

PUBLIC ELECTRIC VEHICLE CHARGING

Our Role: A Strategy for Huntingdonshire District Council





Foreword

Our Corporate Plan to 2028 informs everything we do, including the priority to create a better Huntingdonshire for future generations. ¹ Recognising the threat of climate change, our Climate Strategy sets out an Action Plan to guide our work. This includes enabling and encouraging local people and businesses to reduce carbon emissions.

Huntingdonshire's largest source of greenhouse gas emissions is transportation. Our residents and businesses are keen reduce their carbon footprint, changing behaviours and trying new technologies. Yet many do not have access to public transport. For those who may wish to use an electric vehicle, many do not have private off-street parking suitable for vehicle charging. Existing charge points are also unevenly distributed and concentrated around the settlements of Huntingdon, St Neots, St Ives, Buckden and Needingworth. Because of these challenges, achieving a just transition may require support from local government.

While recognising that Huntingdonshire District Council is not a transport authority, we aim to support and encourage residents by working in partnership with parishes, towns and community groups. To reach the national average, this strategy concludes that 70 additional public charge points would be required across our district, provided by a combination of local government and private businesses. We hope that adopting a Public EV Charging Strategy will unlock future funding sources that our Council can use to support local communities and businesses as they build our much needed EV charging infrastructure.

Guided by these principles and priorities, members of our cross-party Climate Working Group have worked with officers to develop a strategy that identifies the role our Council will play within the future public electric vehicle charging network of Huntingdonshire.

Lara Davenport-Ray

Executive Councillor for Climate & Environment

In current times, when environmental issues are of paramount importance, it was an exciting opportunity for The Climate Working Group to participate in the entire project.

We met regularly and worked in collaboration with officers and Cllr Davenport-Ray to help develop the Public Electric Vehicle Charging Strategy. It was constructive to work cross party and be involved with the proposal from conception; initially understanding the needs, expectations and issues faced by residents by developing, promoting and analysing the questionnaire/survey; including site visits to potential local rural parish; before eventually assisting with forming the strategy.

Julie Kerr

Chair of HDC's Overview & Scrutiny Panel (Environment, Communities and Partnerships) On behalf of the Electric Vehicle Charging Point working group

¹HDC Corporate Plan, 2023-2028: https://www.huntingdonshire.gov.uk/media/vehhxpfr/corporate-plan.pdf





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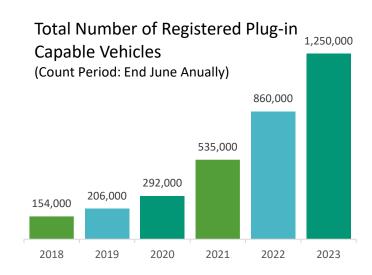
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1. Introduction

Electric Vehicle use and charging is a subject at the forefront of Council agendas across the UK.



In the UK, there are over 33 million cars currently on the road with an increasing number of electric vehicles every month.

At the end of June 2023, the number of vehicles registered with the ability to be plugged in was in excess of 1.25 million. This continues the upward trend observed over previous years.

The scale of growth is expected to increase based on restrictions that will be imposed on the sale of new petrol and diesel vehicles from 2035.

Where do we fit in?

Our Council adopted a Climate Strategy in February 2023 ² which recognises the theme of 'Travel & Transport.' Indeed, the largest source of greenhouse gas emissions across our district comes from transportation. ³ To address this challenge, the Climate Strategy sets out the Council's role in reducing these emissions across Huntingdonshire.

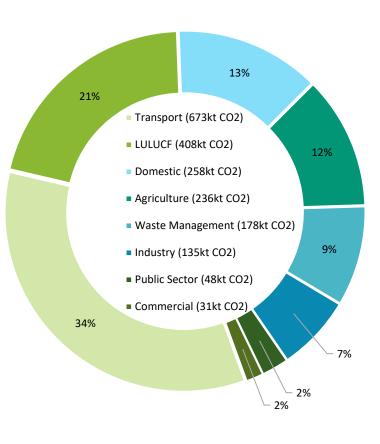
Our Council aims to be:

An Enabler:

- Seeking partnerships and funding to enhance our district's electric vehicle charging infrastructure.
- Working with partners to expand the infrastructure for sustainable and low carbon travel.

