# FleetNews Special report


# ELECTRIC FLEET

June 2026

## Business as usual?

Major improvements to battery ranges mean reasons to stall on switching to electric are rapidly disappearing

## WORKPLACE CHARGING

V2X will allow organisations to reduce power bills and even generate income

## HOME CHARGING

How fleets can be proactive with home charging for their drivers

## SALARY SACRIFICE

Could sal/sac provide the answers for those considering home charger route?

## PUBLIC CHARGING

Rapid and ultra-rapid charging network is expanding quickly despite obstacles

## CHARGING NETWORK

Different approaches – charging networks retain own quirks and costs

## BATTERY TECHNOLOGY

How the tech has evolved – and what different technologies may lie ahead?

## BATTERY DEGRADATION

Data shows that early fears about life expectancy of batteries are ill-founded

## EV WEBINAR

Panel members share experiences on fit-for-purpose charging strategies

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# WELCOME

Electric cars are BAU – business as usual. At least, they should be.

With real-world ranges well into the 300s and some of the latest models comfortably hitting 400-plus miles between charges, they are fit for purpose for everyone.

We know vans have fallen well behind and are currently suitable for a limited number of use cases. We've looked in depth at those issues in previous reports, including this piece of research with Herd and last year's Electric Fleet report which put the spotlight on the challenges facing van decarbonisation.

But if electric cars are BAU, why hasn't every company car driver chosen one? Anxiety still exists, although it has migrated from range to charge point. Common fears here include availability of a working charger when required, length of time to charge and business mileage reimbursement levels not matching the higher cost of public charging.

We look at all these concerns in our latest Electric Fleet report, assessing the best of the UK's rapid charging networks (including some pretty competitive pricing) and network capacity. We also dig into current and future battery technologies and how they will offer not only even greater range, but much faster charging – spoiler alert, sub five minutes is a real possibility.

Elsewhere, we allay once and for all any concerns about battery degradation: in short, the annual loss of range of around 2% – circa six miles a year on a 300-mile car – is only a little more than the 1% loss on a petrol car. In other words, after 10 years, your 300-mile EV will still be good for 240 miles (an equivalent petrol will offer an additional 30 miles).

For those drivers who can charge at home – estimated at 65%-70% of UK houses – we look at how employers can support the installation, drawing on advice from fleets, as well as highlight the funding support via salary sacrifice schemes.

And, if all that isn't enough to get you turning the page, what about using your electric car to make or save money? It is no longer a case of whether vehicle-to-everything works; it's now a case of when it makes commercial sense, which requires having the necessary systems and support structure in place.

With the potential to enable fleets (and drivers) to store energy, earn revenue and cut power bills, V2X is a topic worth knowing about.

Enjoy the read!

**Stephen Briers, group editor, *Fleet News***

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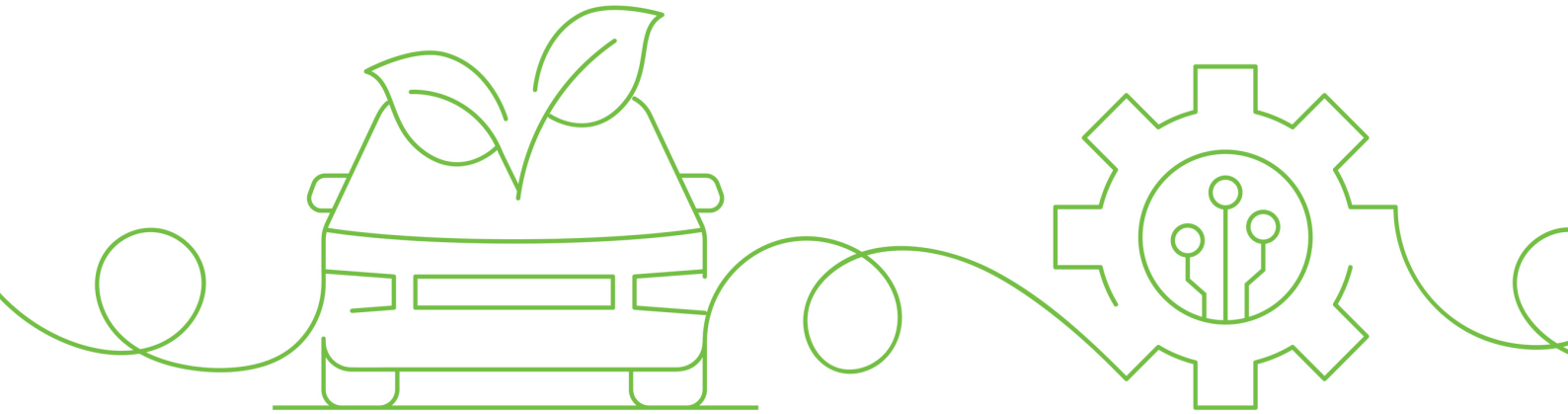


# V2X rises up fleet agenda

Vehicle-to-everything allows organisations to use their electric vehicles as mobile energy storage, earning revenue and cutting power bills. *Richard Shrubb* reports

Rising fossil fuel price volatility is forcing fleets to rethink how energy is used and managed. Vehicle-to-everything (V2X) allows electric vehicles (EVs) to act not just as transport, but as mobile energy storage.

It has a range of specific forms, including vehicle-to-load (V2L) and vehicle-to-grid (V2G), and is a technology in which electricity generated by discharging the vehicle is intentionally exported to the grid, providing various forms of flexibility to electricity markets.

"V2X adds the element of bidirectional charging to an EV, providing a range of storage and flexibility benefits," says Emma Durham, product manager at e-fleet solutions provider VEV, which was one of 12 companies to participate in the Innovate UK-sponsored trial V2X USA in the United States in 2024/25.

Commercial waste collection company Veolia claims that when it has fully electrified its refuse collection vehicle (RCV) fleet, this could provide up to 200MW of flexible capacity — equivalent to a small power station, albeit for limited durations.

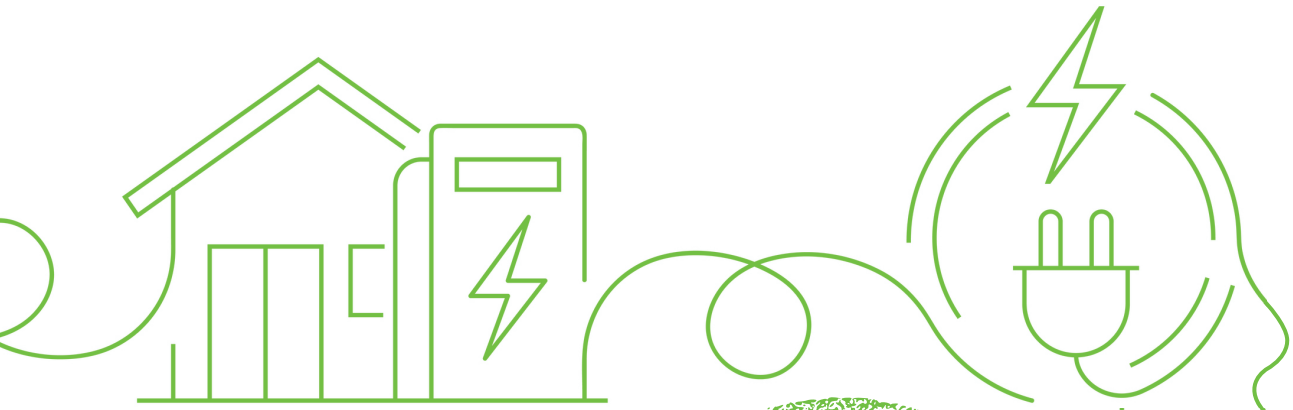
However, V2X hasn't yet reached maturity in terms of commercial viability. "I would say it's still at a relatively early stage," says Durham. "The technology exists and works, but it hasn't yet reached large-scale commercial adoption.

"That said, we are helping increasing numbers of fleets to dip their toe in the water with smart charging in response to price signals, so it's definitely on its way."

## FROM REFUSE TRUCKS TO GRID ASSETS

"Fleets are an interesting use case, particularly those with predictable duty cycles such as refuse collection vehicles," says Graham Hodgson, technical innovation team leader at transport decarbonisation research and technology organisation Cenex. "They have the right operational profile, but it still depends on having compatible vehicles and infrastructure."

In 2024, Veolia trialled bidirectional charging using two modified ERCVs, delivering 110kW — enough to power around 110 homes for a short period;



for example, during half-time of an England football match, when millions of people put the kettle on for a mid-game cup of tea.

For grid operators, this can currently mean having gas-fired power stations online. With distributed energy storage at scale through V2X, connected vehicles can reduce reliance on those power stations at peak times.

At scale, V2X could help decarbonise the electricity system.

For the vehicle operator, it would mean that they could be paid by the grid operator to discharge energy stored within vehicle batteries to meet the electricity demand and create an additional revenue stream for their fleets.

Veolia's planned follow-up trial with Westminster Council has yet to materialise – there is still limited large-scale research into V2X for commercial vehicles or private cars.

Hodgson has been involved in a number of small-scale V2X studies over the years. Most recently, Cenex was a partner in an Innovate UK-managed research project called Papilio3 DC V2X Fast Hub.

The study hit limitations in the availability of vehicles to take part. "There are still significant challenges around vehicle availability and compatibility," says Hodgson.

The expectation at the start of the project was that more OEMs would have V2G-capable vehicles available, but that hasn't materialised yet.

"We're still relying on a very limited set of vehicles, which makes it difficult to scale or properly demonstrate the technology," he adds. Most European EVs use the CCS charging standard, which has yet to fully standardise bidirectional charging.

By contrast, the older Chademo system, used by vehicles such as the Nissan Leaf, was designed with V2X in mind.

While this offers some potential in controlled use cases such as company fleets, it remains far from a scalable solution.

## SMART PACKAGES COULD CUT CHARGING COSTS BY 15%-20%

In principle, V2X could improve the total cost of ownership (TCO) of an electric commercial vehicle by enabling fleets not only to buy energy at cheaper times, but to sell energy to the grid during peak times when the cost per kWh is higher.

> **"V2G HAS TO BE INVISIBLE OPERATIONALLY, WHILE DELIVERING COST SAVINGS IN THE BACKGROUND"**
>
> **EMMA DURHAM, VEV**

The vehicle would serve dual purposes: transport and energy storage. Added capital costs for the charger and vehicle would theoretically be offset by selling energy to a supplier, for example.

VEV offers smart charging packages that have been proven to reduce daily charging costs at depots by 15%-20%.

As such, having a large amount of stored energy in a 100+ kWh battery in a vehicle is an opportunity for its clients, allowing energy to be shared between vehicles or power a depot's buildings overnight.

"For fleets, the priority is always that the vehicle is ready when it's needed," says Durham.

"V2G has to be invisible operationally, while delivering cost savings in the background."

This means there is no sense in having V2X unless its main transport duty cycle allows for a secondary use as a power store.

Although the technology has been around for more than a decade, it has yet to achieve commercial viability, in the eyes of Durham. "There is definitely value in V2G, and I'm a strong supporter of it," she says.

"The hardware costs are falling all the time, but, at the moment, the financial benefits don't consistently outweigh the additional capital cost."

Greg Payne is the modelling and analysis lead at Cenex. In his experience, when he first ran into the technology, the cost of bidirectional chargers made the concept too expensive.

His views have changed as the costs have fallen. "The business case has improved compared ➲

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with where it was years ago – hardware costs have come down significantly," he says. "I'm the most positive I've ever been about it in financial terms."

Durham is of the view that when the commercial viability is here, then VEV will offer it as part of its smart charging packages.

"There are revenue streams emerging, such as flexibility markets and dynamic tariffs, but I wouldn't say the business case is fully there yet," she adds.

"For fleets, TCO is critical. They're already investing significantly in vehicles and infrastructure, so they need to be confident that any additional investment in V2G will deliver a return."

## A TECHNOLOGY HELD BACK BY COMPATIBILITY

Early V2X relied on the Chademo standard, while Europe moved to CCS, which initially lacked bidirectional capability.

"A big part of the issue is standardisation," says Payne. "Chademo was ahead in enabling bidirectional charging, but as the industry moved to CCS there's effectively been a pause while the standards catch up."

Durham says vehicle manufacturers have also developed bespoke systems that work only with certain chargers, or chargers that aren't compatible across different vehicles.

"That lack of interoperability means you can't achieve large-scale adoption and is something we've been working on with other sector players to address," she adds.

Hodgson agrees: "You can't necessarily take a V2G-capable vehicle and plug it into any charge point and expect it to work."

That could mean, at present, with an ERCV supply agreement, that the vehicle and the charger could be acquired together for a 10-year period.

This would achieve the dual aims of an energy store and transport unit — but unless you do something like this, it creates a real risk of stranded assets, says Payne.

"If you invest in a system today, there's no guarantee it will remain compatible with future vehicles or infrastructure," he adds.

Veolia, for instance, used Turbo Power Systems (TPS), but, due to communication issues, it might not be redeployable to a third party system.

If the system were put into operation at a different depot and the vehicles weren't perfectly aligned with it, then both vehicles and chargers might do V2X – but not together.

At its core, the problem is simple: systems still can't reliably talk to each other.

## WHY STANDARDS MATTER MORE THAN HARDWARE

Payne explains that, while existing standards allow vehicles to communicate with chargers, "it's less about whether the technology exists and more about how different systems communicate".

He adds: "That's where the complexity lies – while they 'speak the same language', the dialect between the vehicle and the charger isn't fully standardised.

"The CCS standards do, technically, allow for V2X, but they're not prescriptive enough.

"Different vehicles and charge points interpret the standard slightly differently, which creates inter-operability challenges."

Durham says that there are standards coming out. "There are new standards coming through, such as OCPP 2.0.1 for charger-to-backend communication and ISO 15118 for vehicle-to-charger communication," she adds.

This is being worked out in part by CharIN, a 300-member international organisation focused on the electrification of transport, in which VEV plays a role as a charging software provider.

This might take some time; Cenex suggests it is a process that could take several years to resolve.

"The underlying hardware is largely there," says Hodgson.

"The real challenge now is around communication – how systems talk to each other and how energy requests are defined and handled consistently."

Durham says that, until these issues are ironed out, V2X can't be scaled. She adds: "These are critical because they enable secure, bidirectional control, which is what unlocks V2X."

**"THE BUSINESS CASE HAS IMPROVED COMPARED WITH WHERE IT WAS YEARS AGO"**
**GREG PAYNE, CENEX**

## FLEETS: OPPORTUNITY OR RISK?

Yellow US school buses are often cited as an ideal use case for V2X. They have short duty cycles and if given larger batteries than required for transport, can be charged on solar and the energy made available for evening peaks in domestic demand.

Hodgson and Durham both agree that here in the UK, ERCVs are great candidates too.

Not all fleets are ideally suited to V2X, though. Company cars, for example, could hit contractual issues with employees and long-distance HGVs likely would not be available to release power when it is needed.

"Ultimately, it's very case-by-case at the moment," says Hodgson. "Some fleet types could make it work, but it is not something that can be rolled out universally yet."

Durham adds: "The key to unlocking value is intelligent energy management. You need systems that can respond to energy prices, site demand and vehicle requirements automatically."

VEV offers smart charging that is designed to perform tasks such as 'load management' and 'cost optimisation', ensuring vehicles receive sufficient power to perform their duties, at the lowest cost, and without exceeding their grid limit – a technique that can deliver significant savings to HGV fleets operating on a 24-hour cycle.

## STUCK BETWEEN PROMISE AND REALITY

V2X has consistently demonstrated technical potential and costs have fallen significantly.

But the commercial case remains marginal. Hodgson says: "We've made progress, but not enough to make it easy. That's the frustration – it works, but not in a way that's simple or scalable yet."

While progress slowed as CCS standards caught up with Chademo, that gap is now being closed.

"Once the standards are properly aligned and interoperability is solved, that's when we're likely to see a much more rapid shift in adoption," says Hodgson. "The challenges of connecting to the grid is a barrier too."

As standards mature, OEM adoption is expected to follow – and with it, greater interoperability.

Once interoperability is resolved, the focus will shift to economics.

The economics are also improving and, as they strengthen, fleet adoption is likely to accelerate.

All three sources agreed that V2X is technically viable, with Payne noting: "At the moment, we're probably still a few years away from that point."

