

FLEET STRATEGY



2026 - 2029



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FOREWORD



For victims of crime, the arrival of a police vehicle can be a moment of relief, the reassurance that they have been heard and that help is on its way.

For our communities, police vehicles are a visible symbol of safety, presence and trust. As Police and Crime Commissioner, I am committed to ensuring our fleet supports visible, responsive neighbourhood policing, puts victims first and delivers our safer people and safer places priorities across County Durham and Darlington.

As the legal owner and public custodian of Durham Constabulary's vehicle fleet, I have a responsibility to ensure it enables the Chief Constable to deliver an accessible, effective and efficient police service.

Every vehicle is a publicly funded asset, paid for by local people, and must deliver maximum value, supporting frontline policing, protecting the vulnerable and strengthening public confidence.

This Fleet Strategy for 2026–2029 directly supports my Police, Crime and Justice Plan, aligning strategic priorities with the Chief Constable's Delivery Plan. It underpins our shared ambition to increase

neighbourhood visibility, respond more effectively to victims, and ensure policing is both proactive and community-focused.

A reliable, well-deployed fleet is fundamental to achieving these outcomes, enabling officers and staff to be where they are needed most, when they are needed most. In my role as Chair of Blue Light Commercial, I see first-hand the power of national collaboration, standardisation and smarter procurement in delivering better outcomes for policing. This strategy reflects that approach.

By adopting national best practice, focusing on whole-life costs and embracing a "buy once, use many" mindset, we can drive efficiencies, reduce duplication and secure better value for the public purse. It underpins our shared ambition to increase neighbourhood visibility, respond more effectively to victims, and ensure policing is both proactive and community-focused.

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By adopting national best practice, focusing on whole-life costs and embracing a “buy once, use many” mindset, we can drive efficiencies, reduce duplication and secure better value for the public purse. This is not simply about cost savings, it is about making every pound work harder for the public. Efficiencies achieved through smarter commercial decisions must be reinvested into frontline policing and victim services, strengthening our ability to tackle crime, support those affected by it and maintain a visible, reassuring presence in our communities.

The strategy also reflects my commitment to sustainability. Policing must play its part in responding to environmental challenges. Transitioning to lower-emission vehicles and investing in the right infrastructure will help reduce our environmental impact while maintaining the operational capability our communities rely on. Strong governance, transparency and accountability sit at the heart of this approach. The fleet represents a significant public investment, and it is essential that it is managed responsibly, with clear oversight and a relentless focus on value for money and operational effectiveness.

I welcome this strategy as a clear and practical plan to modernise and optimise Durham Constabulary’s fleet. I will continue to hold the Chief Constable to account for its delivery, providing assurance to the public that the Forces fleet supports effective policing, strengthens public trust and confidence by helps deliver safer communities across County Durham and Darlington.





INTRODUCTION



Vehicles are essential in our ability to provide a visible, accessible and responsive policing service to the communities we serve in County Durham and Darlington. I am committed to efficiently and effectively use our fleet assets to provide emergency response, to support public engagement with our officers and staff, to enable investigations and to create a visible, physical deterrence to crime.

I acknowledge the expectations in relation to the management of public assets and understand that our vehicles are essentially a mobile working environment for our officers. I therefore commit to provision of a fleet that is not only cost effective and fit for purpose but safe and equipped with the technology required to meet the demands placed on policing. These demands are ever changing so our approach to fleet management must be flexible and open to use of innovation while aiming to meet emerging national standards in relation to procurement, conversion, maintenance and disposal.

This strategy therefore focuses on improvements required to fleet provision and allocation, affordability, compliance with legislation, driver safety and adoption of new technology.

In addition, I am committed to reduction of our carbon emissions and aim to modernise our fleet with a replacement plan that involves use of electric vehicles wherever practicable. While not all operational requirements can be met with a fully electric fleet, where necessary I will direct procurement of vehicles with the lowest polluting engines possible.