An Encourager:

 Promoting the health benefits of active travel and alternative travel choices What Causes Huntingdonshire's Greenhouse gas emissions of 1,966 kt CO2



²HDC Climate Strategy, February 2023: https://www.huntingdonshire.gov.uk/media/6882/climate-strategy-appendix-1-climate-strategy.pdf

³ HDC Climate Strategy, February 2023, Page 6





Priority 2 - Creating a better Huntingdonshire for future generations



Improving housing



Forward-thinking economic growth



Lowering carbon emissions

Our Climate Strategy sets out an Action Plan⁴ to guide our reduction of emissions. The Council's crossparty Climate Working Group has undertaken the specific action to 'develop an EV strategy for Huntingdonshire.'

An overarching Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Combined Authority (CPCA) EV Infrastructure Strategy is currently under development. The aim of that document is to set out a high-level approach to EV Charging provision across our region. The CPCA Strategy is distinct from the aim of this document, which focuses specifically in defining the role that Huntingdonshire District Council will play in supporting or funding public charging provision within our District.

 $^{^4}$ HDC Climate Action Plan, February 2023: https://www.huntingdonshire.gov.uk/media/6912/climate-strategy-action-plan.pdf



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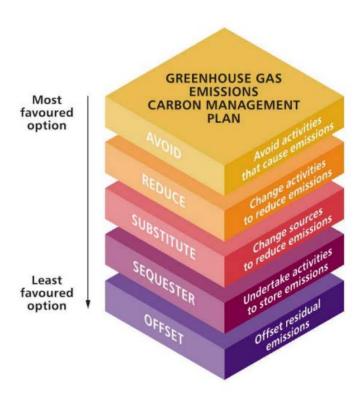
2. Defining & Scoping Our Strategy

Our Council's Climate Strategy outlines our 'hierarchy of action' prioritising avoidance and reduction of emissions through changing activity and demand for energy and fossil fuels. Only after exhausting avoidance and reduction, will substitution of fossil fuels be investigated⁵.

The Climate Working Group (CWG) considered that a reduction of carbon emissions can be achieved through the adoption and transition towards the use of public transport and active travel. The Government's Committee on Climate Change has calculated that the UK's 2050 net zero target is only achievable if at least 10% of car miles can be shifted to walking, cycling and public transport.

However, there is also a recognition that some residents will continue to require private transport. Many residents and businesses in Huntingdonshire, especially in rural areas, do not have access to public transport and do not have private offstreet parking suitable for charging.

For many residents the cost of acquiring an electric vehicle represents a significant challenge. Achieving a just transition for these residents, including a transition to the 'substitute' of electric vehicles, may require encouragement and support from local government. Non-EV owners will benefit indirectly through region wide reductions of emissions and improvement of air quality.



It is estimated that in Huntingdonshire there will be 34,300 electric vehicles on our roads by 2030 and 120,550 by 2050⁶. By supporting electric vehicle charging, we can encourage users of private transport who would like to take the next step to reduce their transport emissions.

⁶ The source for this information is Cenex; a programme run on behalf of Central and Local Government to help support and develop the UK supply chain of low emission vehicle technology.



⁵ HDC Climate Strategy, February 2023: https://www.huntingdonshire.gov.uk/media/6882/climate-strategy-appendix-1-climate-strategy.pdf



3. Our Methodology

To understand our Council's role in Huntingdonshire's charging infrastructure we needed to collect data to understand:

- What our residents' expectations are in relation to electric vehicles
- The current EV infrastructure in Huntingdonshire
- How we can support Towns, Parishes and Community Groups

From this, we would review our findings and begin the development of the strategy which defines the role and objectives for the Council.

We recognise that our role will be a mix of actions that our Council can take, whilst also looking at how we can enable and influence others.



The following areas are also under consideration in our Council's Climate Action plan as they are also significant sources of greenhouse gas emissions. They have been excluded from the scope of this strategy as they will be given separate consideration.