Commercially, VEV is prepared to incorporate V2X into its depot charging offer when the business case supports it.

Durham concludes: "It's not just a concept – it's real, and it's working. But it's still relatively nascent, and the focus now is on how to scale it and make it part of everyday fleet operations."

One of the key uncertainties is how V2X will be monetised in practice.

While mechanisms such as flexibility markets and exporting excess energy already exist, these are not yet sufficiently mature or consistent for fleet operators to rely on.

V2X represents a shift towards mass-distributed energy storage – something not yet widely deployed at scale anywhere in the world.

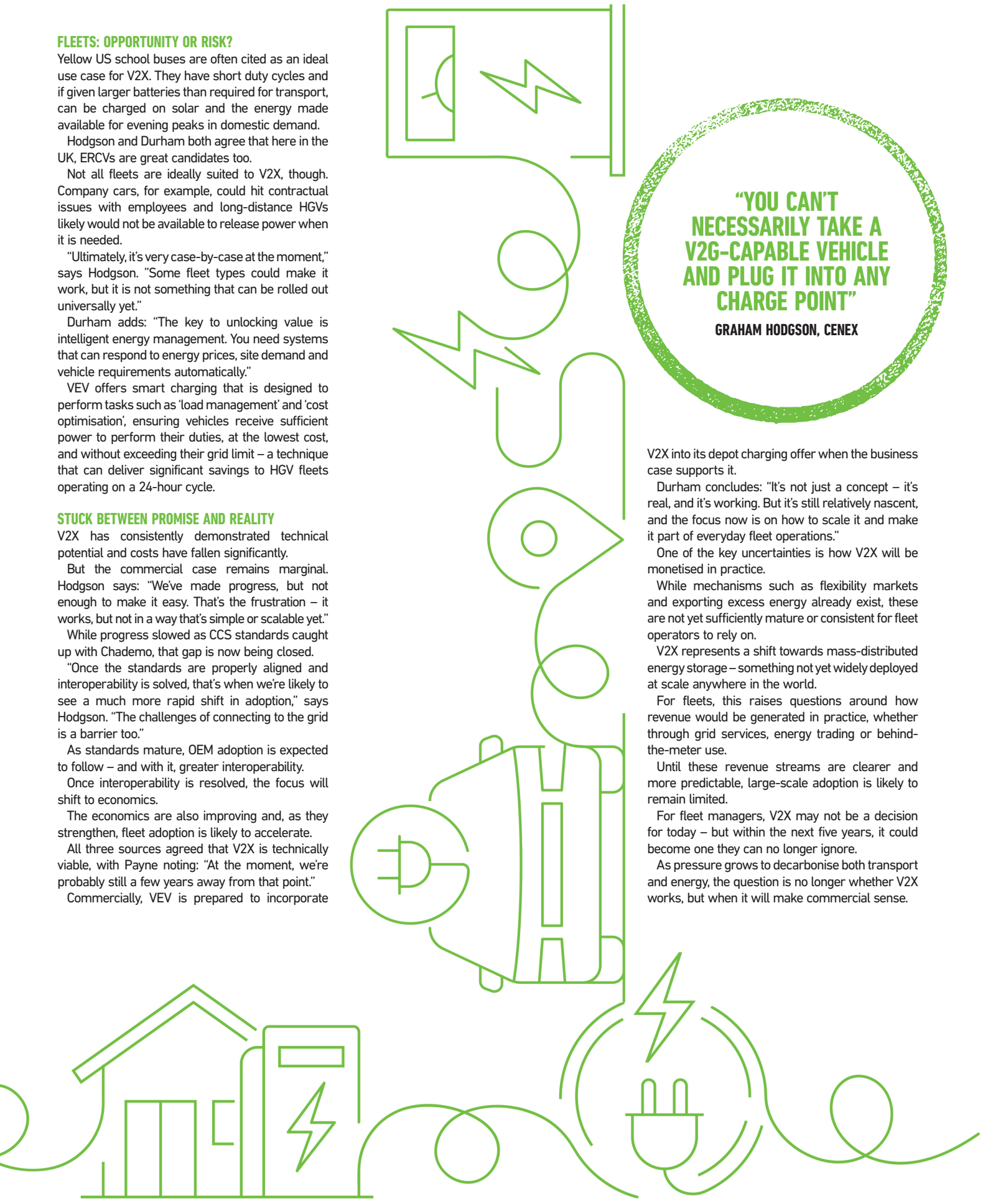
For fleets, this raises questions around how revenue would be generated in practice, whether through grid services, energy trading or behind-the-meter use.

Until these revenue streams are clearer and more predictable, large-scale adoption is likely to remain limited.

For fleet managers, V2X may not be a decision for today – but within the next five years, it could become one they can no longer ignore.

As pressure grows to decarbonise both transport and energy, the question is no longer whether V2X works, but when it will make commercial sense.

> **"YOU CAN'T NECESSARILY TAKE A V2G-CAPABLE VEHICLE AND PLUG IT INTO ANY CHARGE POINT"**
>
> **GRAHAM HODGSON, CENEX**



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# Home charging: everything a fleet manager needs to know

Using charge points at employees' properties can result in significant cost and operational benefits, but work needs to be done to maximise their effectiveness. *Andrew Ryan* reports

One of the facts often used to highlight the challenges facing organisations working to electrify their fleets is that between 30% and 40% of UK properties do not have off-road parking, therefore making home charging difficult to implement.

While this is used to highlight the very real obstacles faced by many organisations when adopting electric vehicles (EVs) – and they are difficult to overcome (but not impossible - see p33) – it makes it easy to breeze past the reality that the majority do.

And simply dismissing these drivers as 'low-hanging fruit' may underplay the important role home charging can play in running an effective and efficient fleet.

Here, we answer the key questions fleet decision-

## Do I NEED to install home chargers for my drivers?

The answer depends on a number of factors, primarily whether the EV is taken home each night.

Should the organisation operate a back-to base model where the vehicle is left at a depot overnight, then it would make sense to install and use workplace charging infrastructure.

If, however, the vehicle is parked at an employee's dwelling, then installing home chargers should be considered.

In the majority of these cases, the company will fully fund the charge point installation, although some employers do insist drivers foot the bill, particularly for perk cars (see panel, right).

Those funding the cost may insert a clause into their employee's contract requiring them to repay part or all of the cost should they leave the business within 12 months.

The decision is also influenced by the type of vehicle and whether it is business-need or perk.

For company cars, home charging supports convenience, cost control and driver satisfaction, particularly where public infrastructure can be inconsistent. But it may not be a necessity.

"Vans introduce additional complexity," says Suzanne Phillips, of Ayvens. "Higher daily mileage, payload requirements and operational downtime mean charging speed, installation suitability and energy reimbursement need closer scrutiny."

A home charger is often essential, not optional for van drivers, says Jonny Berry, head of decarbonisation, innovation and strategy at Novuna Vehicle Solutions. "Relying on public charging during the working day introduces real cost to the organisation through lost productivity, driver downtime and schedule risk," he adds. "Time spent charging at public infrastructure during working hours is effectively paid idle time."

Fleets, of course, could opt not to install a dedicated charger and ask drivers to plug their vehicle into their domestic 2.3kW supply, but this could have safety and operational impacts.

"A standard domestic socket can technically charge an EV, but it's not the right solution for fleet drivers," says Naomi Nye, head of sales at Drax Electric Vehicles.

"Charging is slow – often over 24 hours – and prolonged use increases safety risks if sockets or cabling weren't designed for sustained loads."

A domestic socket does not provide safeguards such as dedicated RCD protection, DC fault detection or load balancing or monitoring which is provided by dedicated EV chargers.

""Domestic sockets are not designed for drawing maximum current for 10-30 hours continuously," says Berry.

"Prolonged EV charging significantly increases overheating, degradation and electrical failure.

"Even as a fallback, 2.3kW charging is so slow that it often fails to deliver meaningful range recovery, which can push them back on to public charging during working hours."

Charging an EV with a 60kW battery from 20% to 80% capacity could take more than 15 hours from a domestic socket, compared with around five hours on a 7kW home charger.

If an EV has an efficiency of 3.5 miles per kWh, this equates to around eight miles per hour from a domestic socket, compared with around 25 miles from a 7kW wallbox.

"A dedicated charger also makes it easier to take advantage of smart tariffs, where off-peak rates can cut charging costs by around 70%," says Elvin Nagamootoo, head of product at Octopus Energy. "Plus, many chargers come with a fixed cable, which is far more convenient."

Berry recommends fleets adopt a policy that company EVs must be charged only using approved chargers.

## SHOULD an organisation install a home charger if it is not an operational necessity?

"In most cases, yes," says Jonny Berry, of Novuna. "If an employer expects an employee to rely on an electric company vehicle for regular work, providing access to reliable charging is a sensible and fair approach.

"If a business mandates electric vehicles, it should also take responsibility for enabling the infrastructure that makes them usable day-to-day."

Some organisations, such as Allianz UK, provide home chargers to their company car drivers when it is not an operational necessity to make it as easy as possible for their employees to make the transition to an electric vehicle.

"Providing charge points became a bit of a no-brainer honestly. I think people recognise it as us going above and beyond, as well as demonstrating our commitment to our sustainability ambitions," says Bethany Thomas, head of sustainability at Allianz UK.

The insurance giant has partnered with home charge point provider Indra to supply and install the chargers, with the company working with drivers to assess their ability to have a unit installed.

"That was an addition to the process and really kicked it off: it's worked incredibly well," says Thomas.

However, some organisations opt not to, instead they leave it to the employee to fund their own wallbox out of the significant benefit-in-kind (BIK) tax savings they will make by choosing a battery electric vehicle (BEV) as their company car.

At Schneider Electric, for example, employees taking on EVs are offered the opportunity to have a home charge point installed on a payment plan through Qmerit, which the company is the majority owner of.

> **"I THINK PEOPLE RECOGNISE IT (PROVIDING CHARGE POINTS) AS US GOING ABOVE AND BEYOND"**
>
> **BETHANY THOMAS, ALLIANZ UK**

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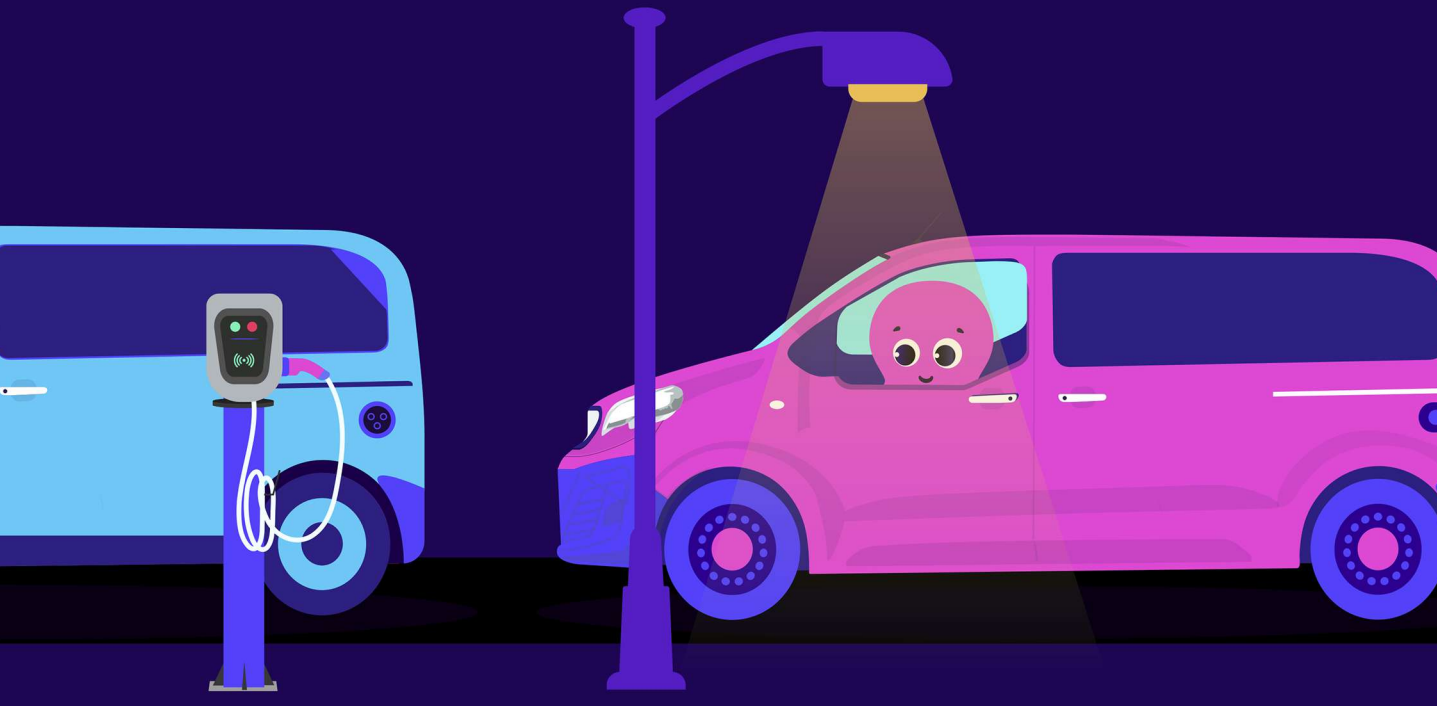

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## What is the financial CASE for providing home chargers?

Installing a home charger typically costs around £1,000 a unit, but this figure can be recouped relatively quickly if it means a driver is charging at their property instead of using the public network.

Zapmap figures show that – dependent on the speed of charger and the operator – it can cost up to 89p/kWh to use a DC public charge point.

This is more than three times as expensive as a typical domestic tariff of 28p/kWh, and up to 12 times more than some EV smart tariffs such as Octopus Go or E.On NextDrive.

If a BEV achieved an efficiency of 3.5 mi/kWh and the driver charged exclusively from a 7p/kWh smart tariff then they would have saved £1,000 – enough to cover the cost of a wallbox – after travelling around 4,300 miles compared with solely using an 89p/kWh rapid charger.

As well as reducing the cost of charging, providing home charge points to employees can reduce an organisation's overall capital costs.

"Home chargers are significantly cheaper to install than depot chargers, even prior to potential upgrade requirements," says Connor Allen, fleet strategy lead at Cenex.

Peter McDonald, mobility director at Ohme, adds: "If you've suddenly got 50 vans plugging in at your depot every night, you're very quickly going to reach the limitation of your site capacity.

"Upgrading those sites is not cheap at all, even if they're on 7kW kilowatt chargers.

"If you can divert that to your drivers' homes by providing them with a charger, then you haven't got that cost of upgrading the network; you've got the cost of buying a charger for your drivers, which you're quickly going to make up."

## Is the employee's home SUITABLE for charge point installation?

Another important factor to consider is how suitable someone's home is for a charge point. As well as looking at where it can be installed – whether it is on an external wall, on a post or in a garage, the property's fuse rating is also key.

A lack of off-street parking may not rule out home charging for an employee. The use of cross-pavement charging gullies to run cables safely across pavements for people who can park outside their home is growing, with the Government late last year launching a consultation to make their installation easier.

"Cross pavement solutions should be considered where appropriate, but may need to be trialled before mass-rollout, checking local authority permissions, and having clear health and safety guidance," says Connor Allen, of Cenex.

If the employee owns their home, then gaining permission to install a wallbox should be straightforward. Even if they are renting, this may not be an immovable barrier.

"Renters will generally need landlord permission, but a growing number of landlords are supportive of installations," says Elvin Nagamootoo, of Octopus Energy.

> "A GROWING NUMBER OF LANDLORDS ARE SUPPORTIVE"
> ELVIN NAGAMOOTOO, OCTOPUS

One issue which may arise more commonly with employees who rent their property is that they move more regularly than those who own their home.

If this happens, then organisations can either leave the charger on the property or remove it and install it at the driver's new dwelling.

"Many modern chargers are installed on mounting plates, allowing them to be safely removed or swapped by a competent person," says Jonny Berry, of Novuna.

## How should drivers be REIMBURSED for business mileage?

Cenex advises that a clear and auditable reimbursement process be in place before any home charger roll-out.

"This should address how electricity costs for business charging are calculated, paid and monitored," says Connor Allen, of Cenex. "Employers should consider mileage reimbursement at an agreed pence-per-mile rate, RFID cards linked to a charging backend, direct reimbursement based on energy provider data and monthly charging allowances or fixed payments.

