
South Gloucestershire Electric Vehicle (EV) Charging Strategy

Please find the below frequently asked questions with their relevant answers.

- **Why does South Gloucestershire need an EV charging strategy?**

This EV Charging Strategy establishes the role of South Gloucestershire Council in ensuring that our residents and visitors who need to drive cars – where cycling, walking or public transport is not practicable - are supported to do so in zero emission vehicles¹.

In developing this strategy, we have sought to listen to the views of our residents, whilst incorporating the evidence on likely future demand. We recognise that reliable and accessible charging infrastructure is essential to encourage EV ownership. Therefore, by adopting the EV Charging Strategy, South Gloucestershire Council seeks to ensure that our investment proposals are installed in the right locations to support current and future demand. The aim is to support our strategic goal to ensure the vast majority² of households in South Gloucestershire are within 1 mile of reliable and accessible charging infrastructure. Due to budget limitations within the council, we will actively seek grant funding opportunities to achieve our goals.

- **Why are you installing chargepoints in all villages?**

We are keen to support all households in the transition to electric vehicles and are continuously exploring ways to ensure wide coverage of public charging infrastructure in our rural communities whilst ensuring the best use of public funds. Evidence suggests that as we move towards a zero-emission future, most rural households have improved access to off-street parking and should have a greater need for home-charging facilities. Therefore, the council will seek to monitor the demand for public charging infrastructure in these more dispersed communities and seek intervene when appropriate.

¹ A Zero Emission Vehicle is defined as any vehicle that does not emit any pollutants at the tailpipe. For example, Battery Electric or Plug-in Hybrid Electric Vehicle

² Majority refers to 92% of households within 1 mile of a council-owned charge point. Current baseline suggests that 62% of households are within 1 mile. Analysis suggests that 92% of households could be brought into the 1-mile catchment with an additional 24 sites provided (*On-street Residential Charging Scheme – 8, Climate Emergency Scheme – 5, 11 Community Hub Scheme*)

- **Why is your vision only limited to Revive public chargers?**

Due to data limitations, the council can only assess the likely impact of investment decisions for public charging. We hope to complement the growth of EV charging provision in the private sector whilst filling gaps through public sector investment.

- **Why is this strategy focusing on Electric Vehicles, not all Ultra Low Emission Vehicles, such as Hydrogen?**

Our strategy is focusing on solutions that have the potential to make the biggest impact on our district's carbon emissions. Considering our Transport challenge, we acknowledge that the vast majority of carbon generated by road transport in the district remains attributable to cars and light goods vehicles. [South Gloucestershire Net Zero Dashboard 2022 \(southglos.gov.uk\)](https://southglos.gov.uk/net-zero-dashboard-2022)

There remains much debate as to which fuel will become the long-term solution for vehicles of the future, but we have taken a view that currently electric vehicle technology is the most advanced for cars and small vans which will support the transition process for our residents now rather than in the future.

- **Why are South Gloucestershire council installing charging points that are not being frequently used?**

Our Revive chargers are being located in areas that support future and/or current demand. Most of our charging points observe comparably good utilisation rates with South Gloucestershire hosting some of the most successful sites within the West of England region.

- **Why aren't South Gloucestershire Council supporting the cost of electric vehicles?**

The overall transport vision for South Gloucestershire is to prioritise sustainable transport options. As such, we are committed to reducing car use overall across the district in favour of active travel and public transport options.

We are also expecting EV's to move towards cost parity with traditional petrol and diesel models in coming years, so our role as a local authority to support the uptake of electric vehicles through the provision of adequate charging infrastructure to support our residents.

- **Why isn't there a plan to support charging for commercial vehicles or buses?**

Our approach to supporting the electrification of the bus fleet or commercial vehicle fleet is being developed separately and will not be covered by this document. At this time charging infrastructure for e-bikes and other micro-mobility solutions such as e-scooters are also not included in this strategy but like buses and commercial fleet, they may form the basis for future consideration.

- **Do Electric vehicles really reduce carbon emissions?**

Electric Vehicles have no exhaust emissions. However, carbon emissions are produced during the generation of electricity, the amount will vary depending how the energy is generated.