These excluded areas are:

- HDC fleet and commercial opportunities
- HDC corporate buildings and estate





4. Discovery

As part of our discovery phase, we have undertaken:

- Public EV Survey
- Parish Sites: EV Capability Study
- Assessment of EV Ownership in Huntingdonshire (section 5)
- Assessment of Local EV public charging provision (section 6)

Key Findings: Public EV Survey

We undertook an online survey which ran for a period of 6 weeks (05/06/2023 - 17/07/2023). This gathered over 400 responses.

The aim of the survey was to understand:

- Where do electric vehicle users want to see charging points installed?
- The behavior of electric vehicle users
- Would residents be willing to pay for the electricity they use when charging?
- The barriers that prevent people making the switch to electric vehicles

The survey responses highlighted the following key findings:

- Access to charging points is a key barrier to EV ownership.
- Public charge points are not the main charging location for the majority of EV owners.
- The use of public charge points by EV Owners is primarily for top up or partial charging as
 opposed to fully charge a vehicle.
- Both EV and Non-EV owners agreed it is fair for EV users to pay to use public charge points.
- The greatest downfall of public charge points is that there are not enough of them.

The results of the survey will inform the role HDC will play in public EV charging infrastructure.

More information can be found in Appendix 1.

Key Findings: Parish Sites EV Capability Study

In August 2023, funds were made available to HDC from the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF).

This funding was allocated for use in relation to Electric Vehicle charging. As works were underway to develop a Strategy for HDC that identified our role in EV, the funding was used to explore the feasibility of installation of charge points at non-HDC locations.

We were pleased to have the opportunity to work with a number of Parish Councils from across the district. As future funding becomes available, we look forward to continuing this in 2024/25.

More information can be found in Appendix 2.





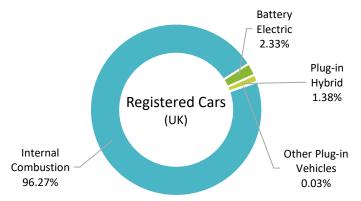
5. Review: EV Ownership in Huntingdonshire

Population estimates (mid 2021) published by the Office for National Statistics (ONS)⁷ estimate the following populations:

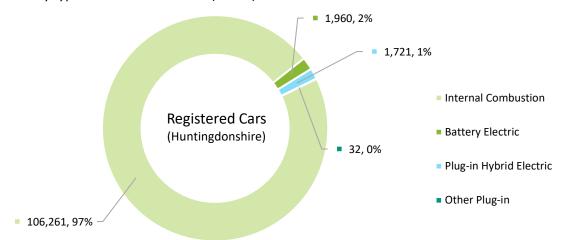


In the UK, the number of registered cars at the end of June 2023 was 33,488,236.

The breakdown of these vehicles by type is shown in the chart (right).



For Huntingdonshire the reported number of registered cars was 109,974. The breakdown of these vehicles by type is shown in the chart (below).



This data can be separated further to only include **privately registered cars** totaling 2,031 electric cars categorised as follows:

Battery Electric (1,191)
 Plug-in Hybrid Electric (810)
 Other Plug-In Electric (30)

For Huntingdonshire, based on approximately 76,900 households per the 2021 Census, we can therefore estimate that there are:

- 1.43 cars per household
- 2.36 persons per household
- 1,420 homes with a privately registered plug-in car
- 3,351 residents with access to a privately registered plug-in car as a method of transport.

⁷ The sources for the information in Section 5 are reported information provided by the Department for Transport (DfT), specifically VEH0101, VEH0105, VEH0142 & VEH9901. The DfT identifies Plug-in vehicles as road using vehicles that use plug-in technology to connect to a source of electricity. Vehicles are allocated to a local authority according to the postcode of the registered keeper. The address does not necessarily reflect where the vehicle is located.





6. Review: Local Public EV Charging Provision

The Council operates publicly accessible charging points in 3 market towns. These were installed in 2020/21 as part of a Parking Strategy with a vision to 'promote environmental sustainability by supporting alternative fuel and travel methods'. HDC provides 27 publicly accessible charge points across these sites.