"It is also important to determine whether personal vehicles will use the charger and how those costs are separated to avoid over-claiming."

To reduce the risk of drivers being under-compensated if an employer pays the HMRC-approved AER (advisory electricity rate) and to minimise the cost of home charging, organisations can encourage drivers to move on to an electricity tariff with cheaper off-peak/overnight rates. These can be significantly lower than standard daytime rates.

"Where employees cannot access off-peak tariffs, employers may wish to consider supplementary reimbursement approaches, such as those based on actual kWh consumed or an uplift to AER to ensure drivers are not disadvantaged," says Allen.

Ohme analysis has found it would cost £539.98 to power an EV for the average annual UK mileage of 6,800 miles if that vehicle achieved 3.5 miles/kWh and was charged on a standard variable tariff of 27.69p/kWh. If the driver solely used a smart tariff of 7p/kWh, it would be £136.

Solutions do exist which record the actual amount of electricity used by a home charger to allow for accurate reimbursement.

Drivers using an Ohme charge point, for example, can select their electrify tariff on the Ohme app. This allows for automatic smart charging so the vehicle battery is at the desired capacity at the time required, with as much charging as possible taking place during the cheapest time of the off-peak or dynamic tariff.

This information is also available to a fleet manager. "They can see the costings for each of their vehicles and how much those drivers have spent on charging and the $CO_2$ savings made as well," says Peter McDonald, of Ohme.

"The cost of charging can be automatically reimbursed to the driver and it means they will often get the money back even before they've got their electricity bill, so they never have to worry about expenses claims or being out of pocket."

Allianz UK has also introduced a driver app, that allows employees to log their charging and their business mileage to make reimbursement easier: the company pays the AER.

## What level of SUPPORT should be provided for home charge points?

Home charge points for company EVs should be treated as business-critical equipment, not consumer gadgets, says Novuna's Jonny Berry.

"If a driver cannot charge at home, the vehicle may be unusable the next day, creating operational disruption and unnecessary cost," he adds.

At a minimum, employers should ensure the following support is in place:

- Clear hardware warranty: defined cover for parts and replacement, with clarity on response times and responsibilities.
- Ongoing software and firmware updates: chargers are connected devices. Without active software support, performance, security and compatibility degrade over time.
- Remote monitoring and diagnostics: faults should be detected proactively where possible, rather than relying on drivers to report issues.
- Responsive driver helpline: drivers need a clear point of contact when something goes wrong, particularly outside normal working hours.
- Defined service level agreements (SLAs): support should have agreed response and resolution times, reflecting the operational importance of the vehicle.
- Planned maintenance where appropriate: especially for high-mileage or operational vehicles, chargers should not be left in a 'fit and forget' state.

## How should home CHARGING be incorporated into fleet?

Installing the wallbox at someone's dwelling is not the final part of the home charging jigsaw.

"Home charging works best as part of a wider ecosystem – linking home, workplace and public infrastructure into a single managed experience," says Suzanne Phillips, of Ayvens.

"Employees shouldn't navigate charging complexity alone. The right tools, policies and support ensure drivers can charge confidently, reduce operational risk for employers and help electric fleets deliver on both cost and sustainability goals while maintaining the consistency fleets rely on for long-term planning."

Jonny Berry, of Novuna, says the market is now moving towards "what can be described as operational domestic charging".

This applies the same principles used for depot and workplace charging to the home environment: chargers are monitored centrally; issues are identified remotely; maintenance and support are planned, not reactive; and uptime is treated as a priority.

"This approach maximises availability, reduces reliance on public charging and removes the burden from the driver," says Berry.

"A charger supporting an operational vehicle at home should be managed, supported and maintained no differently to a charger installed at a depot."

He adds: "If a home charger underpins a company vehicle, then support needs to match its importance. Anything less creates avoidable downtime, higher costs and unnecessary frustration for drivers.

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# Salary sacrifice solutions for home charging

An electric vehicle home charger, solar panels, home batteries and even the cost of electricity can all now be done through salary sacrifice. *Sarah Tooze* reports

Car salary sacrifice (sal/sac) schemes, whereby an employee forgoes some of their gross salary in return for a new or used lease car, are now well established.

Last year's FN50 data, showed that sal/sac had an 11.9% market share, up from 8.6% in 2024, and the vast majority (90%) of leasing companies expect further growth in salary sacrifice this year, according to the British Vehicle Rental & Leasing Association (BVRLA) Industry Outlook Report 2026.

But what isn't widespread among providers – yet – is a salary sacrifice offering for home charging.

Typically, employees who have opted to have an electric vehicle (EV) through a sal/sac scheme either arrange a home charger themselves or the salary sacrifice provider may refer them to their charge point partner.

Tusker, for example, offers a £100 discount on the cost of a home charge point through its charge point partner.

But, even with a discount, employees may still be put off by the financial outlay.

Ashley Boaden, senior director business development for fleet and lease at Pod, suggests that one way to overcome this is with a salary drawdown, whereby the cost of the charger is spread out over 12 months and the employee pays a portion each month through a salary reduction.

"We see conversion rates of standard referral of about 35% once you start finding a way to help a driver to cover that upfront cost," Boaden says.

But a more effective way is an employee paying for the home charger through salary sacrifice. This boosts the conversion rate up to 85%.

Like a car salary sacrifice scheme, payments are deducted from pre-tax pay so employees save on income tax and national insurance.

It means that, instead of potentially paying £999 for a home charger, a 20% basic rate taxpayer might pay £719.28 through salary sacrifice, while a 40% higher rate taxpayer could pay £579.42 and a 45% additional rate taxpayer £529.47, dependent on their individuals tax code and benefits.

It also means an employee is using a "safe, smart charger" with an installation warranty and a product warranty, Boaden says, and it is a better option than an employee using a three-pin plug.

Aside from being the slowest way to charge an EV, using a three-pin charger "isn't great for long-term use" and "a lot of the OEMs we work with don't offer them", Boaden says.

Pod, itself, doesn't offer sal/sac for home chargers directly to fleet customers, but it does partner with benefits providers such as My Benefits World, which MWH Treatment uses to provide home chargers via sal/sac to its company car drivers (see case study on Page 22), and salary sacrifice providers such as Knowles Fleet and SalSac.

The good news for businesses and their drivers is that it's not only the EV home charger itself which can be paid for via salary sacrifice. Solar panels, home batteries and even the cost of electricity can be done this way too.

Here, we look at some of the current offerings.

## HOME CHARGER ONLY

Fleet management provider Knowles Fleet launched its salary sacrifice for home chargers offering with Pod in March this year in response to drivers wanting a home charger to be included with the lease package.

"Home charging should not be treated as an afterthought. For many drivers, being able to charge reliably at home is what makes an EV convenient and cost-effective day-to-day," says Dan Howard, procurement director at Knowles Fleet.

"The aim of this partnership is to make the move to electric simpler and more affordable. Drivers also get the reassurance of working with an established charging specialist and full support from our expert team."

The scheme could reduce the effective cost by up to 40%, dependent on the driver's tax band.

Drivers opting for a home charger are also eligible to sign up for Pod Rewards, a new programme that pays customers for smart charging their EVs at home.

Through the Pod Home app, Pod automatically schedules charging when demand on the grid is lower and drivers earn cash rewards of up to £100 per year.

From an employer's perspective the scheme is "simple to set up and run", according to Howard.

Knowles Fleet takes care of the administration while employers retain full control of their scheme and the driver approval process.

"We provide ongoing support, regular management reporting and consolidated invoicing to minimise the requirements of fleet managers, HR and finance teams. This enables employers to offer a complete, admin-light package," says Howard.

If an employee leaves the company during the lease agreement they will need to settle any outstanding charger costs, as outlined in the contract terms and conditions.

The initial response to the launch has been positive and Knowles Fleet expects around 20%-25% of eligible scheme drivers to include a home charger in their package.

## HOME CHARGER AND CHARGING COSTS

In 2024, The Electric Car Scheme launched The Charge Scheme, which applies not only to the cost of the home charger, but the ongoing cost of electricity used to charge the car at home, at public chargers and at work.

"Every company already on The Electric Car Scheme has access to The Charge Scheme. It's been built to bolt straight onto the existing benefit, with no additional admin or cost for the employer," says Matthew Waller, general manager of The Charge Scheme.

The Charge Scheme can also be used with an existing EV company car arrangement, not just car salary sacrifice schemes.

"A growing number of fleets running traditional company car schemes have added it specifically to address the charging cost issue for their company car drivers," Waller says.

The scheme is flexible and if a business already has a public charging solution it wants to keep, The Charge Scheme can be structured around the home and workplace charging elements specifically, so the driver still benefits from the salary sacrifice saving on their home electricity without disrupting the existing public charging arrangement.

Basic rate taxpayers save around 20% on charging costs, higher rate taxpayers around 30%, and additional rate taxpayers up to 50%, according to Waller.

He suggests that a higher rate taxpayer driving a Tesla Model Y over a four-year, 20,000-miles-per-year term would save around £4,283 if they only did public charging. The same driver doing mostly home charging would save around £2,580, while charging only at home would save around £1,702.

"These figures are estimates, real savings depend on annual mileage, vehicle efficiency, the home/public charging split, and the driver's personal tax position. But the consistent picture is that drivers see a sustained, monthly reduction in their cost of running an EV, regardless of where they charge," Waller says.

The benefits for a company are fourfold: it "gets more drivers into EVs at scale, and has a direct,


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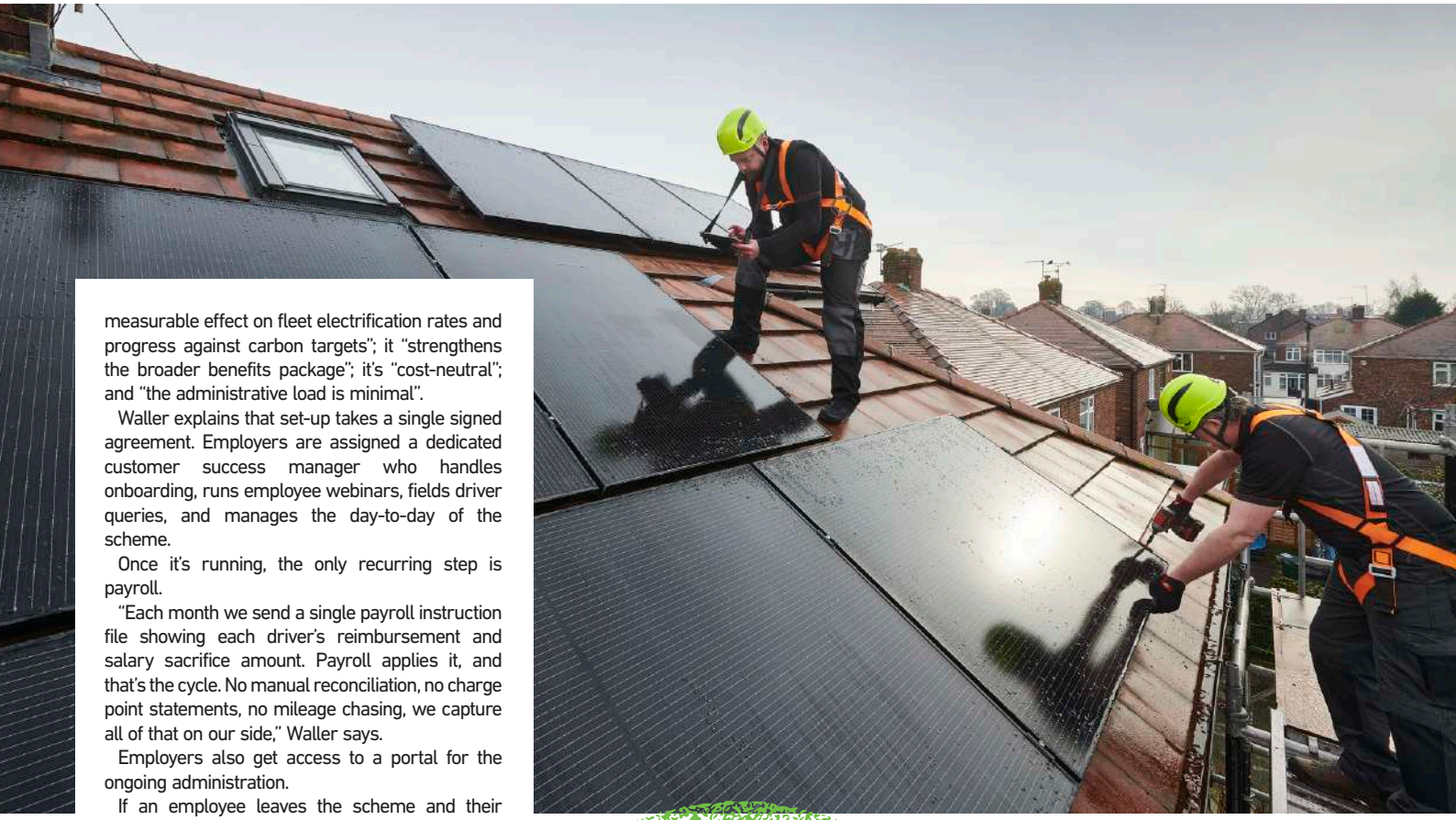

measurable effect on fleet electrification rates and progress against carbon targets"; it "strengthens the broader benefits package"; it's "cost-neutral"; and "the administrative load is minimal".

Waller explains that set-up takes a single signed agreement. Employers are assigned a dedicated customer success manager who handles onboarding, runs employee webinars, fields driver queries, and manages the day-to-day of the scheme.

Once it's running, the only recurring step is payroll.

"Each month we send a single payroll instruction file showing each driver's reimbursement and salary sacrifice amount. Payroll applies it, and that's the cycle. No manual reconciliation, no charge point statements, no mileage chasing, we capture all of that on our side," Waller says.

Employers also get access to a portal for the ongoing administration.

If an employee leaves the scheme and their salary sacrifice payments have not fully covered the home charger installation cost at the time of early termination, the remaining balance is included in their final salary deduction.

Waller says interest in The Charge Scheme has tracked closely with the broader shift in fleet attitudes.

"As charging cost has become a bigger talking point, more employers are actively rolling it out as a standard part of their EV proposition rather than treating it as optional," he says.

Amy Gordon, HR coordinator at logistics company Europa Worldwide Group, says that the ability for staff to save 20%-50% on all charging costs through The Charge Scheme has been "transformative in encouraging the switch to electric vehicles".

## SOLAR, BATTERY AND HOME CHARGER

Heva Energy is offering solar panels, home batteries and EV charge points via salary sacrifice, with the potential to halve customer bills.

"The scheme is fully modular. Employers can offer solar, batteries, EV charge points, or any combination of those," says Ian Napier, co-founder, Heva Energy.

The advantage for the employee is that there is no upfront cost nor the consumer credit check, high interest rate or long repayment terms they would typically face on consumer finance for solar and battery systems.

Heva says that a 40% taxpayer saves 42% on the cost of the scheme compared with buying the same system outright or on consumer finance at 12% APR.

Meanwhile, an employee on £60,000 with a company EV and high energy usage (a full solar and 20kWh battery system) pays £123 a month net and saves £171 a month in energy costs.

A battery-only option is available to all, not just EV drivers. The battery stores cheap off-peak electricity and releases it during expensive peak hours, effectively halving the average energy bill.

In this scenario, an employee on £45,000 without solar suitability takes a 15kWh battery that stores cheap off-peak electricity and releases it during expensive peak hours at £75 a month net and saves £68 a month.

Meanwhile, a basic rate taxpayer on £35,000 in rented accommodation accesses a 10kWh battery at £75 a month net and saves £56 a month.

> **"AS CHARGING COST HAS BECOME A BIGGER TALKING POINT, MORE EMPLOYERS ARE ACTIVELY ROLLING IT OUT AS A STANDARD PART OF THEIR EV PROPOSITION RATHER THAN TREATING IT AS OPTIONAL"**
>
> **MATTHEW WALLER, THE CHARGE SCHEME**

Employers incur no financial risk. They save £2,500 in National Insurance contributions per participating employee per year and reduce their Scope 3 emissions by 1.3 tonnes per employee annually.

The scheme takes two months from an employer onboarding to first installation. A further benefit, according to Napier, is a reduction in Scope 1 emissions for employees working from home.

