

Quick Briefing – Public EV Charging Points

1.0 Background

1.1 The UK has committed to net-zero carbon emissions by 2050. Transport is currently the largest emitting sector of the UK economy, responsible for 25% of total UK greenhouse gas emissions. Over half the UK’s transport emissions (52%) come from cars. Electric vehicles (or EVs) offer one method of reducing emissions.

1.2 The market for EVs is immature yet growing. The latest data for Q3, 2022 shows that 14% of new car registrations in the UK were battery electric vehicles (BEV) with a further 5% being plug-in hybrid electric vehicles (PHEV). However, most cars on the road in the UK are fuelled by petrol and diesel. *At the end of September 2022, 2.5% of all licensed road vehicles in the UK were plug in vehicles, although this did represent an increase from 1.6% in September 2021¹.*

1.2 The parish council has received a request from a resident asking if it would consider installing a public charging point for electric vehicles. This Briefing Note will set out some initial research to present the estimated current demand for a public charging point in Menheniot, make comparisons between this parish and Liskeard, and map out what facilities are available at the moment.

1.3 Parish councils do not yet routinely provide public EV charging points. The main barriers to their installation seem to be: low demand; high cost of installation; lack of suitable locations for the installation; poor infrastructure; legal issues around the purchase and resale of electricity by the council.

2.0 Current situation

2.1 Estimates for the level of demand for a public EV charging point are based on published statistics. However, it is also useful to apply a common-sense test to the numbers in order to get a sense of perspective with what alternative provision there already is. The chart below shows estimates for EV ownership in the parish.

Notes:

Households with 1 car – 2011 Census (2021 not yet available)

Penetration – 2.5% (House of Commons Feb 2023)

Charging at home – 80% charge at home (Energy Saving Trust)

Households with 1 car	315
Penetration	8
Charge at home	6
Charge away from home	2

Summary: current estimate of the numbers of electric car owners needing a public charging point is 2.

2.2 For comparison, the adjacent town of Liskeard (population five times greater than Menheniot) produces these figures:

Households with 1 car	2011
Penetration	50
Charge at home	40
Charge away from home	10

¹ Electric vehicles & infrastructure, House of Commons Library, Feb 2023.

Summary: Liskeard has over six times the number of vehicle owning households as Menheniot, and potential demand for a public charging point would be 10.

2.3 A straw poll invitation for residents to contact the Clerk's Office with their own experiences of current and potential EV ownership (advertised for four weeks on our noticeboards, website and social media outlets) has so far not produced any response.

3.0 The alternatives

3.1 Cornwall Council plans to install 150 new charging points by March 2023 in its car parks. It aims to focus on serving as many residents and visitors as possible by installing devices in its public car parks. They also provide charging points for taxis in Camborne and Bodmin.

3.2 In Liskeard, EV charging points have been installed in Westbourne and Upper Sungirt car park which is 4.2 miles away from Menheniot centre. The town benefits from being a significant commercial centre in the east of Cornwall and benefits from a high throughput of visitors.

3.3 There are 6 EV charging points at the Shell garage at Trerulefoot which is 3.9 miles away from Menheniot centre. The location of the garage on the A38 gives it a high throughput of vehicles which may need charging.

3.4 In April 2022, parish councillors supported the installation of six EV charging points at The Bubble Retail Park, although at the time of writing we do not know when they will be installed. These are located 3.4 miles away from the village centre.

4.0 The options

4.1 The process of installing a public charging point that is managed by the parish council would involve: identifying an appropriate location with suitable infrastructure (space for parking and manoeuvring; access to power supply; access for vehicles; planning consent). There are legal constraints on the ability of councils to buy and resell electricity.

4.1 Councillors may feel that the current level of demand prompts them to explore the practicalities of identifying a suitable site and researching the options for external funding.

4.2 Councillors may feel that the current level of demand is met by the provision of facilities in the areas adjacent to the parish, and agree to review the its own situation in 12 months, subject to their being new information on demand and supply.

John Hesketh, Parish Clerk
14 April 2023