Table 1 – Location of HDC operated Public EV Charge Points

St Neots		St Ives		Huntingdon		
Tebbutts Road	1* 7kW	Cattle Market	1* 7kW	Princes Street	2* 3kW	
	Twin	Twin		Solo		
Tan Yard	1* 7kW	Darwoods Pond	1* 7kW	Multi-Storey	4* 7kW	
	Twin Twin		Twin		Solo	
Riverside	1* 7kW	Globe Place	1* 3kW	Mill Common	1* 3kW	
	Twin Solo			Twin		
Priory Lane West	1* 3kW			Great Northern	1* 3kW	
	Twin			Street	Twin	
Brook Street	1* 3kW			Ingram Street	1* 3kW	
	Twin				Twin	

HDC are not the only contributor to publicly accessible charge points in the District. The below table compares publicly accessible charging points vs the number of plug-in cars. HDC provides approx. 35% of this provision.

Data available from the National Charge Point Registry⁸ shows that the location of publicly accessible EV charge points is focussed around Huntingdon, St Neots, St Ives, Buckden & Needingworth. There is a notable lack of sites within other Parishes across the District.

Table 2 – Public Charge Points Vs Plug-In Cars

	UK	Huntingdonshire
Plug-In Cars (company and private owned)	1,250,036	3,713
Publicly available EV chargers (all speeds)	49,220	76
Publicly available EV chargers per Plug-In car	0.04	0.02

The below table compares the total publicly accessible charging points per 100,000 residents.

Table 3 – Public Charge Points Vs Population

	UK	Huntingdonshire
Publicly available electric vehicle charging devices at all	73.4	41.8
speeds per 100,000 population		

⁸ The source for this information is reports provided by the Department for Transport (DfT), specifically VEH0142 & 'Electric vehicle charging device statistics: October 2023'



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7. Summary & Analysis

In 2021, over half of our residents (51%) who travelled to a fixed place of work travelled more than 10km. Of all residents who travelled to work, the majority (79.5%) travelled as a driver or passenger in a car or van⁹.

The assessment of **EV Ownership in Huntingdonshire** illustrates the relationship between plug-in vehicles and population.

UK plug in cars per personHuntingdonshire plug-in cars per person0.0186

This shows slightly above average ownership of plug-in cars per person in Huntingdonshire.

The assessment of **local EV charging provision** highlights two conclusions regarding Huntingdonshire's shortfall in publicly accessible charge points.

- 70 additional charge points would be required in our district to reach the national average shown in table 2.
- 57.4 additional charge points would be required to reach the average population ratio set out in table 3.

The assessment of **local EV charging provision** also highlights a significant lack of publicly accessible EV charge points outside of Huntingdon, St Neots, St Ives, Buckden & Needingworth.

The **Public EV Survey** received responses from 406 persons. The results highlighted participants felt:

- Access to charge points is a key barrier to EV ownership. Respondents would like to see more
 public charge points across all locations. With primary charging taking place at homes, we can
 support concerns around range concerns by providing public points.
- The use of public charge points by EV Owners is primarily for *top up* or *partial* charging as opposed to fully charge a vehicle.
- Both EV and Non-EV owners agreed it is fair for EV users to pay to use public charge points.
- Participants felt the greatest downfall of public charge points is that there are not enough of them. We can therefore look to balance quantity of points over speed.

During the **Parish Sites: EV Capability Study** we observed challenges that would be faced in installation at these non-HDC locations. Most notably, this relates to the 'Local Council General Powers' under s.137 of the 1972 Act and the General Powers of Competence as EV Charge Point operation is categorised as 'energy trading'.

Should a Parish Council wish to operate EV Charge Points, they must have in place a General Power of Competence (GPC). A Parish with GPC in place may operate and charge for EV charge points. If a Parish Council does not have GPC, we are able to assist them in accordance with legislations to help them explore the operation of EV Charge Points on their land.

 $^{^{9}}$ The source for this information the 2021 Census Office for National Statistics, 2022/23.





8. Our Role & Objectives

The Council's role in Public Electric Vehicle Charging will vary depending on the situation. We have the ability to take action ourselves as well as to enable and influence others. This strategy will act as a tool to attract external funding and set out our role and priorities.