The scheme uses Tesla Powerwall and EcoFlow hardware, selected for longevity and manufacturer warranty coverage. All installers are vetted by Heva and 21-day repair or replace service level agreement is included as standard.

The platform handles installer recommendation, system design and mileage reimbursement, minimising administration for teams.

Payments pause automatically if an employee goes on parental leave or changes employer, early termination protection is built into the lease, and at the end of the term, employees can purchase the system at "fair market value" or continue on a "nominal monthly fee", according to Heva.

Napier suggests that in the long-term, there is an opportunity for fleets to protect themselves from rising EV charging costs.

"Leasing the solar and battery together means the fleet has its own means of fuel production," he says.

And he believes the salary sacrifice battery-only proposition could help van drivers, in particular, make the switch to EV.

"When a driver moves to an EV for work, they almost always switch to a time-of-use tariff at home," Napier says. "That's great for the fleet



Leah Lindsay, fleet and employee benefits manager, MWH

because the vehicle charges overnight at a low rate, and the driver gets reimbursed cleanly.

"The problem is that the driver's household consumption is now potentially exposed to a much higher rate during peak hours. Even the most diligent household has some consumption that can't be shifted to the middle of the night.

"A home battery solves this neatly. It charges overnight on the same cheap window as the car, and then discharges through peak hours to cover the household load."

He adds: "This insight didn't come from us. It came from a housing association we're in discussions with, where the van drivers were the ones asking about the benefit. They'd already done the maths.

"We think this is going to be a meaningful lever for EV van adoption specifically, where the driver demographic has historically been harder to convert."

Overall, Napier says Heva is seeing 40% interest in its proposition from fleet drivers.

He points out that ZapMap research suggests EV drivers are seven times more likely to have home solar panels installed compared with the general population.

Heva is also eyeing uptake among fleet management and leasing companies. Covase Fleet Management already white labels Heva's offering and former Alphabet CEO Richard Schooling, who is now a non-executive director of Heva, believes the platform "enables leasing companies to confidently fund these systems, transforming a traditional Opex headache into a structured financing opportunity".

He says: "We are now ready to engage with partners looking to capture this cross-sell potential and lead the next phase of fleet transition."

## Salary sacrifice home charge point scheme 'critical' to EV uptake at MWH Treatment

**MWH Treatment introduced a salary sacrifice home charge point scheme with Pod in 2022, as part of the next phase of its fleet electrification programme.**

**"At that point, EV uptake across the business was accelerating quickly, and it became clear that access to reliable, affordable home charging was critical to driver confidence and long-term success of the transition," says Leah Lindsay, MWH's fleet and employee benefits manager.**

**"Many drivers were keen to move to electric vehicles but were understandably concerned about the upfront cost and complexity of installing a home charger.**

**"By offering a Pod home charge point through sal/sac, we were able to remove a significant financial barrier, simplify the process for drivers and provide reassurance that installations would be safe, compliant and supported. The scheme also aligned strongly with our wider sustainability goals."**

**The scheme is delivered through MWH Treatment's company benefits platform, My Benefits World, which links directly to Pod.**

**Employees access the platform, select their home charge point, and place their order via salary sacrifice.**

**Once the order has been approved internally the employee deals with Pod directly for site checks, scheduling, installation and any follow-up queries.**

**"From a fleet and employer perspective, the process is very streamlined," Lindsay says. "Our involvement is largely limited to the initial set-up of the scheme and approving requests, then payrolling the monthly deduction.**

**"There's minimal ongoing administration, which makes it easy to manage and scalable as EV uptake continues to grow."**

**More than 120 points have been installed through the scheme and driver feedback has been positive.**

**"Drivers really value having a simple, employer-supported route to installing a home charge point rather than having to research options and manage installations themselves," Lindsay says.**

**From an employer and fleet perspective, the benefits are significant, according to Lindsay.**

**She says it supports faster EV adoption by removing practical barriers; improves driver experience and wellbeing, which helps engagement and retention; reduces reliance on public charging, lowering mileage costs and downtime; and strengthens MWH Treatment's sustainability credentials, supporting its $CO_2$ reduction targets.**

# The benefits of partnership

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Although the electrification of your fleet might seem daunting, it's worth remembering:

- The potential benefits – like cost savings, sustainability advances and public perception improvements
- You don't have to electrify your fleet overnight
- The support available – from electrification partners, to help plan your electrification strategy

This third point's particularly important.

Working with a partner can set you off on the right foot. They'll help you understand your current energy set up and if you need any electrical upgrades. Data plays a key role, and a partner can help you make sense of what you have available to you. They can also help you plan what infrastructure is right for you, vehicles, practical considerations, health and safety and more.

A partner will really understand your organisation's requirements, challenges and pain points to ensure the best electrification strategy for your organisation.

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# sopp+sopp: Proactive accident management strategies for EV-led fleets

As electric vehicle (EV) adoption increases across the fleet sector, accident management can no longer be a reactive function. It must be approached as a critical operational strategy.

Anthony Roberts, sopp+sopp's commercial director, discussed how EV integration into fleet operations is impacting repair costs and complexities, the risks of vehicle downtime and insufficient data reporting, and how sopp+sopp can assist fleets with optimising their risk management strategies.

### Accident management in the EV era

Fleets in the UK are increasingly embracing electrification, with EVs now comprising approximately 30% of new vehicle orders. The use of EVs is impacting the frequency of incidents and associated repairs.

Roberts explained: "The volume of incidents occurring fell 5% year-on-year in 2025, and we've seen an 11% reduction since 2023."

Integrated technology in EVs has enabled a reduction in collisions, with tools like advanced driver assistance systems (ADAS), sensors, and autonomous braking, also leading to reductions in the severity of incidents.

However, despite repair volumes decreasing, Roberts noted that repair costs are on the rise.

"The trade-off for us having this complex technology is that it's now more expensive to repair these vehicles," he said.

"For most modern vehicles, and certainly for EVs, relatively minor incidents can now have significant repair costs. We've seen a 4.4% increase in repair costs year-on-year for the last few years alone. This is due to advanced technology in high-impact areas, more complex materials and construction, and ADAS calibration requirements."

The complexities of vehicle repair have also increased as EV models become more unique.

"Earlier EVs shared parts with ICE vehicle models, meaning many parts were interchangeable and easier to source. As manufacturers shift to purpose-built designs, repair complexity and costs have increased – despite EVs having lower routine maintenance costs than ICE vehicles."

This has led to a general increase in the total cost of ownership (TCO) for fleet EVs.

Additionally, as EV usage increases, Roberts cited research that estimates the market will require an additional 76,000 EV trained technicians by 2030 to keep up with demand, showcasing a clear need for accelerated upskilling.

He said: "We recognise EV repair capacity is critical and are actively managing it. Our purpose-built and strategically located Activate Accident Repair centres support EV nation-wide; but meeting demand requires a broader repair ecosystem to ensure the right expertise, repair quality and turnaround time is provided to our customers."

### Fleet pressures: downtime and operational efficiency

Even as electrification drives a shift in the repair elements of accident management, traditional fleet pressures remain. Vehicle downtime is a crucial consideration and poses significant risks to fleet operations.

"Vehicles are critical to fleet operations, so downtime directly impacts productivity, revenue, service levels and driver utilisation. While extended vehicle off road (VOR) time drives significant costs, the greater risk is often indirect – lost revenue opportunities, reduced service and potential contractual issues – which turn downtime into commercial and reputational risk."

Positively, repair cycle times are improving, with 2025 the strongest since 2021, however Roberts emphasised that fleets cannot become complacent.

"Getting repairs to the right solution first time is key. Early, accurate incident reporting enables effective triage and avoids delays, especially as vehicle complexity varies across EVs, ADAS-equipped and mixed-age fleets."

Claims inflation remains a challenge, with third-party costs continuing to rise despite reduced claim frequency. Roberts noted that this is exacerbated by fleets not focusing enough in this area.

"Delays or missing details at the scene significantly reduce intervention success," he explained.

"Around 25% of opportunities were lost last year due to insufficient third-party information – equating to a £40 million missed recovery opportunity for our customers. This underscores how

**"For most modern vehicles, and certainly for EVs, relatively minor incidents can now have significant repair costs"**

ANTHONY ROBERTS, COMMERCIAL DIRECTOR

small failures at the point of incident can translate into substantial financial impact further down the line"

**Proactive accident management: data-driven solutions**

sopp+sopp aids fleets in developing accident management strategies balancing the nuances of EV adoption with the risks and complexities. This requires a more proactive approach.

"This is where sopp+sopp stands out with a people-led, tech-enabled approach. Our market leading digital platforms, including FleetScout and app-based FNOL reporting, support our experts, integrate seamlessly with customer workflows, and act as an extension of their fleet or insurance teams," said Roberts.

sopp+sopp offers customers bespoke reporting, benchmarking and insights driven by quality data.

Roberts explained: "Fleet risk is not uniform – different operating models, journeys and vehicle mixes create varying risk and cost profiles.

By understanding how customers operate, from routes to vehicle use, sopp+sopp can benchmark performance, target interventions and deliver a strategic, tailored view of risk rather than a one-size-fits-all solution.

These insights help fleets identify risks – such as driver behaviour or routes – and reduce incidents.

For EV fleets, this is critical, as minor damage can have major cost implications or result in a total loss, making awareness and prevention key."

To reduce third-party claim costs, sopp+sopp has developed tools to streamline FNOL reporting across app, desktop and phone.

Roberts highlighted: "speed and data quality are key, with telephone reporting – supported by video-assisted capture – delivering the most accurate, real-time information with no follow-up needed.

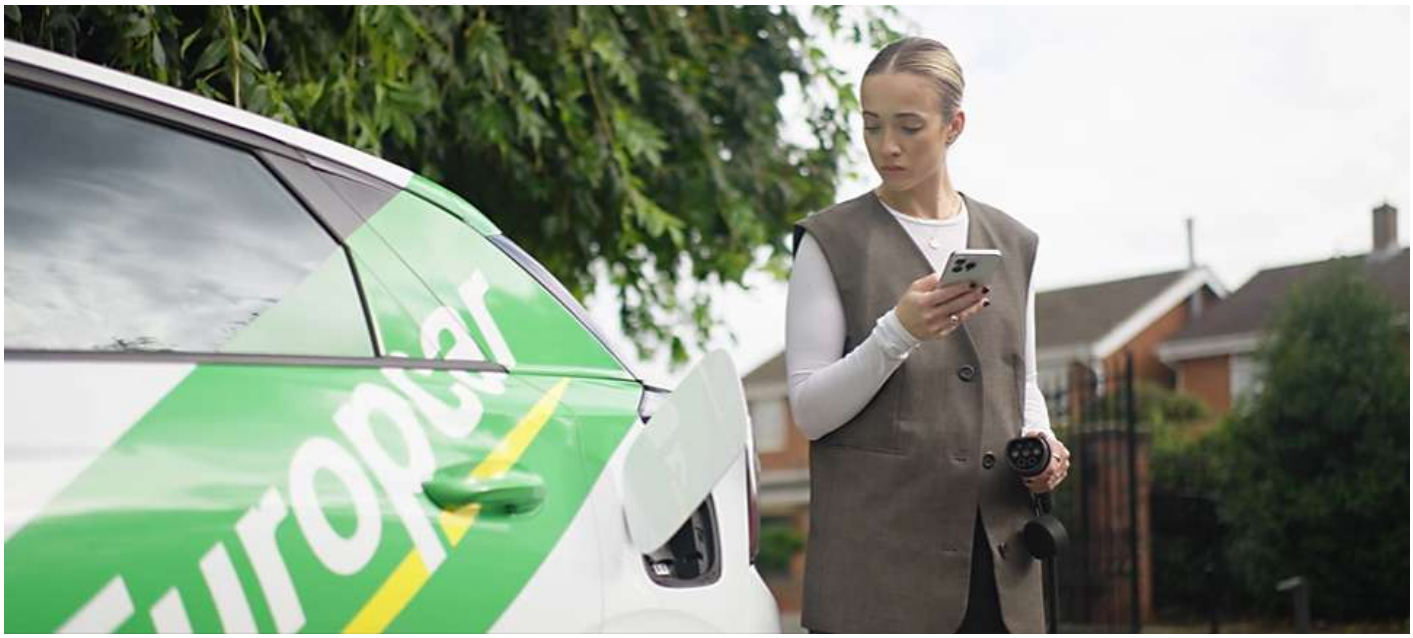
Combined with smart triage, this ensures that repairs are directed to the right solution quickly, improving efficiency and reducing vehicle downtime."

In a closing statement about the service sopp+sopp deliver to fleets Roberts said: "At sopp+sopp, our strategy is built on prevention as much as response. We work with our customers to reduce accident frequency through accurate, insightful data and meaningful analysis that supports better decision making."

sopp+sopp

**Learn more about how sopp+sopp is supporting EV-led fleets www.soppandsopp.co.uk**

# Shifting to sustainable mobility



On a mission to remove the barriers that hold businesses and motorists back from choosing environmentally friendly mobility solutions, Europcar is committed to giving organisations choice across all powertrains. Whether that's opting for a usership model, accessing ICE vehicles to rent for days, weeks or months at a time rather than having fleet sitting unused in car parks or improving the pathway to driver acceptance of EVs.

Europcar's latest sustainability report shows that 2025 was the year when organisations made a decisive move from early-stage minimum-commitment electrification to full operational integration, with businesses embracing electric cars at scale. The report, 'Electrification reaches operational maturity', highlights the significant changes that occurred across the industry, and the trends that are set to shape 2026 and beyond.

There are, however, still barriers to adoption. The latest Europcar EV barometer showed that the biggest hurdles holding organisations back from switching to a more sustainable fleet were costs (38%) and charging infrastructure (29%). 17% said lack of understanding about ownership and 14% cited lack of model choice.


## Scope 3 compliance

That needs to change in 2026, particularly in light of the growing role of Scope 3 emissions in procurement processes. Organisations unable to demonstrate compliance with Scope 3 for their mobility and transport operations could face the loss of contracts as major buyers make this a critical requirement.

That's where rental can play a vital role.

## Rental as a strategic tool

The best way to understand electric motoring is to test in real-world working conditions. Rental provides a fantastic 'no risk' opportunity, taking a vehicle for a few weeks or months to learn from the experience. It is also critical to winning the hearts and minds of drivers who will need to adapt.

As a leading proponent of electric motoring, Europcar has led the way in delivering mobility solutions that enable organisations to operate efficiently, effectively and sustainably without being tied into long-term lease agreements or residual value risks of ownership. In 2026, EV rental from Europcar is delivering a number of critical functions for businesses with fleets:

**Expanded choice of electric fleet -** making electric motoring more accessible for more businesses, Europcar is providing a choice of electric cars and vans that can serve multiple use-cases, with ICE/EV price parity

**Myth-busting –** With a detailed handover of a carefully selected electric vehicle to suit the needs of the job or journey, even previous EV-sceptics are being converted to zero tailpipe-emissions vehicles.

**Delivering Scope 3 emissions compliance –** EV rental can be used to quickly and affordably help an organisation meet customer Scope 3 requirements when a fleet is not compliant and there is a risk of missing out on a contract.

**Scaling without commitment –** Flexible rental allows businesses with seasonal demand or project-based work to add or remove electric cars and vans from their fleet as often as necessary.

**To find out more about Europcars electric mobility solutions visit:**
**Europcar.co.uk/en-gb/p/business/fleet-services/electric**

Europcar

# Public charging powers ahead

The UK's rapid and ultra-rapid public charging network is growing quickly, but there are still obstacles it needs to overcome. *Andrew Ryan* reports

The scale and spread of the UK's public charging network has long been considered a restrictive factor on the transition to electric vehicles (EVs), but the latest statistics make for impressive reading.

Figures from Zapmap show there are now 120,388 chargers, sited on 93,394 devices across 46,333 locations across the UK.

These support use cases across on-street, destination and on-route charging.

This is an overall growth of 17% compared with the end of 2024, when there were 102,771 chargers.

It is not only the growth in the number of public chargers which is notable. Zapmap's analysis also identified a trend away from rapid (50kW to 149kW) chargers to ultra-rapid (149kW and above) units.

In 2025, 3,425 ultra-rapid chargers were added to the network, a 40% year-on-year increase. At the end of April there were 13,346 ultra-rapid units.