Electric vehicles charged using standard UK electricity will show a significant reduction in emissions; analysis on current vehicles suggest a reduction of around two thirds compared to an average conventional car. Larger carbon reductions are likely in the future as the UK grid continues to decarbonise. If renewable or green tariff electricity is used, then life cycle greenhouse gas emissions are effectively zero.

- **Do Electric vehicles help air quality?**

The main cause of poor air quality is nitrogen oxides (NOx). The main cause of this pollution is vehicle emissions. Electric Vehicles have no exhaust emissions, so switching diesel and petrol vehicles to electric will improve local air quality significantly.

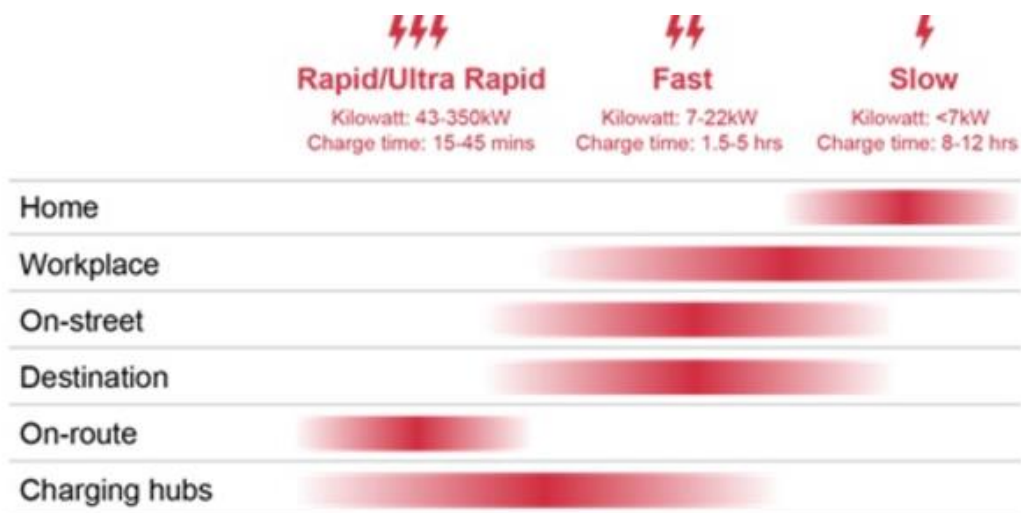
- **Why does South Gloucestershire not subsidise the cost of public EV charging?**

From 2012, the West of England local authorities (including South Gloucestershire) received central government funding to setup the Source West public vehicle charging network and to subsidise 7kW fast charge points though this did not include the 50kW rapid charge points. This was a short-term measure to help support the early uptake of Electric Vehicles (EV). In 2019, the Revive electric vehicle charging network was launched (replacing Source West) with central government funding for the installation of more fast and rapid charge points. The income generated by public charge points directly funds operating and maintaining the charge-points, including supplying them with electricity. The local authority does not have a budget to subsidise the cost of driving for those who are able to make the switch to EVs. In delivering and supporting the roll-out of EV charge points in public spaces through the use of central government grants, this helps to enable people to switch to EVs which not only contributes to our clean air and low carbon targets but supports the transition to a cheaper form of transport compared to petrol and diesel vehicles.

- **Why don't you only install rapid charging points?**

Our officers consider several factors when determining the appropriate charging solution for a specific site. In general, there are significant costs (grid, hardware etc) and delivery challenges associated with Rapid/ Ultra-rapid charging. As such, we would only consider implementing these solutions at charging hubs and/or near strategic networks.

The below graphic summarises the type of charging solutions we tend consider per location.



- **What is a Community EV charging Hub?**

South Gloucestershire are proposing to provide EV chargers at community hubs whereby drivers can leave their vehicle(s) to charge over several hours whilst waiting at home or visiting destinations within their community. Community Hubs are designed to provide facilities for EV owners and business users who do not have dedicated off-street parking.