To ensure targeted implementation of objectives, the strategy is aligned to my Delivery Plan and the commitments within the Police and Crime Commissioner's Police, Crime and Justice Plan with sound governance arrangements in place to monitor our progress.

I consider this embarks us on a fleet transformation process that will enable a more effective police service with greater, visible support to our communities.



WHERE ARE WE NOW?

The Constabulary Fleet comprises approximately 400 vehicles travelling in the region of 4 million miles per annum across County Durham and Darlington.

The number and mix of vehicles is determined through analysis of operational requirements. The Constabulary aims to ensure that vehicles are

available, reliable, and meet operational needs. It is essential that the fleet can adapt to fluctuating and reactive demands through provision of the right number and right types of vehicles.

Within Durham, the current fleet includes 60% liveried and 40% unmarked vehicles which is split across vehicle types as follows:

Description	
Response - Standard police driving licence	101
Neighbourhood - Standard police driving licence	48
Roads Policing - Advanced police driving licence	21
Armed Response - Advanced police driving licence	16
Public Order- Specialist police driving licence	12
Dog Vehicle- Specialist police driving licence	7
Pool Cars/General Purpose	50
Motorcycles- Specialist police driving licence	8
Other Vehicles - Standard, Specialist, Advanced police driving licence	137



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Maintenance of the fleet is provided largely in house by a team of vehicle technicians and specialist technical staff at the PCC owned workshop facility at Peterlee. Servicing and tyre replacement regimes are designed to maximise the safety of drivers and the public as well as to improve vehicle longevity and reliability. In addition to routine servicing, the fleet management team provide the following services to the Constabulary:

- Vehicle acquisition and disposal
- Vehicle repair
- Accident damage
- Defect recording
- Vehicle commissioning and de-commissioning
- MOT style safety inspections as required (MOT exemption applied)
- Preparation of bespoke vehicle specifications
- Specialist vehicle conversions
- Vehicle parts purchase and supply
- In house and external fuel purchase including management
- Operation of dedicated fleet management software
- Fleet innovation
- Advice on alternative transport methods and collaboration opportunities

Vehicles are purchased where possible through the BlueLight Commercial national public sector procurement framework with makes and models offered by numerous vehicle manufacturers in line with HM Government's policy relating to police fleet standardisation and cost effectiveness



There are 4 key considerations in vehicle replacement as follows:



ENVIRONMENTAL

- CO2 emissions
- Fuel efficiency
- Fuel Type



OPERATIONAL

- Performance
 - Safety
- Role suitability
- Equipment control



FINANCIAL

- National procurement contracts
 - Discount percentage
 - Whole-life costs



MAINTENANCE

- Technical expertise
 - Training
- Specialist tooling
- Manufacturer support
 - Retailer network

Most Durham Constabulary vehicles are replaced according to role, age and mileage on a whole life costs basis, generally every 4/6 years or upon reaching 80/150 thousand miles. Other factors are considered on an exception basis where required.

The running costs for the Constabulary fleet were £3.8 million in 2024/25. Extending the service of a vehicle, increases maintenance, which increases time take to repair along with increased component failures.

Transition to a green fleet has multiple considerations, cost of Electric Vehicle (EV) vehicle purchase is around double that of Internal Combustion Engine (ICE) vehicles, increased technical training for staff. Ability to store/maintain, repair and charge EVs requires investment of both capital and revenue along with health and safety implications. Potentially the biggest challenge comes in how policing adapts to the usage challenges of EV along with the need to power additional equipment.

Fleet Innovations

Fleet have initiated a number of recent innovations to aid the Chief Constable's Delivery Plan to include:

- The 'ECCO DNA' beat car with alternating blue light flash patterns to improve visibility, increase safety and reduce response times.
- The 24-volt climate control system installed dog response vehicles for dog welfare.
- The internally developed smartphone app Vehicle Maintenance System (VMS) is both a digital logbook and vehicle defect reporting system. The app records and explains completed required vehicle checks along with advising the user of service requirements. This product has been developed in conjunction with Fleet, ICT and users to ensure full 360-degree development.