The overall number of rapid chargers decreased slightly over the same time period and now sits at 14,743 as some were upgraded to ultra-rapid points, while some were removed altogether.

This reflects the improving charging capabilities of new EVs and will reduce the amount of time a vehicle needs to charge. For example, Pod says charging at 50kW will add up to 90 miles range in 30 minutes, while using a 150kW charger can add up to 200 miles over the same time period.

Some new EVs are fitted with 800-volt architecture which means they can charge at up to 350kW from an appropriate charger.

This means they can take on around 270 miles of range in 22 minutes.

## FAILING TO HIT MAXIMUM SPEED

However, it is not common that vehicles will charge at either their or the charger's stated maximum.

Earlier this year Zapmap worked with the Green Finance Institute to produce analysis of the UK's public charging network.

It found that ultra-rapid chargers exhibit the largest gap between stated capability and observed energy transfer rates, at an average of 55.4kW.

This represents roughly 26% of their stated rating.

A major reason for this is that people are plugging in vehicles that are not capable of taking on the maximum charge, while other factors include the vehicle battery's state of charge and its resulting charging curve, and grid constraints which mean less power is delivered when several vehicles are plugged in at a site at the same time.

Many public charging networks are introducing new technologies to improve the real-world power their chargers can deliver.

"By deploying dynamic load balancing and on-site storage, the industry is making the network more resilient and efficient, measures that are vital for building driver confidence," says Jade Edwards, head of insights at Zapmap. "Knowing that a site can manage peak demand intelligently ensures that the next wave of EV adopters will find a reliable and capable public network ready for them."

Osprey Charging Network, for example, is utilising dynamic load balancing and proprietary software to allocate power in real-time, preventing capacity from being 'locked' in unused bays.

InstaVolt is currently progressing a national programme to future-proof its charging hubs and has recently brought five new battery energy storage systems (BESS) sites online, with at least 20 more planned before the end of the year.

The five sites, each representing an investment of approximately £500,000, bring the total of battery-equipped InstaVolt locations to eight.

The programme addresses two structural pressures that are intensifying across the public charging sector: escalating network demand charges, which increase in line with peak power draw, and grid connection delays that are holding back deployment of the rapid charging infrastructure.

## BATTERY STORAGE IS A 'POWERFUL TOOL'

"Battery storage is one of the most powerful tools we have for accelerating the switch to electric," says InstaVolt CEO Delvin Lane.

"Our batteries charge overnight when energy is cheaper and cleaner, and we draw on that stored power during the more expensive daytime hours.

"Battery storage lets us deploy faster, manage our costs more effectively, and pass genuine savings on to drivers."

By integrating on-site battery storage, InstaVolt sites can draw power from stored reserves during peak charging periods, reducing exposure to demand tariffs and meaningfully increasing the total power available to drivers at any given moment.

> **"BATTERY STORAGE LETS US DEPLOY FASTER, MANAGE OUR COSTS MORE EFFECTIVELY, AND PASS GENUINE SAVINGS ON TO DRIVERS"**
>
> **DELVIN LANE, INSTAVOLT**

Two of InstaVolt's sites which already feature BESS are Corley North and South, and at both of these sites the addition of 230kVa of battery capacity brought the total available power to 500kVA (each) across seven and eight chargers respectively.

Since the upgrade, energy delivered per session has increased 33% at Corley South and 22% at Corley North, reflecting how drivers charge more completely when higher power is available.

This technology also allowed InstaVolt to lower the cost of using its chargers.

"What InstaVolt has understood is that you don't have to wait for the grid connection problem to be solved centrally before you invest," says Dr Andy Palmer, CEO and founder of Palmer Energy Technologies.

"Store cheap overnight power in batteries, draw it down during peak hours, pass the saving to the driver.

"°The Corley data tells you everything you need to know: a 33% increase in energy delivered per session because drivers can actually charge at the speed the hardware is capable of."

## Cheaper to charge an EV than use petrol

**The cost of relying on the public charging network compared with running a petrol or diesel vehicle has often been cited as an obstacle.**

**However, with the cost of the liquid fuels soaring as a result of America's war with Iran, the landscape looks different now.**

**In April, ChargeUK reported that public EV charging is now cheaper than petrol or diesel in most scenarios.**

**Its analysis, based on RAC Fuel Watch and Zapmap Price Index figures, found that when charging on a standard charger (such as on-street or in a car park) at the average cost of 54p per kWh, drivers can expect to pay around 15p per mile compared with a current rate of 17ppm for a typical petrol car or 17.5ppm for a diesel.**

**Drivers using an 80/20 mix of standard and rapid public charging will pay around 16ppm. Only those exclusively using public ultra-rapid charging will pay more than using petrol or diesel.**

**"The cost of public charging is now the final hurdle for mass EV adoption," says Vicky Read, chief executive of ChargeUK.**

**"We need to see Government take control of the situation to ensure the numbers stack up not just in a time of global crisis, but for the long term.**

**"The cost pressures currently pushing up public EV charging prices are largely within the Government's grasp, whereas the global pressures pushing up petrol and diesel prices are not."**

**Read says ChargeUK is calling on the Government to address skyrocketing charge point standing charges and adding renewable electricity to the renewable transport credit scheme; measures which, it says, will reduce the cost of charging.**

**Campaigners have also called for the 20% VAT on electricity used through public charging should be reduced to match the 5% domestic VAT rate.**

**In February a First-tier tribunal agreed, but HMRC has appealed the decision. The Upper Tribunal has not yet ruled on the appeal.**

# Why the future of fleet is built on transparency

Fleet management has been on a real journey in the last 5 to 10 years. For the most part, the industry has been built on complexity, legacy systems, and a "that's just how it's done" attitude.

But the world is changing. We're moving toward a future that is electric, automated, and, well, a bit more fun. That's why we do things a bit differently at Octopus Fleet. We believe that fleet electrification needs a fresh approach, built on pricing transparency and unlocking savings for fleets ready to build their future fleet.

If you're currently transitioning your fleet, you're thinking about your charging strategy, which EVs to buy and guiding your drivers through the transition. But while you're managing all of this, it might be worth taking a closer look at your recent invoices.

In our industry, there's a bit of a theme regarding transparency. We've seen examples of fleets getting admin fees of up to 40% added onto monthly bills. Meaning in some cases, nearly half of what you're paying isn't going toward your fleet operations - it's going toward the pleasure of receiving a bill.

At Octopus Fleet, we know the transition to an electric fleet can be straightforward and predictable. We're built on transparency because we believe your budget should go toward your transition, not nuanced mark-ups.

## Less admin, more action: A holistic toolkit for the transition

A fleet for the future comes in all shapes and sizes - ICE, hybrid, pure EVs, or a complete mix of all. Managing that shouldn't require seven different portals and a mountain of receipts. That's why we've created fleet solutions for businesses, no matter where they are in the journey:


Matt Pretorius


- **Public Charging:** When your drivers hit the road, they get access to over 1.4 million chargers. Electroverse is the largest EV charging network across the UK and Europe. Plus, innovations like Plunge Pricing mean you can tap into discounted charging when energy is cheaper.
- **Home Charging:** This is the game-changer. We enable drivers to charge at home on any energy tariff, and we handle the reimbursement. No manual claims, no headaches.
- **The Fleet Card:** We built our Visa-backed card to be the ultimate bridge. It handles your remaining petrol and diesel needs today, while giving you one source of truth as you transition at your own pace.
- **The Business Payments Card:** From tolls and overnight stays to the occasional team lunch, fleet managers need a unified way to handle everyday spend without drowning in a sea of manual claims.

We're committed to making the transition from ICE to EV (and everything in between) simple. By uniting your charging, fuel, and everyday business spend into one transparent platform, it's about giving you the headspace to focus on what matters: keeping your fleet moving. Coupled with clear pricing that you can trust for your budget forecasting and a partner which is part of Octopus Energy, we're helping you turn the 'big transition' into your biggest competitive advantage.

**Learn more about Octopus Fleet here**

octopus FLEET

# Making rapid progress

The UK's rapid charging network is larger and simpler to use than ever, but different networks retain their own quirks and costs. *Ben Rooth* looks at what the major providers are offering

Using the public rapid charging infrastructure has never been easier. It has come a long way from just a few years ago when multiple apps and radio frequency identification (RFID) cards were needed to operate charge points on different networks.

Most of the networks do still have their own apps and there are advantages to using these, such as access to receipts and charging session details, while many offer subscriptions which will unlock lower rates.

Often network providers offer specific programmes aimed at helping fleet managers simplify their transition to electric vehicles, as well as their processes when running them.

However, for ad hoc charging sessions, drivers can now generally just turn up at a charger, pay with a contactless bank card and be on their way.

One drawback of this approach is the charge points do not have the capability to print receipts, so drivers and fleet decision-makers need to be aware of the processes in obtaining these.

In this feature we look at what some of the UK's largest public rapid charger networks offer, as well as network size, cost to use and their growth plans.

BP Pulse, Fastned, Gridserve, Tesla and Applegreen Electric were also invited to contribute to this feature, but did not provide any information.

# Arnold Clark Charge


**What is your UK network size? What speeds are the chargers?**
Arnold Clark Charge has more than 60 ultra-rapid charging hubs at its branches across the UK with more than 600 chargers. Chargers are ultra-rapid with speeds up to 150kW. We're already one of the largest ultra-rapid networks in Scotland, with growing UK-wide coverage.

**2. How much do they cost to use? How often is this figure reviewed?**
Current pricing is 55p per kWh for app and contactless users, which is significantly below UK rapid charging averages. We also offer drivers a free coffee in branch while they charge. Pricing is reviewed periodically in line with market conditions and energy costs.

**3. What is the process for a driver to get a receipt?**
Drivers can pay via the Arnold Clark app, contactless or through roaming partners such as Octopus Electroverse, Zapmap and Allstar. For Pay & Go customers, they can scan the QR code on the charger screen to request a receipt for your charge or fill out the receipt form on our website. For app users, they will get a receipt via the app. Contactless and roaming users receive receipts via their payment provider or roaming platform.

**4. Do you have any fleet-specific products? If so, what are they?**
We have partnerships, such as with Allstar, Paua, Shell and Octopus Electroverse, that enable fleet billing and consolidate payments. Contactless and app-based payment is beneficial for fleet drivers, while our pre-booking functionality can help with operational planning.

**5. What are your growth ambitions?**
We've already invested £30 million into our Arnold Clark Charge network and are expanding rapidly, with a focus on accessibility, affordability and nationwide coverage.

We will continue to roll out ultra-rapid hubs across the UK, expanding beyond Scotland into key English locations.

# InstaVolt

**What is your UK network size? What speeds are the chargers?**
Our network is more 3,200 chargers live or in development. We have a range of charger speeds from 50kW to 160kW to suit all vehicles, with more than 2,000 live ultra-rapid chargers (100kW-plus).

**How much do they cost to use? How often is this figure reviewed?**
The chargers cost 92p per kWh at all times for contactless and fleet roaming 92p per kWh between 7am and 8pm 55p per kWh 8pm-7am for InstaVolt App and InstaVolt RFID users. We also have a special rate on throughout summer at our Winchester Superhub of 70p per kWh at all times for contactless and fleet roaming. Then, 65p per kWh 7am-8pm and 55p per kWh off-peak 8pm-7am for InstaVolt app and InstaVolt RFID users.


**What is the process for a driver to get a receipt?**
If a driver charges via their contactless credit/debit card, they can use our receipt generator on the website or if charging via our app a driver can download their session directly from the app.

If they have any issues a driver can email vatreceipts@instavolt.co.uk with their session details and our supportive team will then manually generate a receipt.

**Do you have any fleet-specific products? If so, what are they?**
InstaVolt supports extensive roaming, allowing drivers to use third-party RFID cards or apps as well as directly via the InstaVolt app, for easy access to our network of chargers.

**What are your growth ambitions?**
Our goal is to have 10,000 chargers live in the UK by 2030.

# Home charging made simple for fleet drivers

For fleet managers, the switch to electric is no longer a question of if, but how. Depot and workplace charging tend to dominate the planning conversation when it comes to fleet electrification - but for the growing number of fleets where drivers take their EV home overnight, the most important charge point is on the driveway.

Job-need fleets - vans, field service teams, drivers who start and finish their day from home - bring a particular set of challenges. Manual mileage claims. Drivers fronting the cost of fuelling a company vehicle. Energy bills that don't always reconcile cleanly. And the administrative load of managing it all at scale. That is why Pod built Home Fleet: an end-to-end solution designed specifically for businesses electrifying drivers who charge at home and on the go.

**One managed service, end to end**

Home Fleet brings home charging, optional public charging, automated reimbursement and 24/7 driver support together within a single managed service. Pod installs its award-winning Pod Point Solo 3S at the driver's home, provides access to a nationwide public charging network for the times they need it, and consolidates every charging session into a single, HMRC-compliant invoice each month. The result is clean, auditable data and a significant reduction in the admin that has traditionally surrounded expense claims.

> 'for the growing number of fleets where drivers take their EV home overnight, the most important charge point is on the driveway'

**Drivers stay whole, and get rewarded**

Through Pod's partnership with Rightcharge, work charging costs are credited directly back to the driver's home energy bill, automatically. Drivers are never out of pocket, and they don't need to switch energy supplier or move to a specific tariff for the system to work - it operates with their existing provider.

Eligible drivers on a single or two-rate domestic tariff can also sign up to Pod Rewards and earn up to £100 a year in cash simply by plugging in and letting Pod smart charge the vehicle at the cheapest times. The outcome is a smoother experience for drivers, vehicles ready each morning, and a more attractive proposition when introducing EVs to the fleet.

**Built to scale, designed for complex fleets**

Pod has installed more than 300,000 chargers across the UK and worked with a multitude of fleets over the last 17 years, and Home Fleet has been built with that experience at its core. The solution supports phased transitions and mixed fleets, integrates with existing processes, and provides fleet managers with a centralised portal to oversee installs, costs and ongoing driver support. Surveys, scheduling and installation are managed by Pod, with UK-wide field service and remote diagnostics on hand when needed.

**The bottom line**

Electrifying a fleet of home-based drivers should not mean inheriting a new layer of admin. Home Fleet removes the friction for fleet managers, for finance teams, and most importantly, for the drivers themselves.

If your drivers take their EV home at night, we would welcome a conversation.

**Find out more at podenergy.com/business/fleet-charging**

# Ionity

**What is your UK network size? What speeds are the chargers?**
Ionity's UK network has just crossed the 700 charge point threshold, representing about a third of the UK's ultra-rapid charging capacity. We intend to break the 1,000 mark before the end of 2026.

Ionity chargers in the UK typically offer charging speeds of up to 350kW. Newer sites are increasingly offering speeds of up to 400kW-plus. That energy is 100% renewable.

**How much do they cost to use? How often is this figure reviewed?**
Ionity pricing for private customers varies dependent on the product they choose to use. They can pull up at a site with no app and charge for 81p per kWh, dropping to as low as 46p per kWh dependent on their subscription model. For businesses, it offers Ionity Fleet, launched in 2025, to specifically meet the needs of business fleets across the UK and beyond. This introduced progressive, volume-based, tiered pricing with no running costs unless vehicles are actually charged, with even more attractive kWh prices than for private usage due to the higher charging volume. Prices are reviewed regularly. We have been able to maintain an overall stable price level across our network over the past years.

**What is the process for a driver to get a receipt?**
Private consumers have automated receipts provided as part of their charging sessions within the Ionity App – but for Ionity Fleet customers, there is no need to involve the driver at all. The Ionity Fleet Portal allows fleet managers to view completed and ongoing sessions and download monthly invoice documentation per fleet,..


**Do you have any fleet-specific products? If so, what are they?**
The Fleet Management Portal has been specifically developed to support companies operating EV fleets across Europe. It combines access to Ionity's ultra-rapid charging network with centralised digital fleet management capabilities. The portal allows fleet managers to create and manage multiple fleets, even across different billing accounts; order and manage RFID charging cards centrally, allowing tap-and-go charging across 24 European countries; monitor live ongoing and completed charging sessions.

In addition, it allows fleets to take complete control of their invoices and define country-specific charging permissions.

**What are your growth ambitions?**
Ionity sees fleet electrification as a major long-term growth priority across Europe, with fleets being an important component. Its ambition is to continue expanding both its ultra-rapid charging infrastructure and digital fleet management capabilities.