As an Enabler we will:

- Support Towns, Parishes and Community Groups looking to pursue EV charging with advice and information about funding opportunities.
- We will support the emerging EV strategies from the CPCA and highways authority.

We will Influence local delivery of charge points by higher level authorities to:

- Fill the geographical shortfalls identified by our findings.
- Address the, often rural, Huntingdonshire locations currently not prioritised by private and commercial investment.

We will look to **influence** the expansion of electricity networks to ensure they are able to support the provision of EV infrastructure in Huntingdonshire.

In relation to what the Council will **Do**:

- Internal **HDC funds** will focus on **EV charging at our own car parks** offered as part of site facilities for our parking operations. We will look to support this with external funding where available
- Where opportunities for external funding are available, we will look to obtain and utilise it to
 prioritise support for rural off-street provision in proximity to local amenities. We hope that
 these added facilities will also help to stimulate and support local businesses in the area.
- We will be clear on the source of funding of any charging provision installed, illustrating the minimal level of internal HDC funding available and significant dependence on external funding sources.
- If a Town or Parish wish to operate a EV charging but lack the General Powers of Competence to do so, we will look to support by acting as a 3rd party to support their ambitions for EV installation.
- Where the Council installs Charge Points, we will aim to keep these operable and accessible within the technology's life span.





9. Charge Point Installation

When considering charging point type and operation our Council will follow these general principles.

Charging point equipment:

- The quantity of charge points and speed of charge will be carefully considered, taking into account the average dwell time of a site, and the average distance travelled by visitors. We will aim to achieve a minimum standard of 7kW charging capability unless prohibited by the constraints of a site.
- The charging points installed across the District will look and feel the same, with consistent signage.

Charging point installation

- Installations will include the creation of charging bays with EV parking bay marking.
 These will be marked to ensure the use of the bay is apparent to all users.
- Signage will be installed with consistent signage information. It will be clear and concise, confirming that the use of bays is only for electric vehicles whilst charging.



Appendices

The following is a list of associated appendices:

- 1. Public EV Survey Findings
- 2. Parish Sites: EV Capability Study





Public EV Survey

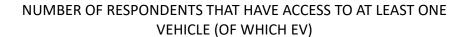
We undertook an online survey which ran for a period of 6 weeks from 5th June to 17th July 2023. The survey had a total of 406 responses with 393 being residents in Huntingdonshire. We also collected feedback included as comments in social media adverts for the survey.

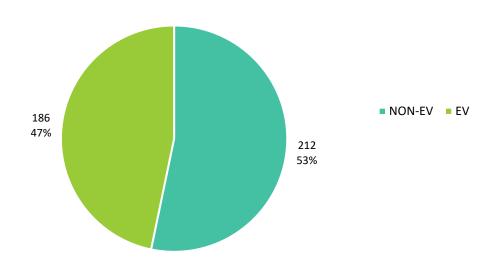
The survey responses highlighted the following key findings which will be incorporated into our outcomes of the strategy:

- Access to charging points is a key barrier to EV ownership.
- Public charge points are not the main charging location for the majority of EV owners.
- The use of public charge points by EV Owners is primarily for *top up* or *partial* charging as opposed to fully charge a vehicle.
- Both EV and Non-EV owners agreed it is fair for EV users to pay to use public charge points.
- The greatest downfall of public charge points is that there are not enough of them.

1. Vehicle Ownership

Survey participants were asked if they have access to at least one vehicle. Of the total 398 that do have access to a vehicle, we asked if at least one vehicle falls into an electric category.





Of the 186 Electric Vehicle owners, 170 stated this was their main vehicle.



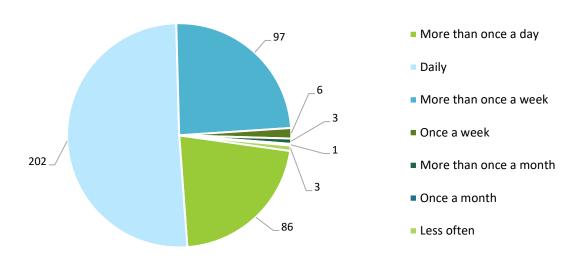
2. Vehicle Usage

Survey participants were asked about their vehicle usage.