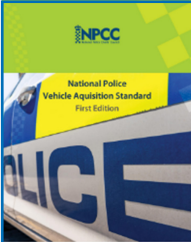

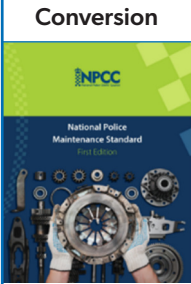



THE NEED FOR CHANGE

External Factors

Policing is driven by several external factors placing a duty on Chief Constables to use their operational fleet to provide an effective emergency response, create a visible deterrence to crime while also engaging technology to improve detection rates and improve efficiency. The fleet must therefore be suitable, sufficient, safe and effective.

The key current external consideration within police fleet management is the National Standard released by the National Police Chief’s Council (NPCC) to achieve a consistent level of performance across the country. This standard will cover the following 4 elements of fleet management:

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish vehicles available • Develop and apply assessment criteria • Formalise decision making • Process for testing vehicle • Guidance on how police vehicle should be procured
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Builds on foundation laid in acquisition • Managing design risk converting from manufacturer’s specification • Development of specifications, construction of prototypes, testing of converted vehicles to confirm their performance and safety
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Process required to ensure the safety and availability of vehicles during their police service • Outlines the specific challenges ensuring the safety of a police fleet • Stresses the importance of a robust system for capturing and analysing the use, maintenance, performance and failure patterns of a police fleet • Stresses the importance of ensuring scheduled maintenance / periodic technical inspections are performed in a timely manner and identify any emergent patterns of failure
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Process when vehicle has reached end of life • Guidance to ensure the condition and mileage of any vehicle which will be sold into the public market is publicly available • Guidance on when a vehicle should not be made available to the public

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The National Maintenance Standard has been produced and sets out a continuous improvement regime building upon the already rigorous processes applied by police fleet management teams across the country.

The document sets out 5 pillars for assurance in fleet safety and roadworthiness:

- Daily checks
- Effective methods of communicating between drivers and maintainers
- A robust maintenance schedule
- Periodic Safety Inspections
- Effective Fleet Management System

The documents in relation to acquisition, conversion and disposal have also now been released and while these bring demand and budgetary pressures, the Constabulary must aim to comply with national expectations within fleet management.

Another external factor within fleet management relates to sustainability. We accept our corporate social responsibility to meet ongoing political sustainability objectives. We know that our travel has an impact on the environment and, as a responsible public sector body, we aim to manage this in line with Government policy.

The lifecycle of our vehicles through manufacture, use, maintenance and disposal affects the natural environment through carbon emissions and potentially harmful waste products. Older ICE vehicles generally use more fuel, have higher emissions and require more reactive maintenance.

Replacement of ICE vehicles with EVs is a challenge to the police fleet due to operational performance and use demands as explained above. In addition, the electrical power infrastructure to enable rapid charging across our estate needs to be in place. Despite this, the Constabulary must adapt to new and emerging technologies as far as possible as well as ensuring fuel efficiency.



Internal Factors - Strategic Fit

Durham Constabulary strives to build on our success and continues to deliver a service to our communities which provides value for money to the people of County Durham and Darlington. This will be achieved while working towards the NPCC's 6 Policing missions in its 2030 vision. To succeed in this the Chief Constable has identified a spectrum of key deliverables, in conjunction with the Police, Crime and Justice Plan, which identifies our goals to support in the prevention of crime and how we will relentlessly pursue criminals, how we remain determined to protect vulnerable people and how we will continue to provide a first-class service to victims. The four pillars of the Chief Constable's Delivery Plan (CCDP) are Organisational, People, Operational and Prevention aligned with the five productivity levers of:

- Process Improvement / Problem Solving
- Technology / Assets
- Staff Resource
- Partnerships / Collaboration
- Data Analytics

The CCDP is set out below.



