



TRANSPORT COMMITTEE

ELECTRIC VEHICLE (EV) CHARGING POINTS – PROGRESS REPORT

1. Introduction

The former Traffic and Parking Group has now become the Transport Committee with delegated powers from the full Council.

The Transport Committee have been tasked with carrying out the necessary research into the provision of public EV charging points for EV drivers who do not have the facility for off-street parking and access to charging from their domestic electrical installation. The proposed research was identified at the last T & P Group on 30th June 2022 and this paper sets out progress to date.

2. Electric Vehicle Charging points in North Tawton

Research in April 2022 identified about 170 vehicles parked on North Tawton streets in the evenings. None of these would have access to home EV charging and would need to rely on public charging or other options such as Co-Charge (see below) to charge their EV.

The Committee have researched a number of options for EV charging points, including shared use of private charging points, hosting by local businesses and on-street charging, before turning attention to the provision of public charging in Council car parks.

3. Co Charger Scheme

Research: Cllr C Lee

There is a 'Co-Charger' scheme (www.Co-Charger.com) where private householders with a charging point can rent out their parking space and vehicle charging point to EV drivers with no charging facility of their own. 'Hosts' who have registered with Co-Charger as being willing to provide charging facilities can set their own terms and conditions, together with the price, generally per hour, although Co-Charger provide some guidance on this (and take a 12% commission).

As the charger will normally be a domestic unit, the maximum power will be 7.4kW, meaning that the average EV will usually have to be left for several hours, or even overnight, to deliver a full charge.

There is a Community App to match drivers with charging points and this app has to be installed on a smartphone. However, it is possible to search for 'Hosts' on the Co Charger website. Unfortunately a check on 26th September showed no Hosts in North Tawton, the nearest being in Chagford, Crockernwell and Lapford. There were none in Okehampton on the date of check.

4. Local businesses

Research: K Caldwell

Local businesses such as Arla, Gregorys, North Park Vets and North Tawton Surgery may be willing to have EV chargers installed (or share with the public if they already have them)

A letter was drafted by the Town Clerk and sent to all local businesses in July. At the date of this report only North Park Vets had replied and confirmed they would be interested in taking part. No other replies have been received.

5. On street charging points

Research: Cllr C Lee

There is some potential for 'on street' EV charging in North Tawton and various means are available to achieve this. The difficulty in North Tawton is the narrow pavements and the lack of lamp posts at the edge of kerbs (Adding a charge point to a lamp post is now possible). The space outside No. 14 The Square is already identified for removal of the current parking restrictions and could provide an EV charging bay as the pavement is wide enough at this point.

As NTTC do not have the powers to provide on-street EV charging we have approached Devon Highways and are awaiting a response.

6. The potential for NTTC to install public EV charging points in Council-controlled car parks

Research: Cllr C Martin

NTTC could install public EV chargers in the two car parks owned or controlled by the Council, although a check would be needed to ensure this would apply to the Memorial Park car park, which is owned by Trustees

The research should include:

- Charging schemes – types of charger and how drivers pay for the energy
- Getting information and quotations from EV charging point suppliers
- Availability of grants to install EV charge points
- Rating of charging point suppliers (see below)

It is suggested that any approach to charging point suppliers should consider how good they are in terms of reliability, ease of use, price, customer service and so on. A recent survey carried out by 'Auto Express' magazine gave the following 'ranking'.

1. **Tesla.** Easily the best system in the survey but only accessible to Tesla drivers
2. **Shell Recharge.** May only be interested in large sites
3. **Instavolt.** Generally good in the survey but prices on the high side
4. **Osprey.** Recent installation at the Red Deer pub in Crediton. Now pricey.
5. **Gridserve.** Recently bought out the Ecotricity brand. Newer units good
6. **Pod Point.** Their app is highly rated, customer service less so.
7. **Ionity.** Best for fast charging but this comes at a price.
8. **Genie Point.** Poor scores for reliability and their app.
9. **BP Pulse.** Smartphone app well rated, ease of use bottom place in survey.
10. **Charge your Car.** Poor scores across the board

7. Power supply considerations

Research: Cllr C Lee

There is a requirement to contact the network operator (was Western Power Distribution, now National Grid) about the availability of power supplies.

A small number of EV charge points is unlikely to create any problems and an initial 2 x 22kW unit in the main car park could be connected to the existing cables from the substation in the car park.

National Grid would require a formal application to be able to confirm the costs of connection.

8. Incentives to switch to electric vehicles

The uptake of EV's will depend on a number of factors including the price of vehicles, costs of charging and the availability of public charging for drivers unable to charge at home.

The previous grants towards the price of a new EV have now been withdrawn. So also have the grants to help homeowners install a home charging point – although these are still available to flat dwellers and people who rent their home.

The previous Government under Boris Johnson had a stated aim of banning the sale of new petrol or diesel engine cars by 2030. The new Truss Government has not confirmed this and recent changes in energy prices and the availability of supplies may affect this policy.

The recent steep rises in the price of electricity are resulting in a big increase in costs for public charging – up 46% in the last 4 months to an average of 64p/kWh. Osprey are the first supplier of public EV charging to break the £1.00/kWh barrier at a time when domestic energy will be 'capped' at 34p. This may result in the cost advantage of running an EV over an equivalent petrol car disappearing unless Government action is taken.

Add in the fact that there are now only 7 models of EV on the UK market with a list price under £30,000, against 100 + petrol car models under £30,000 means that the Government has an uphill battle to persuade drivers to go electric, particularly if they have to rely on public charging.

If a driver is provided with a Company car that they can charge at home on an off-peak tariff the economics are very different but there are likely to be only a small number of drivers in North Tawton in that advantageous position.

Report by Cllr C Lee
30 September 2022