- **Why aren't you supporting chargers on lamp columns like some other local authorities?**

We will not be pursuing the installation of lamp column charging points at this stage. This decision has been made for number of reasons:

- Power supply: Street Light columns have a very low power supply therefore, this solution would only support slow charging and with battery size in cars increasing this option is unlikely to be fit for purpose within a few years.
- Trailing Cables: Most of SGC's the council's lighting columns are placed at the back of footway as this makes them less vulnerable to damage but this means charge leads would be going across the footway creating a trip hazard.
- Multiagency electrical asset: There are some logistical difficulties associated with allowing a third-party access to our street lighting. This option could lead to complex and costly legal issues which could hamper delivery in a timely manner.

- **Why is the council preferred delivery model to own and operate the charging infrastructure?**

South Gloucestershire Council are highly ambitious in promoting the uptake of EV's across our district. As part of our efforts to decarbonise the transport sector, we recognise the importance of reliable and accessible charging infrastructure in encouraging the uptake of EV's. Given the rurality of our district, there is limited scope for commercial returns operated through concessionaire agreements. As such, we felt that it was important for the Council to intervene to ensure equitable distribution of charging points across the district.

- **Where are the exact locations of the new EV chargers being proposed as part of the EV strategy?**

We are still determining exact locations depending on land ownership, power supply and deliverability. However, we are keen to work with village halls and community centres to support the implementation of our 'Community Charging Hub' scheme.

The locations we are exploring are:

- Wickwar
- Charfield
- Alveston
- Severn Beach
- Almondsbury
- Frampton Cotterell
- Chipping Sodbury
- Pucklechurch
- Warmley
- North Common
- Longwell Green

South Gloucestershire residents will also have the opportunity to guide further development of EVCP provision by suggesting additional charging point sites via the Travelwest [website](#).

- **How will the charging points be funded?**

We are adopting a cautious approach to investing our limited capital funds in an innovative and evolving technology. Whilst we anticipate that the private sector will provide the majority of charging points in our region, the Council will seek to make targeted, and specific interventions where there is evidence of market failure and benefit to be gained by our residents. In so doing, we will seek to fund any charging infrastructure schemes using available Government Grants for EV charging.

- **Why doesn't the council support residents without a private driveway access to private home charging points on the pavements outside their home?**

We recognise that many residents do not have access to off-street parking and would like the opportunity to charge their EV at home. Unfortunately, we cannot offer residents a reserved space for their own EV charging needs. The current law does not give residents an unrestricted right to charge vehicles which are parked on the street outside a property, by direct connection to that property.

As a local authority, we have a legal duty to ensure the safety of the highway in accordance with the Highways Act 1980 and the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974. Therefore, we will not permit the charging of an EV by running a cable across the public highway, including the use of a cable protector or cable ramp. If an injury occurs, this might result in a liability claim for the homeowner or occupier and for the authority.

We are monitoring the outcome of innovative trials such as the [Oxford Gul-e Project](#) but will focus on supporting residents lacking off-street parking by providing public charging points in on and off street locations.

- **Why intervene and support Electric vehicles at all?**

The transport sector is the largest single source of carbon emissions in the Southwest accounting for at least 32% and worryingly, they are predicted to rise by a further 22% if we do not intervene. This of course increases the risk of droughts, floods and extreme heat in the Southwest and globally which is why we have declared a Climate emergency in South Gloucestershire.

There are a range of environmental benefits associated with EVs; as a council we recognise that both emissions released at the vehicle itself (tail-pipe emissions) and those released in the generation of the fuel should be considered when looking at environmental performance. Through the council's Climate Change Strategy we also seek to support the decarbonisation of grid (mains) electricity. Therefore, as the carbon intensity of grid electricity decreases the environmental performance, and specifically the CO2 emissions from each mile travelled by an EV will continue to fall.

We also acknowledge that with the national ban on the sale of new petrol and diesel cars due by 2030. Therefore, it is our role as a local authority to support our residents to transition by ensuring equitable distribution of charging infrastructure across the district. We want to provide charging points in the places that people need them, but not in locations that encourage additional car use and not at the detriment of other road users.