Current developments include application programming interface (API) integrations that will allow companies to connect the Ionity Fleet Portal directly with their own fleet management systems. It will also integrate fleet account functionalities into the standard Ionity app, giving drivers their own insight into state of charge (SoC) and charging history.

# MGF Power

**What is your UK network size? What speeds are the chargers?**
MFG EV Power has more than 2,000 bays across more than 500 locations nationwide. Our chargers span 50kW to 400kW.

**How much do they cost to use? How often is this figure reviewed?**
Pricing remains 69p-to-79p per kWh.

**What is the process for a driver to get a receipt?**
Drivers who transact via the MFG Connect App receive receipts automatically. For contactless charging, receipts are delivered either through its website or via the MFG Connect App.


**Do you have any fleet-specific products? If so, what are they?**
We work with all of the UK's major fleet providers to ensure the ultra-rapid network is openly accessible to them and their customers.

**What are your growth ambitions?**
Our growth ambition is clear: we're aiming for more than 3,000 ultra-rapid chargers to be rolled out across the UK by 2030, backed by a £400 million investment. With more than 2,000 bays already live and approximately £170m invested in 2025 alone, we're delivering on that ambition at pace, cementing MFG EV Power's position as the UK's largest ultra-rapid charging network.

# Osprey Charging

**What is your UK network size? What speeds are the chargers?**
Osprey Charging operates more than 1,500 rapid and ultra-rapid chargers across Great Britain. Locations range from large en route hubs of eight-16 ultra-rapid charge points delivering up to 300kW, to local sites with 50-75kW rapid charging.

**How much do they cost to use? How often is this figure reviewed?**
All chargers have a contactless card reader, with a pay-as-you-go rate of 87p/kWh. Using the Osprey App gives drivers a cheaper rate of 82p/kWh during the week and the Weekend Saver rate of 74p/kWh all weekend. The Osprey network also accepts all major roaming and fleet cards and apps, who set their own pricing.

Pricing is reviewed regularly, in line with other rapid and ultra-rapid charging networks, and particularly when there is a significant change in the elements that make up the cost of operating the network – such as the fixed standing and capacity charges on large grid connections.

**What is the process for a driver to get a receipt?**
Drivers can get a receipt by entering session details into the automated VAT receipt generator on the Osprey website, or by charging through the Osprey App, where receipts are generated and stored as standard.

**Do you have any fleet-specific products? If so, what are they?**
Osprey charging hubs are designed with larger parking bays and space for commercial vehicles to charge easily. Our proprietary software platform Osprey Iris integrates with all common fleet roaming providers, enabling a frictionless at-charger experience for fleet drivers and reconciling billing behind the scenes. Fleet managers receive consolidated monthly invoices and all billing and payment reconciliation is handled automatically.


The Osprey App provides benefits to smaller business drivers, such as cheaper rates, charging history and direct access to downloadable VAT receipts.

**What are your growth ambitions?**
Osprey's continued growth was backed in 2025 by a multi-bank funding package that will see us continue to build large, ultra-rapid hubs in convenient locations on major roads and in busy urban areas. In the next stage Osprey will target quality over quantity, reflecting a focus on customer service, reliable operations and financial strength.

# Shell Recharge

**What is your UK network size? What speeds are the chargers?**
Our growing UK-wide network includes access to more than 50,000 public charge points, including:

More than 1,000 Shell Recharge-branded chargers at Shell forecourts and participating Waitrose or Aldi supermarkets; More than 10,000 on-street charge points; Other charge points from more than 40 operators.

**How much do they cost to use? How often is this figure reviewed?**
Public EV charging prices vary dependent on location. It is important to check the payment terminal at the charge post or Shell App for current pricing at your chosen location.

A pre-authorisation amount of £55 will then be charged by your bank to ensure it is available for you to pay with.

When making contactless payments:

Charging speed: rapid/ultra-rapid (DC 50-300kW): 74p-89p

Charging speed: fast (AC 7-22kW): 64p-79p

When using the Shell App/Shell Recharge Card:

Charging speed: rapid/ultra-rapid (DC 50-300kW): 64p-79p

Charging speed: fast (AC 7-22kW): 54p-69p

When a driver has joined the Shell Recharge Subscription for £9.99 per month:

It is possible to save an extra 30% on the Shell App price (up to 1,000 kWh per month)

Charging speed: rapid/ultra-rapid (DC 50-300kW): 45p-55p

**What is the process for a driver to get a receipt?**
When paying with contactless or using the QR code at a Shell Recharge charge point, drivers can request a receipt by visiting our website.

**Do you have any fleet-specific products? If so, what are they?**
The Shell Fleet Card is a secure, cost-effective way for business fleets to pay for fuel, EV charging, and other fleet essentials. It is possible to manage cards, monitor spend and access real-time data in the Shell Fleet Hub – along with benefiting from advanced fraud prevention tools that protect your fleet and reduce costs. In addition, Shell Fleet Insights provides analytics and telematics to optimise routes, improve fuel efficiency and minimise downtime.


# Smart Charge

**What is your UK network size? What speeds are the chargers?**
More than 80 locations across the country with in excess of 700 ultra-rapid charging bays and growing.

**How much do they cost to use? How often is this figure reviewed?**
It's 72p/kWh for ultra-rapid charging. Drivers can collect Nectar points on every charge.

**What is the process for a driver to get a receipt?**
Scan the QR code on the charger and drivers can follow the status of their charge and get a receipt at the end of the charging session.

**Do you have any fleet-specific products? If so, what are they?**
We have exclusive partnerships with fleets and are open to exploring new relationships.

**What are your growth ambitions?**
We are committed to providing an easy-to-use and accessible charging service across the country.

# The depot revolution: How EV charging transforms fleet operations

Fleet electrification continues to reshape transport, yet the vehicle itself doesn't carry the greatest influence. The depot does. Through a Freedom of Information request, Drax Electric Vehicles identified 284 applications to the Government's Depot Charging Scheme pilot. Private organisations dominated the list, and local authorities followed close behind. With a £170m funding programme open until 2030, fleets can benefit from the support they need to electrify. Here we look at some of the considerations when implementing an electrification strategy.

### Data at the heart

Every strong depot strategy begins with data. Telematics provides a clear view of mileage, dwell times and movement patterns. When telematics isn't available, operational profiles built from job types, driver behaviour and load requirements deliver valuable insight. A structured EV suitability assessment pulls these sources together, helping fleets determine which vehicles are ready for electrification, what charging provision is genuinely needed, and what carbon and cost savings are realistic. In many cases, the process reveals that vehicles spend longer stationary at depot than fleet managers assume, which changes the equation on charging speed and infrastructure scale entirely.

### Knowing what your site can deliver

Knowing what your site can actually support is just as important as knowing what your fleet needs. A professional site assessment clarifies what the grid can support today, how demand will grow and where smart charging or a connection upgrade makes sense. Understanding this data keeps projects on track with no unexpected surprises.

### Shape infrastructure around operations

With their data and capacity understood, fleets can start to shape their infrastructure strategy around the workings of their sites. Single shift operations could benefit from slower, low cost overnight charging, whilst depots with unpredictable returns may need targeted fast charging. When fleets align charging with actual movements, they strengthen uptime and cut energy costs through off-peak scheduling.

### Design a safe and efficient depot

Smart layouts and cable management protect people and equipment. Overhead cable supports, recessed ground channels and defined charging bays eliminate hazards and keep operations flowing. Also consider how your vehicles charge and whether a reverse parking policy will be required. When fleets take depot safety seriously, they strengthen efficiency and protect their investment long-term.

### Activate smart energy management

Energy intelligence raises depot charging from functional to future ready. Smart platforms distribute power efficiently, flatten peak demand and help fleets avoid penalty charges. Many organisations discover that intelligent control negates the need for costly grid upgrades. Extra ducting, modular layouts and the option for battery storage or on-site renewables position the depot for long-term resilience.

Depot charging doesn't sit in the background, it drives fleet electrification forward. Fleets that plan early, invest with intention and harness energy intelligence gain control, confidence and the freedom to scale.

Visit: energy.drax.com/ev or email evsales@drax.com

drax | Electric Vehicles

**Matt Pretorius, Head of Fleet Solutions, Octopus Fleet**

# Take the hassle out of transition and power up your modern fleet

If you're reading this report, you're already thinking about fleet electrification. Maybe you're just taking your first steps, or already managing a bunch of EVs. But while fleets are already on the journey, the "how" has become unnecessarily complicated. For too long, the fleet industry has operated on complex legacy systems and a "one size fits all" mentality that just doesn't work for the modern, mixed fleet transition.

Octopus Fleet does things a little differently. We're on a mission to make fleet electrification simple, with transparent pricing and smarter savings - all alongside award-winning customer service.

The industry needs to evolve to meet the needs of the modern fleet manager. By unifying your public charging, home reimbursement, and everyday business spend into one transparent platform, we're giving you the headspace to focus on what matters: your strategy and your drivers.

It's a really exciting opportunity to define what your future fleet looks like. Why not move away from rigid processes of the past and build something fit for the future? We're here to ensure that as you navigate fleet electrification, you have a partner that values transparency as much as you do.

**Find out how we can make electrification simple - we'd love to chat!**

# A simpler way to power electric living

**Ashley Boaden, senior director, Fleet and Leasing**

Pod is a leading EV charging provider, powering homes, workplaces and public spaces across the UK. We've been helping drivers and businesses make the switch since 2009, from the very start of the EV transition.

Today, over 300,000 customers trust Pod to be the heart of their EV life, and we power more than 5 million miles of driving every day. Our award-winning technology, heritage and proven reliability set us apart in a fast-moving market.

We're proud to sponsor this Electric Fleet special issue of Fleet News. The decisions fleet managers make today will shape the future of mobility, and we've spent years building the right proposition and partnerships to back that shift. Manual mileage claims and fragmented charging are giving way to managed, end-to-end fleet offerings.

Earlier this year, we launched Home Fleet, our latest solution to help fleet managers with electrification. It brings together home charging, public charging and automated driver reimbursement in one place. More on it later in this issue.

We also partner with leading UK businesses to electrify their car parks, so employees, customers and visitors can charge on-site with ease.

And we're continuing to innovate at pace. Pod Rewards pays customers cash for smart charging at home. Pod Power by EDF, our exclusive new EV tariff, gives drivers the lowest off-peak rates available, every night.

Each step takes us closer to our mission: making electric living easy, affordable and rewarding for everyone.

**Find out more at podenergy.com**

A SPECIAL REPORT BROUGHT TO YOU BY FleetNews


# CHOOSING THE RIGHT PATHWAY FOR FLEET ELECTRIFICATION

# Championing sustainability as a trusted partner

## There's never been a better time to join Toyota and Lexus on the road to decarbonisation

Fleet customers seeking to engage with electrification can rely on Toyota and Lexus Business for innovative technologies, vehicle quality and an expert, extensive dealer network.

Independent research[1] indicates that fleets are confident in Toyota and Lexus Business as a highly-trusted and sustainable partner. Toyota has achieved Top Three status from a selection of 28 automotive manufacturers in research from Fleet Power Index independent brand-tracker.

Through its multi-path fuel strategy, Toyota and Lexus Business offers fleets hybrid electric vehicles (HEVs), plug-in hybrid electric vehicles (PHEVs), battery electric vehicles (BEVs) and hydrogen fuel cell electric vehicles (FCEVs).

With seven EV and hybrid launches scheduled for 2026, Toyota and Lexus Business has committed to maintaining its focus on quality, value and dealer support.

Paul Fricker, General Manager at ONE Toyota Fleet Services, commented: "Toyota and Lexus Business is dedicated to maintaining its high-performance, trusted brand status among UK fleets."

### Growing confidence in BEVs

Among SME fleets, confidence that battery electric vehicles can do the job required of them continues to grow.

**64%** of small-to-medium enterprises (SMEs) believe BEVs can meet driver operational requirements.

**50%** of SME fleets say dealer networks remain critical to EV fleet transition.

**48%** of SMEs identify lower fuel costs as the biggest benefit of BEVs.

**39%** of SME fleets describe current EV charging infrastructure support services as quite capable.

**38%** of SMEs are very confident that EVs deliver total cost of ownership benefits.

Overall, Toyota's findings show there is good visibility of the opportunities for electrification and decarbonisation.

At Toyota and Lexus Business, we are committed to helping SMEs and corporate businesses turn this into reality, by offering a range of vehicles suitable for every need and role, plus support to keep them operating effectively and economically.

### Define your EV fleet strategy with six steps

1. Identify, brief and survey key stakeholders
2. Communicate with drivers and conduct analysis
3. Set your goals: Cost/$CO^2$/choice
4. Identify any van EV requirements
5. Conduct initial journey analysis for drivers and routes
6. Construct transition schedule

*[1] Based on independent research conducted by 360 Media Group with responses from 400 UK fleet decision-makers during February 2026 to understand their current relationship with electric vehicles, future intent and the key enablers influencing fleet electrification. The sample profile was a mix of SME fleets and corporate fleets from different industries.*


# Navigating the complexities of electrification

Electrification is happening across fleet, with thousands of businesses and millions of drivers benefitting from newly electrified and decarbonised powertrains


Electrification adoption rates vary by fleet size, sector and location. Larger fleets are seeing broader adoption, particularly with cars, while the situation is more mixed across the commercial vehicle sector.

For most fleets, the challenges of electrification go beyond simply choosing the right vehicles. Running electric fleets successfully requires coordination across charging infrastructure, energy management, billing systems, driver behaviour and operational policy. Managing these elements independently can create significant complexities, particularly for SMEs that may not have dedicated fleet management teams.

Research highlights the value of manufacturer support in addressing this challenge: a majority of SMEs (66%) believes OEM support would be very, or quite, valuable when transitioning to EVs.

## CHARGING COMPLEXITIES

Charging infrastructure remains the limiting factor to full EV adoption for SMEs – more than the upfront cost or operational suitability.

EVs have seen significant improvements to their real-world range, battery durability and charging speed, making them capable of the vast majority of roles required by fleets and their employees. While many now deliver 300-400 miles of real-world range, and the number of public charge points to support this has grown to almost 90,000 in the UK, there is still a distinct gap between this performance and driver confidence.

Fleet operators believe public charging reliability is a primary concern. While networks have grown, inconsistent uptime and maintenance issues can disrupt operations, especially for high utilisation vehicles that depend on predictable turnaround times.

While fleets believe that BEVs are fit for the task – with many SMEs (64%) and most corporates (77%) confident they can do what's required of them – trust in charging infrastructure is limited. Fleets believe that when it works, charging works well, but only a quarter of fleets (26%) rate the network as 'very capable'.

Many SMEs (40%) identify workplace charging as their biggest challenge when it comes to managing charging infrastructure; meanwhile, 42% of corporate fleets say public charging is the biggest challenge, with a quarter believing it limits greater EV adoption.

## HOW TOYOTA AND LEXUS BUSINESS SUPPORTS FLEET ELECTRIFICATION

Toyota and Lexus Business removes many of the operational barriers that can slow EV adoption by bringing together key elements in one ecosystem – an EV transition 'one-stop-shop'.

Rather than leaving businesses to coordinate multiple suppliers and systems themselves, Toyota combines the key elements of EV transition in an integrated approach, allowing fleet managers to work with fewer partners while improving management visibility and reducing administrative burden.

Ultimately, the goal is simple: making the transition to electric vehicles easier and more predictable for fleets of all sizes.

## SUPPORT ECOSYSTEM

Fleets can select from a growing range of BEVs, each designed to meet different requirements.

Alongside electrified cars and vans, Toyota provides back-up and assistance to keep them running and working efficiently.

- **Service Activated Warranty**

Vehicles can have extended protection up to 10 years or 100,000 miles, subject to regular servicing within the authorised network.

- **Battery Care Warranty**

Drivers can enjoy total confidence with 10-year/1,000,000-mile coverage[2].

- **Five years' roadside assistance**

Toyota Express Servicing helps minimise downtime through faster maintenance and proactive diagnostics.

- **Nationwide support**

This support is reinforced by Toyota's national dealer network, with more than 200 franchised sites across the UK, providing consistent expertise and local fleet support.

## SOLUTIONS

Successful EV operations depend on reliable access to charging across a variety of locations. It also requires systems that enable a business to make the most of its electrified fleet and help drivers to transition.