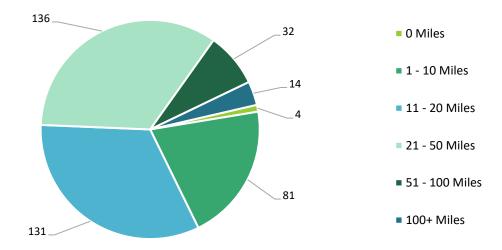
The results for EV and Non-EV owners were similar in both average miles, and frequency of use.

The most common use for both groups was daily, with the average miles being between 11 - 50 miles per day.

HOW FREQUENTLY DO YOU USE YOUR MAIN VEHICLE (BOTH EV & NON-EV USERS)



HOW MANY MILES A DAY DO YOU TRAVEL IN YOUR MAIN VEHICLE? (BOTH EV & NON-EV USERS)

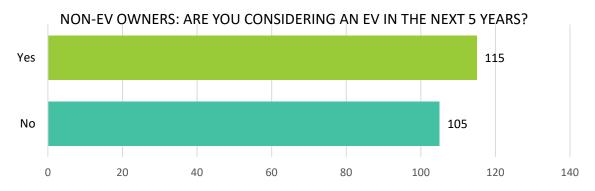




3. Barriers to EV Ownership

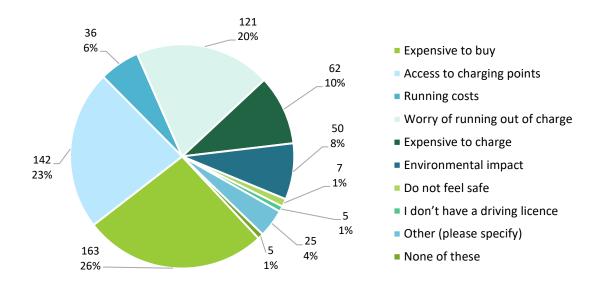
We asked Non-EV owners if they would consider buying an Electric Vehicle in the next 5 years.

The Majority indicated they would consider an Electric Vehicle in the next 5 years.



All current Non-EV owners were asked about the barriers the perceived to EV ownership. Respondents could select more than one barrier.

NON-EV OWNERS: BARRIERS TO EV OWNERSHIP



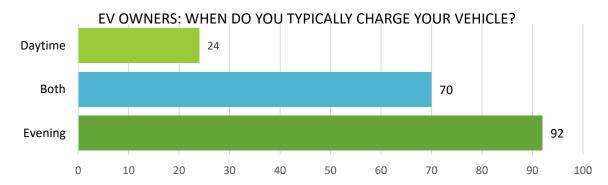
The responses highlight the greatest barriers as:

- The cost to buy an Electric Vehicle
- Access to charging points
- Concerns around charge capacity



4. EV Owners: Charging Behaviour

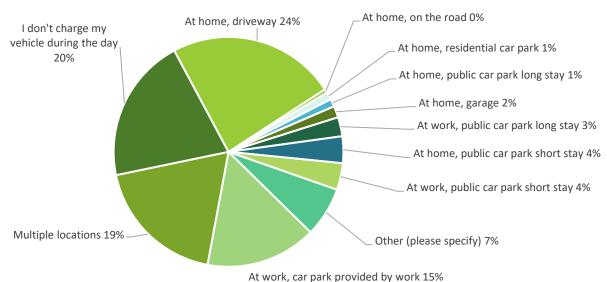
Current EV owners were asked a series of questions relating to their charging behaviours to understand when they typically charged, and *how* they charged when using public charge points.



Overnight charging was typically done at home (driveway or garage) accounting for 73% of users.

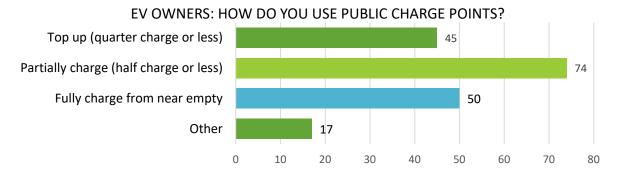
Data obtained shows that public car parks are not a main charge location for EV users. The main reasons provided for lack of use link to the theme of the locations not being close enough.