Durham Constabulary's Chief Constable Delivery Plan 2024 - 2027

Our Purpose
We will build trust and confidence by:



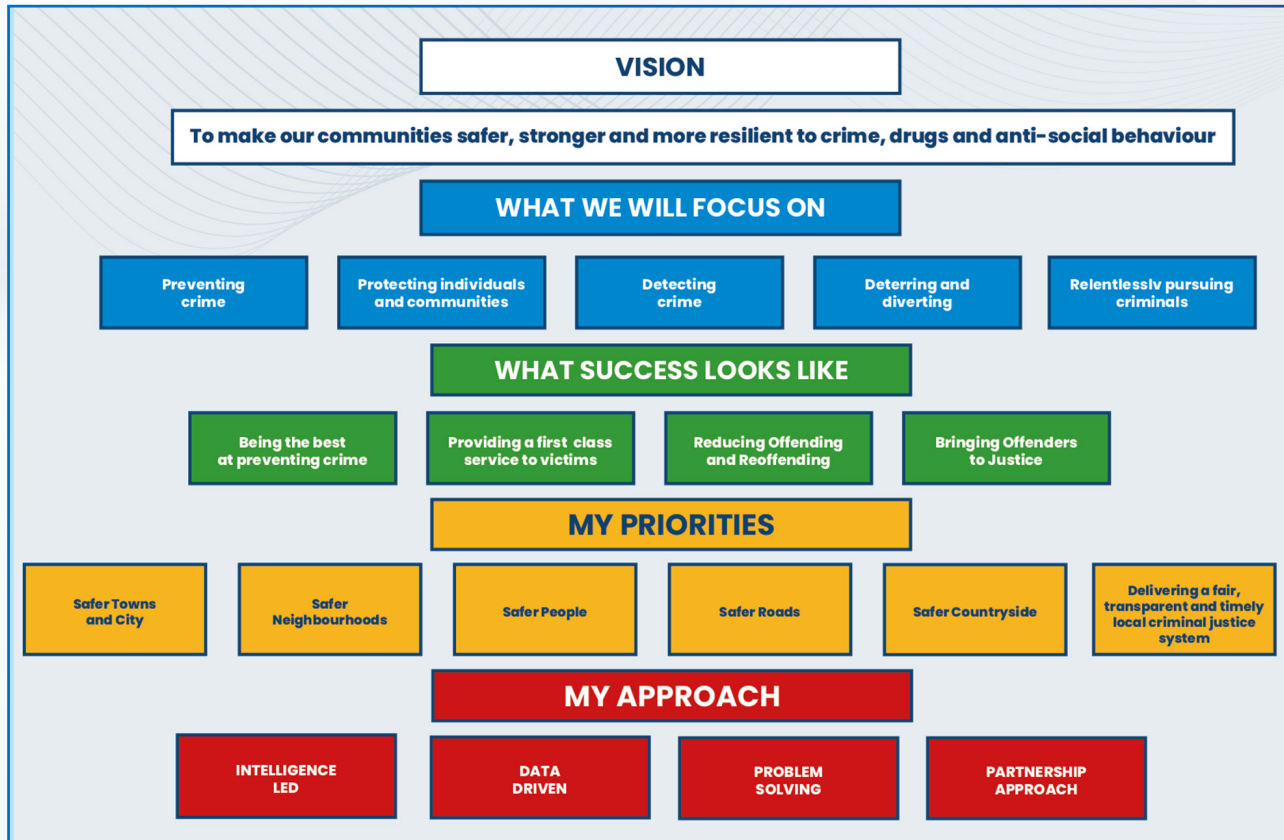
- Relentlessly Pursuing Criminals
- Being Determined to Protect Vulnerable People
- Providing a First-Class Service to Victims
- Being the Best at Preventing Crime & ASB

 ORGANISATIONAL	 PEOPLE	 OPERATIONAL	 PREVENTION
Innovative and Productive	Health, Safety and Wellbeing	Responding and Investigating	Early Intervention and Prevention
Data Led	Diversity, Equality and Inclusion	Protect Against Exploitation and Vulnerability	Problem Solving
Digital Inclusivity	Supportive Leadership and Accountability	Focus on Victims and Victim Satisfaction	Offender Management and Diversion



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The Police, Crime and Justice Plan will be set around the following Plan on a Page:



Fleet is a cross-cutting resource involved in the delivery of all pillars and values of the CCDP and Police, Crime and Justice Plan. An understanding of our operational requirements is therefore essential and, as crime and policing methods are continuously changing, so fleet management must also evolve with a suitable and flexible transformation plan.