By integrating these, Toyota and Lexus Business provides fleets with the tools to avoid the complexities of managing multiple suppliers and systems, while making EV adoption seamless and simple.

- **Charging infrastructure**

Solutions supporting home, workplace and public charging environments.

- **Billing and payments**

Integrated platforms that simplify payment, reimbursement and cost reporting.

- **Driver guides and training**

Giving employees the knowledge to operate EVs efficiently.

- **Fleet optimisation**

Guidance on vehicle suitability, duty cycles and operational policy.

## Customer case study: Real-world savings

**Selling EVs in today's Zero Emission Vehicle (ZEV) mandated and highly competitive landscape presents real challenges. The question we continually ask is: How do we differentiate ourselves?**

**Our Fleet Sales team goes way beyond transactional relationships – we operate as consultants and partners, always prioritising the customer, and working collaboratively with them at every step along their journey. This approach has earned us enduring loyalty in a market where loyalty is increasingly rare. When it comes to EVs, that trust factor becomes even more critical. But so do flexible and bespoke solutions to meet customer needs and overcome barriers.**

**Toyota and Lexus Business does not operate a one-size-fits-all policy. Recently, a prospective customer, managing a fleet of 900 vans, expressed hesitation about transitioning to EVs. Its drivers were concerned about home charging logistics, rising energy costs and the administrative burden of expense claims. Sticking with diesel seemed simpler.**

**Fortunately, we already identified these concerns as common barriers and had a solution ready. Through strong collaboration and open communication, both teams quickly developed a tailored plan.**

**The result?**

**The customer not only overcame its initial concerns, but also gained valuable data, demonstrating clear cost-savings from switching to EVs. The evidence was compelling, making the decision to proceed straightforward. Without these solutions, the customer couldn't proceed with their transition to electric.**


*2 Battery electric vehicles requiring mains electricity for charging. Electric range figures were achieved using the WLTP test procedure and are provided for comparison purposes. Only compare $CO^2$ and electric range figures with other cars tested to the same technical procedures. These figures may not reflect real-life driving results, which depend on various factors including the starting charge of the battery, accessories fitted (post-registration), variations in weather, driving styles and vehicle load.*

Seeking solutions for fleet electrification? Ready to decarbonise with clarity and commercial sense?

**Download the Toyota and Lexus Business Electrification whitepaper**

## Costing considerations for the electric transition

The main elements of total cost of ownership (TCO) modelling – energy, funding, insurance, servicing, maintenance, residual values and taxation – are well understood in principle. However, confidence in how these costs translate into real-world fleet BEV operations for fleets is still developing.

Only around a third of businesses actively use TCO to manage vehicle costs, while many continue to rely primarily on leasing rates as a benchmark.

Most fleets believe that electrification reduces the cost of running company cars. However, confidence is lower for vans, where operational factors such as range, downtime and infrastructure requirements can have a larger financial impact. In practice, the biggest differences between total cost of ownership theory and real-world EV operation often come from variables that are harder to predict, particularly around charging behaviour and infrastructure.

### ENERGY COSTS AND CHARGING BEHAVIOUR

Electricity costs vary significantly dependent on where and how vehicles are charged.

Home charging is typically the lowest-cost option, particularly when drivers use smart tariffs during off-peak periods. Public charging, while convenient, can be significantly more expensive and may increase operational costs if used frequently.

Driver charging behaviour, therefore, becomes a factor in determining overall fleet costs. Vehicles or employees that rely on public charging, even occasionally, can quickly alter the predicted cost profile.

### INFRASTRUCTURE INVESTMENT

Electrification can require investment beyond the vehicles themselves. Many fleets need to consider the cost of installing home chargers for drivers, as well as workplace or depot charging infrastructure.

This forms a significant part of a fleet's transition strategy, both financially and practically. Clarifying who funds and manages charger installation – the employer, employee or a third-party provider – is an important step in planning an EV roll-out.

### MAINTENANCE AND TAXATION

Electric vehicles typically benefit from lower servicing requirements due to fewer moving parts and reduced mechanical wear. However, many fleets still lack long-term operational data to validate projected budgets. Tax incentives, particularly benefit-in-kind (BIK) tax advantages for company cars, also strengthen the business case for electrification.

Yet these policies can change over time, dependent on shifting Government needs, which, in turn, introduces uncertainty into longer-term planning for fleet operation and employee benefits.

### HIDDEN OPERATIONAL COSTS

Some of the most important EV costs are not directly linked to the vehicle itself. Home charging reimbursement is one example.

Without visibility of how and where drivers charge, employers may struggle to accurately reimburse electricity costs.

Similarly, fleets may need to invest in charging-management platforms, billing systems and driver policies to ensure charging is used efficiently.

These operational factors can significantly influence whether theoretical total cost of ownership savings are fully realised.

For fleets looking to overcome cost concerns, manage hidden operational costs and realise real-world savings; none of these can be achieved without tailored and consultative support.

## 2026 BEV range

Toyota and Lexus Business contributes to fleet electrification with a new expanded range of battery electric vehicles, the broader choice offering fleets greater coverage of roles with less compromise.

**TOYOTA URBAN CRUISER**
A compact SUV for the growing urban crossover segment. Available with two battery options – 49kWh and 61kWh capacities, and a range of up to 264[2] miles.

**TOYOTA C-HR+**
The new-generation C-HR+ with elevated design and technology. Two battery options – 57.7kWh and 77kWh, with up to a 376[2] miles of range.

**TOYOTA BZ4X TOURING**
The estate extension of the original bZ4X. Providing a 74.7kWh lithium-ion battery and a targeted range of up to 366[2] miles.

**LEXUS ES**
This premium saloon delivers up to 361[2] miles of range.

**TOYOTA HILUX**
This next generation pick-up now includes the first battery electric Hilux, which delivers up to 159[2] miles of range.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# Battery technology: where is it going next?

*Dr Euan McTurk*, consultant battery electrochemist at Plug Life, looks at how the market has evolved and the potential of future technologies

Electric vehicle battery technology is undergoing a great diversification. Throughout the 2010s, almost all electric cars and vans used a variant of lithium-ion cells called lithium nickel manganese cobalt oxide (NMC).

While NMC has evolved to provide impressive 400-plus mile range in modern EVs, there is controversy around the use of cobalt due to its cost and ethical concerns in its supply chain. These are not as clear cut as the tabloids might have you think, but that's not a topic for this article.

The ratio of cobalt in NMC has been substantially reduced over the years. The trend has been to replace cobalt with more nickel, but nickel is also quite pricey and its supply chain can be carbon intensive.

Therefore, many battery and EV manufacturers are looking beyond NMC to improve the cost, ethics and performance of their vehicles.

The first big change has been the introduction of lithium iron phosphate (LFP) in cars and vans.

LFP contains no nickel or cobalt, and its main ingredients are comparatively cheap and abundant – they're effectively made of lithium, rust and fertiliser.

It survives more charge/discharge cycles than NMC and is safer, too, although NMC is already very safe versus an internal combustion engine (ICE).

LFP's downside is that it is less energy dense than NMC. In other words, less range can be squeezed into a given weight or volume of battery.

In the 2010s, this restricted its use to electric buses which have ample space for big batteries. Improvements in cell and battery packaging allowed manufacturers to build LFP-equipped cars with 200-plus mile ranges in the early 2020s.

Now, LFP is found in Standard Range cars and vans from Tesla and most Chinese manufacturers, with several European OEMs offering LFP packs too.

## WHERE IS TECHNOLOGY GOING NEXT?

As for where battery technology is going next, LFP is being evolved in three key ways:

1. Changes to LFP's chemistry are resulting in impressively long-lived battery packs. By using additives to reduce degradation, battery giant CATL's latest electric bus battery has a warranty of 15 years or 1.5 million km.
2. Tweaks to the structure of electrodes in LFP batteries and the use of additives that lower internal resistance are allowing ever-faster charging. BYD is currently rolling out a Flash Charging network that can deliver 1.5MW of power to its latest LFP-equipped electric cars, charging them from 10%-to-70% in five minutes.
3. LFP looks set to be able to match the range of NMC. This is being achieved by substituting some of its iron for manganese, which boosts the cell voltage and therefore the energy contained by the battery: energy (Wh) = capacity (Ah) x voltage (V). The resultant "LMFP" battery is both low cost and high energy density, with good ethics to boot.

Some manufacturers are also looking beyond lithium. Sodium-ion cells appear set to lower the cost of entry-level EVs even further.

**"SOME MANUFACTURERS ARE ALSO LOOKING BEYOND LITHIUM. SODIUM-ION CELLS APPEAR SET TO LOWER THE COST OF ENTRY-LEVEL EVs EVEN FURTHER"**

There are numerous different sodium-ion chemistries, but the cheapest are expected to cost 40% less than LFP by 2030, which would make EVs comfortably cheaper than their ICE equivalents to buy.

However, sodium-ion won't realise its true low-cost potential until it's being mass-produced at the same vast scale as LFP today.

Sodium-ion has several useful tricks up its sleeve: it loses hardly any usable capacity in freezing conditions, has a long cycle life, and can be safely, reversibly discharged all the way to zero volts, which makes it safer and cheaper to ship. This will reduce the cost of EVs even further.

The downside of sodium is that its atoms are physically bigger than lithium but transfer the same number of electrons (i.e. do the same amount of work) during charge and discharge, so sodium-ion batteries are less energy dense than lithium-ion cells.

This initially prompted speculation that sodium-ion would mostly find use in grid energy storage systems, where energy density doesn't matter as much.

However, CATL has just launched a sodium-ion cell that has similar energy density to LFP, and a 10,000-cycle life.

Sodium-ion-equipped EVs have already been launched in China, targeting cold regions

for their improved winter performance.

Expect to see sodium-ion cars and vans hit the UK over the coming years, offering reasonable range per charge, fast charging, excellent winter performance and a tantalisingly low price point.

## SOLID-STATE CELLS

Arguably, the biggest step forward in range will be delivered by solid-state cells.

In normal lithium-ion cells, the positive and negative electrodes are separated by a polymer (plastic) separator soaked in an electrolyte, which lets lithium ions through but not electrons, which must travel through the external circuit from one cell terminal to the other and power the EV in which they are housed in the process.

Solid-state cells replace the polymer separator and liquid electrolyte with a single solid component, which improves safety by removing flammable liquid electrolyte.

This also allows pure lithium negative electrodes to be used, as the risk of branch-like 'dendrites' of lithium growing over many hundreds of charging sessions, puncturing the separator and internally shorting the cell, is greatly reduced.

This allows the bulky graphite (carbon) that is used to prevent dendrite growth in the negative electrodes of today's lithium-ion cells to be removed, saving space and weight, which could result in a battery that doubles the range of an electric vehicle today.

Like lithium-ion and sodium-ion, solid-state is a broad church of chemistries, and solid-state electrolytes are being developed for both lithium- and sodium-based cells.

**"WATCH OUT FOR EUROPEAN AND AMERICAN BATTERY START-UPS TEAMING UP WITH MAJOR CAR AND VAN BRANDS TO COMMERCIALISE ALL-SOLID-STATE BATTERIES WITHIN THE NEXT DECADE"**

The main types of solid-state electrolyte are polymer, sulphide and ceramic, which have increasing cost, safety and rapid charging performance in roughly that order.

Polymer is likely to be commercialised first, but will be promptly overtaken by sulphide and then ceramic when they are perfected at scale.

Ceramic and sulphide electrolytes may take a while to reach mass production due to the completely new supply chains and manufacturing processes that shall be needed compared with lithium-ion or sodium-ion cells today.

Indeed, BMW is trialling a sulphide-based solid-state battery in an i7, but has stated that it won't offer solid-state cells in its EVs until at least 2033, not because of technological feasibility, but because of cost.

Some Chinese brands have started to launch 'semi-solid-state' batteries in EVs in the UK.

A prime example is the MG4 EV Urban, which shall be offered with such a battery.

Semi-solid-state batteries still contain flammable liquid electrolyte and tend to have bulkier electrode materials than all-solid-state cells.

As such, while they offer mild improvements in performance they are generally not the holy grail that all-solid-state cells are promised to be.

Watch out for European and American battery start-ups teaming up with major car and van brands to commercialise all-solid-state batteries within the next decade, although don't be surprised if Chinese OEMs beat them to the punch.

So, the next few years will see more diversity in EV batteries than we've experienced before.

LFP will become increasingly high-power and long-lived, LMFP will provide long-range EVs at the cost of Standard Range ones today, sodium-ion could cut costs further and improve winter performance, and solid-state could double the range of today's EVs.

Crucially though, it will take a while for EVs using these chemistries to be launched in the UK and geopolitics may delay things even further.

However, the promise of these exciting new chemistries should not be used as an excuse to hold off on electrifying your fleet: if an EV exists that has sufficient range, payload and charge speed to do the job for you, then it's an absolute no-brainer for your fleet. Procure it now – and thank me later.

# Beyond electric: What next for fleet operators?

With over 80% of company car drivers now choosing plug-in models, and fleet policies increasingly driving towards zero emission motoring, Grosvenor, the UK's largest privately-owned contract hire, fleet management and EV salary sacrifice specialist, is advising companies to look 'beyond the current EV trend' and begin planning a future of broader and more flexible, sustainable business travel options.

Analysis of DVLA and National Travel Survey data reveals a sharp 'generational tilt', with the demographics of license holders ageing rapidly. Nearly one-third (32.8%) of all UK licenses are now held by those aged 60 and over, while drivers aged 17-24 now account for just 7% of full license holders.

Financial pressures are one reason why young drivers are delaying taking their test. The average cost to get on the road in year one now sits between £7,352 and £10,852, compounded by stricter DVLA booking rules that came into effect in March 2026.

A rise of digital connectivity, increased urbanisation, and environmental awareness are other contributing factors. As a result, a lower proportion of new talent coming into the UK workforce has a driving licence, with many younger employees accustomed to using Apps and flexible travel options.

The traditional company car therefore faces potential change once again and, for fleet managers, this cultural shift serves as a catalyst to look at what the future may hold.

To support companies in planning these future fleet strategies, Grosvenor recently launched Vista. This consultative solution looks at how businesses will move employees from A to B sustainably, efficiently and cost-effectively.

Vista is made up of 8 pillars that cover all key areas, including policies, technology, infrastructure, culture, regulations, data, financial implications and propulsion, with the Vista team broadening the scope of fleet consultancy by advising companies on more flexible, sustainable travel choices to complement the company car.

Steve Beadle, head of Vista at Grosvenor, said: "We are seeing a shift in the very culture of the fleet. EV uptake in the company car sector has been successful due to tax incentives and business decarbonisation strategies.

"Yet, whilst continuing to advise and support customers on the transition to EVs and the infrastructure that supports this, we must now look over the horizon once again and begin planning our longer-term business travel strategies, where the company car is supported by other sustainable, digital alternatives."

Grosvenor's Vista solution is supporting fleet managers by:

- Looking at how more flexible business travel plans could be incorporated alongside the company car and grey fleet.
- Ensuring the diverse business mobility needs of both the traditional workforce and a newer, more tech-driven, workforce is combined.
- Helping companies with the cultural shift of a younger generation entering the workforce who may expect greater flexibility in their business travel choices over and above the company car.

# Long-term performance allays fears over battery degradation

Growing volumes of data show that early fears over the life of batteries was misplaced. *Andrew Ryan* reports

One of the longest running fears raised by electric vehicle (EV) critics has been concerns over the longevity of batteries, with many saying that they will need to be replaced prematurely.

However, as time has gone on and more EVs have been on the road for longer, the evidence continues to become much more conclusive that battery degradation is not something fleet decision-makers – or drivers as a whole – need to worry about.

Multiple studies released this year show EV batteries typically experience degradation of around 2% a year, which, in real-world terms, means that a battery with a range of 300 miles when new (and has a state of health (SoH) of 100%), would lose around six miles of range each year.

"EV battery health remains strong, even as vehicles are charged faster and deployed more intensively," says Charlotte Argue, senior manager, sustainable mobility at Geotab. "Our latest data shows that batteries are still lasting well beyond the replacement cycle most fleets plan for."

For its updated EV battery health study, the connected vehicle and asset management solution specialist, has analysed more than 22,700 EVs across 21 makes and models, drawing on several years of aggregated telematics information.

