

Frequently Asked Questions

Q1. What are Smart Cities?

Smart Cities use data and innovative technology to inform decisions and improve services and quality of life. A smart city collects information about itself through devices such as sensors, digital devices and existing systems. It communicates the data collected using wired or wireless networks. This enables more efficient and effective monitoring and control of energy and water systems, transportation networks, human services, public safety operations and core functions to make cities more liveable, prosperous and sustainable.

Q2. What is a Smart City Strategy?

A Smart City Strategy is a specific plan about how data and innovative technology can be used to address urban challenges in an efficient and effective way.

Q3. Does Parkes Shire Council have a Smart City Strategy?

Parkes Shire's Smart City Strategy is a high-level strategy that was developed initially in 2016 to take advantage of State and Federal funding that was targeted around the development of "Smart Cities". Our strategy assesses on-going Council projects for opportunities to incorporate the use of technology to improve the efficiency of or the quality of services that Council provides. Examples of projects that have been developed based on this approach include:

- A Recycled Water System that uses devices at each location that council irrigate to efficiently apply water at the optimum time and to track the total water used in the system to ensure we meet regulatory obligations.
- Smart Water Meter roll out which uses standard water meters equipped with a small sensor to allow water usage to be captured daily rather than once every 3 months and reduce the need for the meters to read manually, while also allowing us to communicate with individual water users regarding potential leaks and issues.

Q4. What is Parkes Shire Council doing about Smart Cities Right Now?

Parkes Shire Council developed a high-level strategy and has implemented technologies, such as water usage sensors, automated water meter reading technology and use of Quick Response (QR) codes, CCTV and free Wi-Fi. Council provides details of the actions it intends to deliver in its [Operational Plan and Budget](#), which is available on its website. In the plan, there is a capital project to install and commission smart water meters. This will happen at Peak Hill over the next fiscal year.

Q5. What are Smart Water Meters?

Smart water meters are digital devices that uses sensors to measure water flow and communication technology to transmit water use data to Council. The data can then be analysed to monitor usage patterns, detect leaks, and optimise water distribution. It saves staff having to go out and physically read meters. For more information on smart water meters please refer to the information on our website here: [Smart Water Meters Parkes Shire Council \(nsw.gov.au\)](#)

Q6. What is the Smart Regional Space Project and how was Parkes Shire Council involved?

The Smart Regional Space project was funded by NSW Regional to the University of New South Wales and University of Sydney, to develop place-based assessment tools for precincts to be "smart ready". To develop



those tools, they selected 3 Councils Armidale, Lithgow, and Parkes, and undertook assessments of key precincts in each area to develop templates as a part of the project. Each Council could then use the assessments to determine if appropriate technology use could enhance those areas. Areas in Parkes that were assessed for "smart readiness" were Cooke Park, the CBD, Lions Park, Kelly Reserve, in Trundle Berriman Oval precinct and in Peak Hill the Lindner Oval / Peak Hill Pool precinct.

Initiatives that were identified included free public Wi-Fi device charging stations and use of IoT devices for Council staff to monitor the condition of assets to improve service levels. Identified options were then incorporated into outcomes including:

- Lions Park Adventure Playground Development - Inclusion of CCTV, free public Wi-Fi and cabling installed for future improvements such as online booking systems for BBQ's.
- Kelly Reserve Development - CCTV to protect the play equipment assets and QR code usage for access to information about the site, CCTV and water education for the area.

Parkes Shire Council was a participant in the Smart Regional Spaces project by invitation but did not receive any grant funding.

Q7. What does Parkes Shire Council use CCTV Cameras for?

Our community has an array of CCTV cameras within the Parkes and Peak Hill CBD and other public areas within the Shire. The purpose of this installation is to improve public amenity and minimise opportunities for criminal or mischievous behaviour within these public spaces. This action was consistent with the Crime Prevention Plan developed by Parkes Shire Council in 2011. Any areas that have CCTV coverage are signposted. There is more information on our website under [Community Safety – CCTV](#).

Q8. Does Parkes Shire Council track its citizens or use facial recognition technology?

No, Council does not track the movements of its citizens or use facial recognition technology. Council has no plan to install or use such technology and has not included any such actions in [its Operational Plan and Budget](#).

Parkes Police and few trained staff can access recorded CCTV footage but only in response to an incident and under the strict control of the Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act and the CCTV Operation in Public Areas Policy.