providers. Raising rental income from £4.27 per week to £5.27 per week for council tenants and £6.27 per week for private occupiers would result in an additional income of approximately £65,000.00 per annum. Raising rental income to the average mean income would generate an additional income of £154,000.00 per annum.

Service Provider	Rent charged to tenants / week	Rent charged to private / week
Nottingham City Council	£8	£9+vat
Derby City Council	£8	£9+vat
Leicester City Council	£11	£11+vat
Mansfield District Council	£7	£8
Ashfield District Council	£8	£8+vat
Newark and Sherwood District Council	£8.67	£10.20
Rushcliffe	£8	£9
Chesterfield Borough Council	£7	£7
Sheffield City Council	£7	£9+vat
<b>Broxtowe Borough Council</b>	<b>£4.50</b>	<b>£4.50</b>

Year	Actual rental income
2009-2010	£175,305.00
2010-2011	£164,822.00
2011-2012	£164,477.00
2012-2013	£168,003.00
2013-2014	£161,767.00



# Development Options

Retirement Living Car Parking - The Directorate of Housing, Leisure and Property Services owns approximately 2000m<sup>2</sup> of land currently used for retirement living car parking. This land and land adjacent to it does not provide any income to the Council.

When considering development opportunities for garage sites and retirement living car parking, the following options need to be explored:

- Redevelop and refurbish existing garages at an approximate cost of £1.2M (£120K / annum based on a 10 year improvement programme funded by proposed increases in rent)
- Demolish garages and use the land for car parking thereby creating an additional 2 spaces for every 10 garages at an approximate cost of £460,000 (demolition) and £1M (reinstatement of hard-standing)
- Demolish garages and redevelop land for affordable housing at an approximate cost of £460,000
- Demolish garages and erect new purpose built garages at an approximate cost of £2.5M
- Sell existing garages therefore removing any liability but also reducing rental income (an expression of interest has already been made to purchase the garages on Stapleford Lane)
- Dispose of car parking land and extend retirement living complexes thereby creating more affordable housing.
- Extend retirement living car parking to accommodate the inevitable increase in demand over the next 10 years at an approximate cost of £1000.00 per space.



Considering the outcomes of the analysis of condition, demand and location, the following sites have been identified as being suitable for re-development. These sites have also been assessed as being suitable for re-development from a financial and practical perspective. Consideration of rights of way across garage sites needs to be given prior to any development programme.

- 46 garages at Chilton Drive, Watnall
- 7 garages at Cliff Hill Avenue, Stapleford
- 17 garages at Ryecroft Street, Stapleford – development at this site has already started.
- 24 garages at Central Avenue, Beeston
- 14 garages at Lawrence Avenue, Eastwood



# Long-term investment -

In order to ensure the sustainability of our remaining garage stock and Retirement Living car parking, income generated from existing / reviewed rents should be used to address the current situation of under investment. Due to the demands of the Decent Homes Programme and the Broxtowe Standard, combined with the obvious need to ensure the Housing stock is prioritised, it is acknowledged that the garage stock and hard-standings have been neglected. To redress the balance and ensure garages and car parks attached to retirement living schemes are sustainable in the future, a planned maintenance programme covering a 10 year period will ensure all sites retained are

improved as below:

- Removal of all asbestos
- Upgrading structural elements including rainwater goods
- Refurbishment of hard-standings
- Improvements in security

During any future planned maintenance programmes, the security of the site should be considered. This will in turn assist to reduce anti-social behaviour and improve the overall outlook and feel of the estate.

A lack of management and marketing has resulted in a reduced income from garages in

the past. The Marketing Officer is to consider void garages and hard to let garages in the same manner as the housing stock and market them accordingly. Any planned investment programmes are to be promoted through press releases and resident newsletters. Following individual improvement schemes, sites are to be promoted to encourage demand.

If garages are going to be a sustainable option for the storage of a vehicle for the future, the following areas of service delivery will need to be considered:

- Provision of electric charging points





- Size of garages – cars are getting larger and the existing stock of garages have not been designed for today's or tomorrow's cars
- Utilization of solar panels on roofs to provide power for security lighting or general site lighting
- Consider the provision of smaller garages for the storage of motorbikes or motorised scooters
- Consider the provision of high specification garages where wind and water-tightness is as good as a dwelling house and offer them for storage of items other than a vehicle at a higher rental rate.

# Strategic actions -

1. Review the garage tenancy agreement in conjunction with resident groups
2. Management of the garage waiting list should be allocated to a Garage Officer
3. Review and alter the garage application form
4. Increase rental income for garages so it is in line with other service providers
5. Consult with service users and members regarding the potential income that could be generated from charging for the use of retirement living car parking
6. Liaise with Nottinghamshire County Council regarding the provision of on-street car parking
7. Consider the demolition and redevelopment of sites
8. Consider the available options for the garage sites retained
9. Develop a planned maintenance programme for any proposed refurbishment contract for garages and retirement living car parking
10. Estate Management Inspections are to consider the use and improvement of garage sites





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