HOW DO WE GET THERE?

To ensure strategic fit and consideration of external factors, a fleet transformation plan with key objectives has been developed. This will be supported by a detailed annual action/capital plan monitored through our internal governance systems and procedures with an acknowledgement of what is achievable with the staffing and financial resources available.

Key Fleet Objectives

The key objectives of this strategy are to enable transformation into a fleet portfolio that:

- Has the right number and type of vehicles to meet operational requirements
- Is affordable and environmentally sustainable as far as possible
- Is managed in line with legislation and is compliant, as far as reasonably practicable, with guidance, best practice and industry standards
- Is driven safely with a reduction in Police Vehicle Incidents
- Is more technologically advanced with modern driver aids, safety systems and operational equipment

These objectives have been developed into a transformation plan as set out below. Financial viability and fleet staff capacity needs to be correlated with the transformation plan via the Estate and Fleet Asset Delivery Group in consultation with the Chief Constable and Police and Crime Commissioner.



Fleet Transformation Plan

The fleet transformation plan is set out below demonstrating indicators of success, alignment with the CCDP and milestone tasks to be achieved within the timeframe of this fleet strategy.

Key Fleet Objective Transformation into a fleet portfolio that:	Success	CCDP Pillars	Productivity Levers	2026-2028 Milestone Tasks
Has the right number and type of vehicles to meet operational requirements	<p>Allocation and type of vehicles that are fit for purpose and support operational policing</p> <p>A fleet that enhances public visibility and promotes confidence in policing</p> <p>High levels of fleet availability</p>	All 4	Process Improvement/ Problem Solving; Technology/ Assets; Staff Resource; Data Analytics	<p>Establish operational requirement with consultation via Vehicle User Group</p> <p>Evaluate fleet performance through data from Tranman system and telematics</p> <p>Reallocation, acquisition and disposal of vehicles according to demand</p> <p>Develop capital programme via Estate and Fleet Asset Delivery Group</p>
Is affordable and environmentally sustainable as far as possible	<p>Annual fleet spend within budget allocation</p> <p>Reduced mileage, fuel consumption and fleet carbon emissions</p> <p>Increased recycling of fleet components</p>	Organisational and Prevention	Process Improvement/ Problem Solving; Technology/ Assets; Staff Resource; Data Analytics	<p>Strategic rotation of vehicles with use of telematics usage data to evenly spread wear and tear across fleet assets, improve efficiency, increase reliability and reduce demand in fleet workshop.</p> <p>Use of telematics to understand fuel consumption and vehicle performance to enable predictive analytics informing fleet workshop processes and maximising efficiencies</p> <p>Ensure servicing regimes and capital replacement programme contribute to the extension of life of fleet assets</p> <p>Consider opportunities to replace ICE vehicles with electric vehicles whenever possible and operationally suitable. Where not suitable, purchase vehicles with the lowest polluting engines available.</p>



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Key Fleet Objective Transformation into a fleet portfolio that:	Success	CCDP Pillars	Productivity Levers	2026-2028 Milestone Tasks
				<p>Maximise opportunities to recycle fluids, parts and tyres as well as end of life vehicles.</p> <p>Optimize route planning and reduce unnecessary journeys to minimize fuel consumption and emissions.</p> <p>Involve eco-driving techniques within driver training</p> <p>Align fleet with estate and sustainability strategy actions producing anticipated/ projected electric fleet vehicle numbers to enable suitable provision of site charging requirements.</p>
Is managed in line with legislation and is compliant, as far as reasonably practicable, with guidance, best practice and industry standards	<p>Meeting vehicle related legislative requirements</p> <p>Aiming to align with national standards as far as possible</p>	Organisational, People and Prevention	All 5	<p>Establish and evaluate current, fleet management standards and processes</p> <p>Review current legislation and national fleet standards/ expectations maintaining close links with the National Association of Fleet Managers and the NPCC</p> <p>Adapt and deliver fleet management improvements that comply with all relevant legislation and are cognisant of national guidance and best practice</p> <p>Establish a culture of continuous learning and improvement within the fleet management team, encouraging development and knowledge sharing</p>