EV OWNERS: DAYTIME CHARGING LOCATIONS



At work, car park provided by work 13%

Data obtained shows that more EV Owners use public charge points for *top up* or *partial* charging that to fully charge a vehicle. *Other* was commented as partial up to 80%.





5. Charging Locations

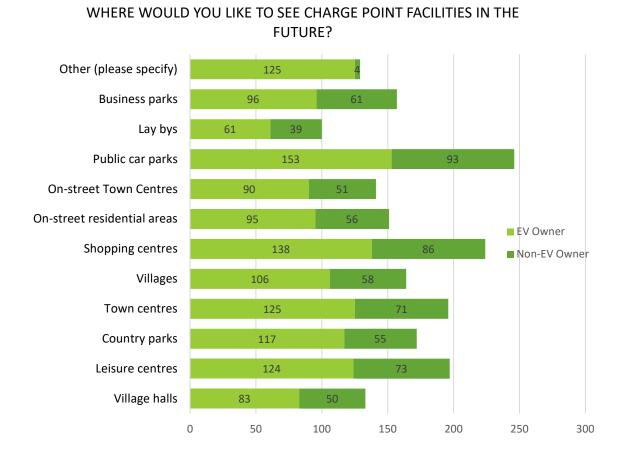
We asked all survey participants a series of questions relating to charge point locations.



A number of concerns were raised across both groups which included:

- Concerns over liability
- Inconvenience and access when needed
- Comfort with making the arrangement with a neighbour

All participants were asked where they would like to see charge points located. The results show a desire for points in all locations.

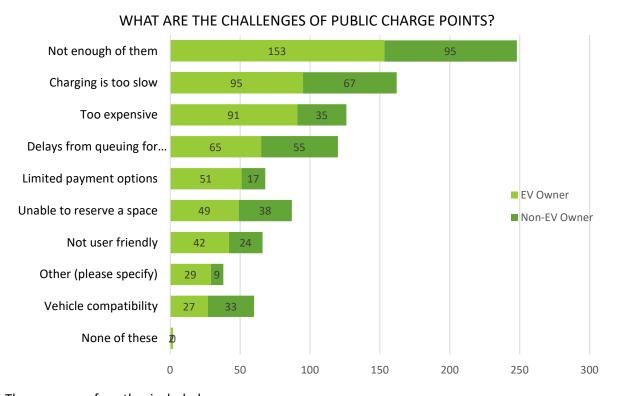


Common answers for 'Other' locations included Public Transport Hubs (e.g. Rail/Park & Ride), Trunk Road & Motorway Services, and a general desire for 'all' locations cars frequently access or park at.



6. Public Charge Points

We asked all survey participants a series of questions relating specifically to public charge points.



The responses for *other* included:

- Abuse of charge point bays by persons not charging
- Reliability of the charge points.

Both EV and Non-EV owners agreed it is fair for EV users to pay to use public charge points.

Yes (EV) 173 59% Yes (Non-EV) 98 34%

DO YOU FEEL IT IS FAIR FOR EV USERS TO PAY TO CHARGE?



Parish Sites: EV Charge Point Capability Study

In August 2023, funds were made available to HDC from the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF).

This funding was allocated for use in relation to Electric Vehicle charging. As works were underway to develop a Strategy for HDC that identified our role in EV, the funding was used to explore the feasibility of installation of charge points at non-HDC locations. We contacted all Parish Councils in the District to give them the opportunity to be a part of this case study.

During this process, we noted key challenges that would be faced in installation at these non-HDC locations. Most notably, the challenges relate to the 'Local Council General Powers' under s.137 of the 1972 Act and the General Powers of Competence as EV Charge Point operation is categorised as 'energy trading'.

In summary, should a Parish Council wish to operate EV Charge Points, they must have in place a General Power of Competence (GPC). A Parish with GPC in place may operate and charge for EV charge points.