The updated analysis shows an average annual battery degradation rate of 2.3%, compared with 1.8% in Geotab's 2024 findings. Geotab says the increase likely reflects a few combined factors, most notably a growing reliance on high-power DC fast-charging, vehicle types and battery chemistry in the pool of vehicles tested.

Its conclusions are mirrored by analysis by both Generational and Arval.

The Generational Battery Performance Index, which is the average of the 8,000 batteries assessed from a vehicle age range of 0-12 years and mileage from 0-160,000 miles, found the average SoH was 95%, with even vehicles aged eight or nine years old retaining a median 85% capacity.

Batteries below 70% SoH are considered unfit for retail but suitable for second-life applications such as for use in battery storage systems.

"In most cases, the battery is likely to exceed the lifespan of the vehicle," says Oliver Phillpott, CEO of Generational.

For its research, Arval analysed 24,000 battery electric (BEV) and plug-in hybrid (PHEV) batteries from 11 European countries and found that at 70,000km (43,750 miles), the battery displays 93% remaining capacity on average, while at 160,000km (100,000 miles) or after six years of use, SoH remains above 90%.

Arval also found that new-generation EV batteries, which benefit from improvements in design, cooling and energy-management systems over earlier technologies, tend to show slightly

better performance over time. It says these show a SoH of two-to-three points higher than older models. This finding was also reflected in Generational's analysis, which found the battery health of younger, high-mileage vehicles typically outperforms older, low-mileage vehicles.

This, for example, means a three-year-old ex-fleet vehicle with 90,000 miles on the odometer, if well-maintained and driven in less intensive, sympathetic usage patterns, could represent a superior purchase to a six-year-old vehicle with a recorded mileage of 30,000.

## CHARGING SPEED HAS BIGGEST IMPACT ON BATTERY HEALTH

Geotab's analysis found charging power is now the strongest operational influence on EV battery health.

"Charging behaviour now plays a much bigger role in how quickly batteries age, giving operators an opportunity to manage long-term risk through smart charging strategies," says Argue.

Geotab found vehicles that relied heavily on DC fast charging above 100kW experienced faster degradation, averaging up to 3% per year, compared with around 1.5% for vehicles that primarily used AC or lower-power charging.

"For fleets, the focus should be balance," says Argue. "Using the lowest charging power that still meets operational needs can make a measurable difference to long-term battery health without limiting vehicle availability."

Getoab's research also found the common advice for EV operators to keep battery charge between 20% and 80% to avoid the chemical stress associated with a full or empty battery may not be as critical as once believed.

Its data indicates this measure is only critical if the battery is left outside this range for extended periods: vehicles which spent half their time outside the 20%-80% range saw degradation of 1.4%; if they spent 50%-80% of their time outside, it rose slightly to 1.5% but if they spent 80% in the extremes, it was 2%.

Geotab says this increase above 80% shows that battery degradation accelerates only when there is prolonged, habitual and extreme exposure to high or low states of charge.

Higher use vehicles showed slightly faster degradation, increasing by 0.8% per year, compared with the lowest-use group, "but this is an acceptable trade-off relative to the operational and cost benefits gained from keeping vehicles in service", says Argue. "For many fleets, these productivity gains directly translate into a lower cost per mile over the vehicle's life."

## GOOD NEWS FOR RESIDUAL VALUES

Continuing evidence of the longevity of batteries is also good news for the residual values (RVs) of EVs, which British Vehicle Rental and Leasing Association (BVRLA) chief executive Toby Poston described last year as "falling relentlessly, destroying value on an epic scale".

Last year's FN50 research also found leasing companies listed RVs, particularly of EVs, as the biggest challenge facing their own business over the following 12 months.

A big issue has been a lack of confidence from used car buyers in the technology, including how long batteries last, which has kept demand and prices low for defleeted EVs. However, there are strong signs this is changing as familiarity with EVs grows. Figures released by the Society of Motor Manufacturers and Traders (SMMT) show that in the first quarter of this year, used electric car sales reached record levels.

"Used car buyers can be confident in the durability and reliability of EV batteries over the long run," adds Pascal Seeger, global remarketing director at Arval.

Derren Martin, automotive expert at Cazana, says the shift towards EV acceleration is also stabilising fleet operations by tempering depreciation and potentially improving future RVs.

This shift reduces lease risk premiums and creates a more positive window for defleeting three-year-old stock, while the steady performance of hybrids provides a high-value risk hedge for those not yet ready for full electrification.

## Four steps to lower battery degradation

**Following on from its latest research, Geotab has issued advice to fleet decision-makers about how they can manage EV battery degradation.**

**1** **Be strategic with charging power: Prioritise AC charging or lower-power DC charging, only using high-power DC charging (especially above 100kW) when absolutely necessary. This strategy helps minimise battery stress which, unchecked, can lead to an estimated 76% SoH after eight years compared with 88% SoH for those who prioritise lower-powered charging.**

**2** **Be aware of climate: There was a small, but measurable, difference for EVs operating in hotter climates (an increased rate of 0.4%). Consider operational adjustments during heatwaves such as parking in the shade or indoors to reduce exposure.**

**3** **Prioritise vehicle utilisation: The acceleration in degradation from high utilisation is a manageable cost (an approximate 0.8% penalty) when weighed against the significant revenue and productivity gains from maximising vehicle deployment. A fleet strategy should prioritise uptime and usage.**

**4** **Avoid extreme state of charge exposure: Your drivers can worry less about adhering to a 20%-to-80% SoC rule for day-to-day use. However, avoid leaving vehicles parked and idle for prolonged, habitual periods when the charge is near full or near empty, as degradation accelerates significantly when extreme SoC exposure exceeds an 80% cumulative time threshold.**

**"USING THE LOWEST CHARGING POWER THAT STILL MEETS OPERATIONAL NEEDS CAN MAKE A MEASURABLE DIFFERENCE TO LONG-TERM BATTERY HEALTH WITHOUT LIMITING VEHICLE AVAILABILITY"**

**CHARLOTTE ARGUE, GEOTAB**

# How to ensure your charging strategy is fit for purpose

Experts discuss how fleets can decisively manage charging requirements across home, public and workplace networks. *Tim Keogh* reports

Charging remains one of the biggest obstacles facing many fleets when it comes to making the transition to electric vehicles (EVs).

During a *Fleet News* webinar, sponsored by Pod, a panel of experts discussed how fleets can decisively manage their charging requirements across home, public and workplace networks to ensure a smooth transition to electric.

## BALANCING WORKPLACE, HOME AND PUBLIC CHARGING

Methods that fleets can use to balance different charging options within an overall EV strategy were addressed by the panel.

Smith Brothers Stores's Andrew Teer explained how, when the company began issuing EVs, it provided employees with free workplace charging and would pay for public charging.

He said: "The business was absorbing all that cost as an encouragement to roll it out and make sure we could get where we needed to be.

"We're actually looking at where the public charge is happening, why, when, and for what reason.

"So 30% of overall charging probably occurs on the public network, then probably 50% around our branch network, and then roughly 20% at home."

Pod's Ashley Boaden discussed how fleets can ensure they are HMRC-compliant when looking at reimbursement for home charging.

"There are two things that the HMRC wants to see," he said. "Evidence of how much electricity was used for business charging and evidence of what that electricity actually costs.

"Our Pod platform captures both automatically at the session level and connects directly to the driver's home charger and their energy tariff. So, every reimbursement is based on real data rather than estimates or flat rates.

"The alternative, which is reimbursing at HMRC advisory electricity rates – currently at 7p per mile for home and 15ppm for public charging – is widely considered to be too low to cover actual charging costs. It really puts the admin burden on the driver to submit expense claims."

## EV TRANSITIONING CHALLENGES

Panellists defined the challenges they have faced during their electric transitions, noting that unexpected difficulties are not unlikely when undergoing large operational changes.

Platform Housing Group's Adam Jones highlighted the difficulties posed by a lack of charging infrastructure in crucial areas.

"There are certain areas where you would expect more public charging," he said. "For instance, there are rural areas where you think that councils would target but, for whatever reason, they're not."

"Some of our drivers might travel an hour-and-a-half or two hours to their first job. They could start on a full battery, but we've got to make sure we can get them back."

Defra's Sarah Nicholson explained that, despite many drivers engaging with EVs early, charging anxiety has become a concern.

She said: "This includes confidence around the actual practices of the charge points while they're out, or issues around charging hierarchies in our depots. Who can take priority? Who should be charging them overnight?

"We've just issued 28 electric pool cars to sites around the country and there is much anxiety around how we charge them. What happens if a vehicle goes out and somebody gets stuck? We have issued charge cards to them, but there are still a lot of questions."

Ensuring that charge points are futureproofed was given attention, with Teer expressing surprise at just how fast the advancement of technology has been.

He said: "What we found was that the technology in the charge points we were putting in six years ago had become old and we couldn't get them repaired. Already we're on our second generation of chargers at all of our locations."

He also explained that finding the right vehicles for LCV and HGV operations is a difficult prospect, and that this affects the fleet charging strategy.

> **"START SMALL, BUT THINK BIG. HAVE IN MIND SOLUTIONS THAT CAN GROW AS ELECTRIFICATION TAKE-UP INCREASES"**
>
> **ASHLEY BOADEN, POD**

"As a business we have chassis cabs and dropside vehicles – not panel vans – and we find there is much less suitable charger availability for these products," said Teer.

"We've done trials and we're getting close to having a viable product. We also currently need to be back-to-base, because the width of our vehicles means they are not ideal for public chargers."

## DEFINING SUCCESS

Successful charging strategies and how to implement them became the focus of discussion.

Boaden highlighted the merits of home charging. "It's the most cost-effective way to charge a fleet," he said.

"It builds confidence, you get ambassadors on board in the team, and it starts the learning process in a much more manageable way.

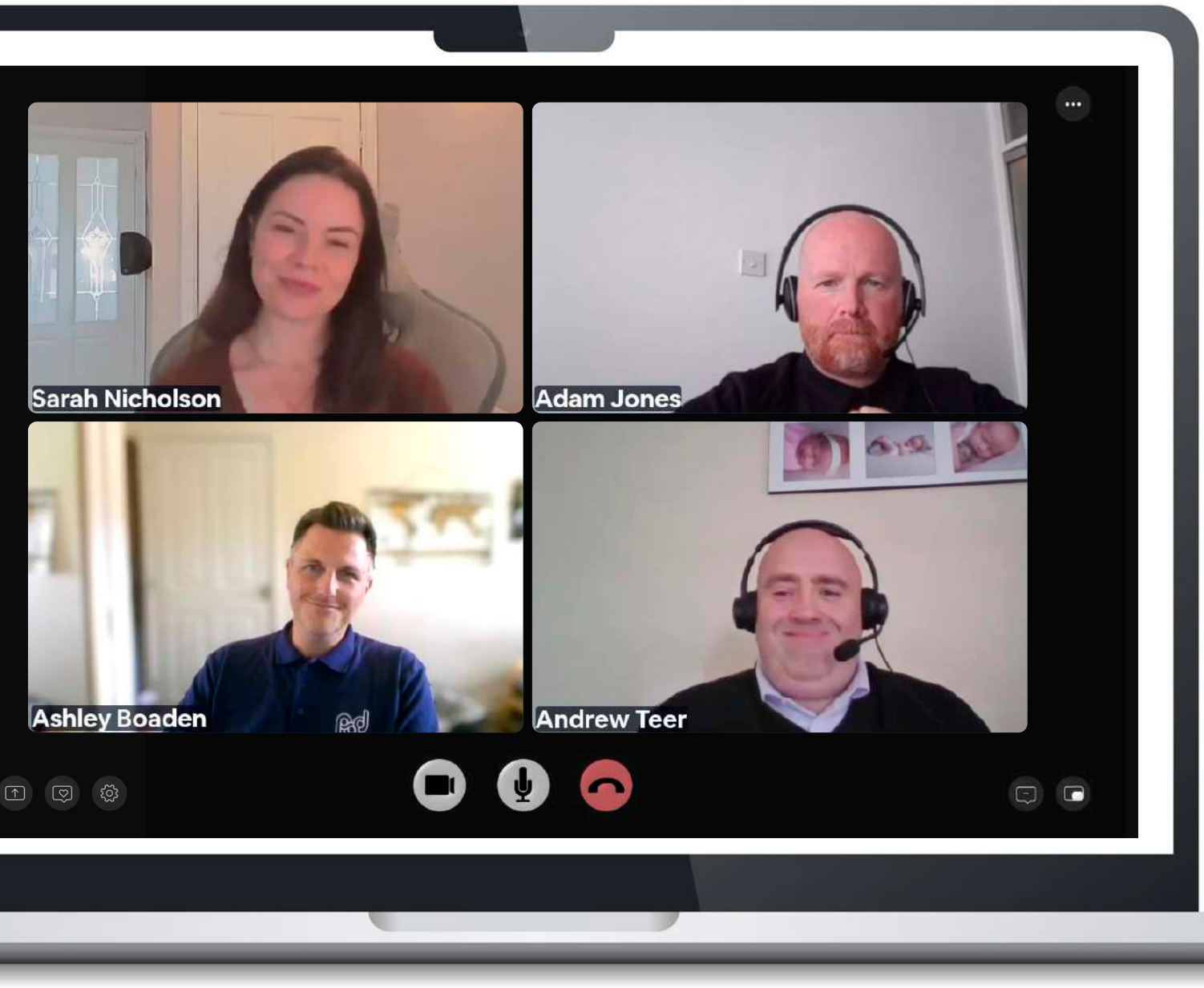
"Start small, but think big. Have in mind solutions that can grow as electrification take-up increases."

Jones defined the factors that must be considered when establishing a charging strategy beyond just a single cost or measure of uptime.

## Webinar attendees

- **Adam Jones, fleet environmental manager at Platform Housing Group.**
- **Andrew Teer, transport operations manager at SBS.**
- **Ashley Boaden, senior director business development – fleet and lease at Pod.**
- **Sarah Nicholson, fleet manager (cars) at Defra Group Services.**

**The opinions expressed panellists were their own at the time of recording and do not necessarily represent the views or policies of their respective organisations.**




He said: "How well it balances the reliability, the convenience for the user, the cost-effectiveness, the scalability, the futureproofing of it.

"Charging has to be available when our driver needs it, because the convenience then drives the adoption, ensuring charging locations and speeds fit the real operational and user behaviours."

Jones noted that decision-makers need to focus on the full lifecycle of a solution, rather than on upfront costs – as futureproofing will be worth the initial expense.

"Don't necessarily be put off by the upfront cost. I'm trying to enable our infrastructure from the very start to be scalable and flexible enough to support future EV growth," he said.

In this regard, Jones argued that success for a fleet comes when charging supports its operational needs, encourages further use of EVs and delivers long term value.

## LESSONS LEARNED

The panellists highlighted how they had learned from earlier engagement with electrification – particularly when installing charging infrastructure into sites or depots.

Boaden said: "Rapid chargers on-site can be very expensive. They can require enormous and lengthy power upgrades.

"Talk to experts. Get some advice, learn from others as well. My analogy in this space would be that you wouldn't put a rapid charger outside a cinema.

"Think about who is using the chargers? Is it customers? Staff? How long are they on-site for? How much energy do they require? Who is paying for it?

Nicholson noted that, if she was starting to establish a charging strategy today, she would work from a behaviour-led model.

"We made a lot of assumptions about where charging would happen, and that most vehicles would charge overnight at depots," she said.

"That's not what's happening. In practice, driver behaviour and operational order requirements have dictated where the dwelling time is for those vehicles."

## FINAL ADVICE

The panellists offered guidance and best practice for fleets as they undergo their electric journeys.

Jones advised fleet managers to actively collaborate with their business's planning teams.

"If you could just join them for a period of time so they can understand the role of the driver and the routes that they take," he said.

"A planning team could really benefit this journey, because of the impact they can have on a workforce to be more productive, but also with a massive cost-saving element. If you could reduce somebody's mileage on a daily, weekly or monthly basis; then I could do more jobs, but also use less energy."

Boaden pinpointed driver engagement as a must for decision-makers when electrifying their fleets.

He said: "Make sure you engage with your driver population. Ask for feedback, ask your CPO to run workshops, EV training webinars – remove those barriers early, carefully consider reimbursement and build confidence early with your drivers."

The full recording of this panel is available to watch online at fleetnews.co.uk/webinars.

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