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Key Fleet Objective Transformation into a fleet portfolio that:	Success	CCDP Pillars	Productivity Levers	2026-2028 Milestone Tasks
Is driven safely with a reduction in Police Vehicle Incidents	<p>Reduced number of Police Vehicle Incidents</p> <p>Reduced insurance costs</p> <p>Reduced risk of injury or death to police drivers and the public</p>	Organisational, People and Prevention	Process Improvement/ Problem Solving; Technology/ Assets; Staff Resource; Data Analytics	<p>Development of the Constabulary's driver training programs to include defensive driving, vehicle dynamics, safe operation of specialist or new-to-force vehicles, safe operation of onboard vehicle equipment, use of dashboard diagnostic indicators, reporting faults to fleet management, vehicles checks and completion of VMS log.</p> <p>Develop policies and procedures for driver licensing and health and fitness to drive</p> <p>Development of culture change to involve supervision/SMT awareness of Police Vehicle Incidents</p> <p>Use telematics data to monitor driver behaviour such as speeding and erratic braking then provide targeted direction/training via supervision where required.</p> <p>Improve accident reporting, investigation, and analysis to identify trends and root causes through use of the Police Vehicle Incident reporting system</p> <p>Share lessons learned to include use of dashcam video in relation to incidents through the Constabulary via the fleet management governance system and via SMTs.</p> <p>Development of VMS system</p>



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Key Fleet Objective Transformation into a fleet portfolio that:	Success	CCDP Pillars	Productivity Levers	2026-2028 Milestone Tasks
Is more technologically advanced with modern driver aids, safety systems and operational equipment		All 4	Process Improvement/ Problem Solving; Technology/ Assets; Staff Resource; Data Analytics	<p>Increased onboard technology where appropriate to include dashcam, ANPR, diagnostics, mobile office equipment and vehicle safety systems</p> <p>Development of a telematics solution to monitor vehicle location, identify usage frequency, track maintenance trends, monitor mileage, track fuel consumption, optimise route planning/logistics and assess driver behaviour.</p> <p>Continuous improvement of innovation within fleet management to include trialling new technology</p>

GOVERNANCE AND REVIEW

The PCC is the legal owner of the fleet and is responsible for ensuring an efficient and effective police service in County Durham and Darlington. The PCC has representation on the Estate and Fleet Asset Delivery Group. The Chief Constable operates the fleet assets with responsibility for its management acting as the duty holder in relation to legal and regulatory liabilities.

This strategy will be overseen by the Deputy Chief Constable under delegation from the Chief Constable, with the support of senior leaders and, the Assistant Chief Officer to ensure financial prudence and value for money considerations are properly addressed. The primary reporting mechanism will be through an established Estate and Fleet Asset Delivery Group which will report into wider Executive and PCC

governance structures as determined over time. This Delivery Group is supported by Vehicle User Group. The membership of Vehicle User Group involves wider operational stakeholders and staff associations to provide a communication forum for all fleet related matters.

The strategy is also considered within the strategic planning cycle and our internal performance management system.

This strategy is a 3-year plan for 2026 - 2028 underpinned by several force and PCC strategic documents to include specific annual plans in relation to fleet investment. Actions will be revised in accordance with any changes in legislation, policing policy or funding streams.





COLLABORATION AND COMMUNICATION

The Chief Constable and PCC remain committed to collaboration with key strategic partner organisations and agencies in relation to the implementation of this fleet strategy in the interests of mutual gain and efficiency savings.

This strategy will be available electronically on the internal force intranet, the internet or by email request. Hard copies can also be provided on demand.

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