If a Parish council does not have GPC, they may still be able to explore EV Charge Points on Parish land, the following options are available:

- a) Charge points may be installed by the Parish (subject to section 137 limits if funded by the Parish Council) and leased for operation by a 3rd party. A metered supply powering the charge points must be in place, separate from any supply to the Parish Council.
- b) Land may be leased to a 3rd party to install and operate charge points. A metered supply powering the charge points must be in place, separate from any supply to the Parish Council.
- c) A Parish Council may install charge points at a premises owned or operated by the Parish Council. This does not require any 3rd party involvement; however the Parish Council cannot charge for use of, or energy provided through the charge point.

In all of the above options, the 3rd party mentioned could be a District Council. This would be reflected in the Council's Role and Objectives.



1. Case Study

Using available funding, the Council wished to explore the feasibility of installation of charge points at non-HDC locations. We contacted all Parish Councils in the District to give them the opportunity to be a part of this case study.

We received 18 expressions of interest from Parish Councils across the district. Of these, 16 Parish Councils continued discussion and applied for consideration:

- Bluntisham
- Elton
- Earith
- Sawtry
- Keyston
- Holywell-Cum-Needingworth
- Great Gransden
- Grafham

- Hail Weston
- Yelling
- Yaxley
- Sibson-Cum-Stibbington
- Great Staughton
- Glatton
- Fenstanton
- Hilton

2. Suitability Evaluation

The applications received were considered against the following elements to determine if they would be suitable to be further explored as part of this study:

- Ownership Is the site owned by the Parish Council?
- Location what is the proposed area serving? Would anyone be able to access and use?
- Footfall would the points likely be used?
- Lighting & Security of the site
- Landscape and surface structure of the area (e.g. are tree root zones expected?)
- Accessibility is this car park open 24/7?

Following a review, it was agreed to proceed with the following sites for further exploration into feasibility of EV charge point installation:

- Sawtry, The Old School Hall, Green End Road, Sawtry PE28 5UY
- Holywell-Cum-Needingworth, Millfield Car Park, Overcote Lane, PE27 4TU & Mill Way Car Park, PE27 4TF
- Grafham, Village Hall car park, Brampton Road, Grafham, PE28 OUR
- Yaxley, 48 Main Street, Amenity Car Park, Yaxley, PE7 3LU
- Fenstanton, Chequer Street Car Park, Fenstanton, PE29 9JQ



3. Site Surveys

In October, site surveys were undertaken to understand:

- The suitability of the existing electric supply or if a new supply would likely be needed
- Mapping to suggest route from electric supply to location for install
- Hardware options considering site constraints
- Initial estimates for installation. Where needed this would include electrical supply uplift.

A number of sites would be able to support EV charge point installation, however others would likely to have a new/additional incoming site power supply put in place as part of the EV works.

4. Parish Council Charge Point Operation & Legislation

Through discussion with Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Association of Local Councils Ltd (CAPALC) around the requirements for a Parish Council to charge for electricity, it was concluded that under s.137 of the 1972 Act of the 'Local Council General Powers' and the General Powers of Competence Order, EV Charge Point operation would be classified as 'energy trading'.

This splits Parish Councils into 2 categories:

- 1) Those who have General Power of Competence (GPC);
- 2) Those who do not have GPC

The eligibility for General Power of Competence (GPC) is that a Parish must satisfy both:

- The clerk (no one else) holding the 'Certificate in Local Council Administration' (CILCA)
- At least 2/3 of Cllrs must be elected (electoral mandate element)

Parish Councils that do not have General Power of Competence have the following options for installing Electric Vehicle Charge Points on Parish owned land:

Option A: The Parish Council install the equipment. This equipment is leased to 3rd party EV operator.

Option B: The Parish lease the land to 3rd Party to install & operate the charge point equipment.

In both these options, a sperate energy meter is required for the charge point supply to ensure that it remains separate from energy used or provided to the Parish Council.

5. Summary

During this process we have noted issues that would likely be faced by Parish Councils when installing Electric Vehicle charge points. These issues are:

- Legislative restrictions
- Site constraints e.g. power supply or natural elements (likely tree root zones)

These issues have been noted by the Climate working group with options for how these may be overcome incorporated into the strategy where HDC's role in EV is identified.



Parish Council Decision Tree

